MEETING SUMMARY

**WRIA 15 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement**

**Committee Meeting**

February 6, 2020 | 9:30 a.m.-1:45 p.m. | [WRIA 15 Committee Webpage](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37327/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_15.aspx)

## **Location**

Kitsap County

619 Division Street

Port Orchard, WA

**Committee Chair**

Stacy Vynne McKinstry

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**Handouts**

* Agenda
* Growth Projections Discussion Guide
* Consumptive Use Calculator

# Attendance

Committee Representatives and Alternates \*

Joel Purdy (*Kitsap Public Utility District*)

David Winfrey (*Puyallup Tribe)*

StacyVynneMcKinstry *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

GregRabourn *(King County)*

SamPhillips *(Port Gamble S’Klallam Tribe)*

TeresaSmith *(City of Bremerton)*

Mike Michael *(City of Bainbridge Island)*

Dave Ward (*Kitsap County)*

Zach Holt *(alternate - City of* *Port Orchard)*

Brienn Ellis (*alternate - City of* *Gig Harbor)*

Alison O’Sullivan (*alternate - Suquamish Tribe)*

JoyGaritone *(Kitsap Conservation District)*

Austin Jennings (*alternate -* *Pierce County*)

Dana Sarff (*alternate -* *Skokomish Tribe*)

Nate Daniel *(Great Peninsula Conservancy)*

Paul Pickett *(alternate - Squaxin Island Tribe)*

Randy Neatherlin *(Mason County)*

Russ Shiplet *(Kitsap Building Association)*

Committee Representatives Not In Attendance\*

City of Poulsbo Washington Water Service (ex-oficio)

WA Dept of Fish & Wildlife Mason-Kitsap Farm Bureau (ex-oficio)

Other Attendees

Susan Gulick *(Sound Resolutions, Facilitator)*

Angela Pietschmann (*Cascadia Consulting Group, Information Manager*)

Burt Clothier *(Pacific Groundwater Group)*

John Covert *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

Stephanie Potts *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

Rebecca Brown *(WA Dept of Ecology)*

\*Attendees list is based on sign-in sheet.

# Meeting Agenda and Meeting Summary

Susan reviewed the agenda.

*No revisions to the agenda.*

Susan acknowledged a minor revision to the December meeting summary (added a note to clarify that the January 14th Technical Workgroup meeting was canceled, but the Project Workgroup meeting was rescheduled from January 8th to the 14th). No concerns were shared with the revised version. Ecology will post the final meeting summary on the committee webpage.

*No further refinements to the meeting summary provided.*

# Updates and Announcements

Stacy provided updates from Ecology:

* Ecology has participated in several meetings since the December committee meeting:
  + Squaxin Island Tribe – discussed tribe’s interests and concerns and general discussion of the committee’s progress.
  + Mason County – to discuss a proposal for onsite offsets. Mason County will present to the Committee on the proposal in March.
  + Hydrology/Hydrogeology Workshop – debriefed on this meeting during “Project Considerations” discussion below.
  + Project Workgroup 1/14/20 – debriefed during “Project Considerations” discussion below.
  + Meetings with Kitsap County, KPUD, PGST, Wild Fish Conservancy and contacted Kitsap County to discuss Kingston Waste Water Treatment Plant and others to talk about project ideas.
  + Presentation to Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council.
  + Ecology met with DFW staff to discuss progress and universal considerations across WRIAs.
* Stacy shared a hard-copy of the [**Committee Brochure**](https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/summarypages/2011075.html) document that can be circulated to elected officials and decision-makers representing respective entities. The brochure provides background information and a timeline for upcoming decisions. Stacy will distribute as a PDF with printing instructions.
* Ecology is working on two memos and a technical progress document:
  + PEW growth projections memo – available next week
  + Updates to subbasin delineations memo – available next week
  + Technical progress memo – available before next committee meeting

# Plan Review Process

All committee members must approve the WRE Plan before Ecology’s review. While the legislation does not require governments and organizations on the committee to go through a formal internal approval process before approving the WREC plan, committee members should consult with their organizations to determine their internal review processes. The committee chair is collecting WREC Plan Local Approval Process Forms to accommodate review and approval timelines and shape future committee meetings. Ecology will provide components of the plan throughout the spring and summer 2020, with the compilation of the initial draft components around early August 2020.

**Reference Materials**

* Copies of completed WRE Plan Local Approval Process Forms available for reference.

**Discussion**

* Interest groups ( agricultural, environmental and residential building reps) are reminded to ensure they are keeping interested parties in the loop and addressing any questions/concerns along the way. Similarly, all members are encouraged to keep persons who must ultimately approve the plan briefed along the way so they will be prepared for final review and approval.
* Members of the committee provided a high level overview of their respective government’s or organization’s internal review and approval timelines. The anticipated review timeline for WRIA 15 committee members ranges from a few weeks to three months. Stacy and Susan will plan the plan development and review timeline based on these needs. Members identified the need for brochures, presentations and potentially other support during the review process.
* We are waiting on local review process needs from Squaxin Island Tribe, King County and City of Poulsbo. Unless these entities provide information on their timelines and needs, Ecology cannot account for their needs in the plan development and review process.
* Note that the City of Poulsbo has not attended meetings for several months and Stacy will follow up with them to check on their anticipated committee participation going forward.

# Growth Projections

Ecology will share a technical memo on growth projections next week. Ecology provided a discussion guide, based on input from Kitsap County, KPUD and Bainbridge Island, proposing recommendations for the low, medium, and high permit exempt well growth projections. Refer to the discussion guide for details.

**Reference Materials**

* [Discussion guide.](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/images/WREC/WRIA15/202002/WRIA15MeetingPacket6Feb2020.pdf)

**Discussion**

* The committee agreed to move forward with the growth projection range as provided in the discussion guide for Kitsap County.

|  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
|  | **Low Range** | **Medium Range** | **High Range** |
| **Kitsap County** | 2,568 | 2,920 | 3,066 |
| **Justification** | Use the 2077 projection plus an estimate of 491 wells for Bainbridge Island based on the method and the estimate provided by Kitsap County. | Use the KPUD proposal of an average of 146 wells per year, based on the historical average. | Use the KPUD estimate of 2920 plus 5% as a margin of error. |

# Consumptive Use

The committee **discussed** **uncertainties around various estimates and considerations** (e.g., PEW growth projections, consumptive use estimates, climate change and other safety factors, adaptive management considerations). Note that the “outdoor irrigation method” for estimating consumptive use is also referred to as the “Ecology method,” as it is included in Appendix A of Ecology’s NEB Guidance document.

**Reference Materials**

* [Consumptive use spreadsheet](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/images/WREC/WRIA15/202002/WRIA15MeetingPacket6Feb2020.pdf)
* [Sensitivity analysis handout](https://app.box.com/s/vzfpnopnx400jsezm0w9y1pxxh8mjl8f) (Paul Pickett)

**Discussion**

* The committee discussed which consumptive use methodology should be used to estimate a working number/range to move forward with analyzing projects.
* The committee wants to include all three methodologies in the final plan for comparison/reference purpose with an explanation for and why they were (or were not) selected as the official consumptive use estimate.
* Ecology believes that the outdoor irrigation method is inherently more conservative than other methods and over-estimates how much water will be consumptively used because it:
  + (1) uses growth projections much higher than what is currently being reported for new PEWs (based on county reports to Ecology for new building permits)
  + (2) assumes people are watering commercial turf
  + (3) Relies on the 30-year old [Washington Irrigation Guide](https://www.nrcs.usda.gov/Internet/FSE_DOCUMENTS/nrcs144p2_035205.pdf).
* Many committee members spoke in favor of using the USGS Groundwater Model Method. Committee members who preferred the USGS Groundwater Model method noted:
  + It is more direct—based on real WRIA 15 numbers, collected over 20-years. The outdoor irrigation method is less precise/robust and more subjective.
  + The outdoor irrigation method overestimates consumption because it uses commercial turf watering guidance.
  + Plan could be adaptively managed to be more conservative in future, if needed.
* Committee members who preferred the Outdoor Irrigation Method noted:
  + It is consistent with other WRIAs’ methodology (the USGS Groundwater Model is not available for other WRIAs).
  + It is more conservative to account for uncertainty into the future and restore streamflow and benefit salmon.
  + Plan could be adaptively managed to be less conservative in future, if appropriate.
* Additional considerations:
  + Pierce County prefers USGS model method but would be open to using the outdoor irrigation method. If using the more conservative irrigation method, they would want to lower any additional safety factor accordingly.
  + Squaxin Island Tribe pointed out several uncertainties in the USGS method.
  + Despite metering, a number of homeowners on Bainbridge Island water their lawns to commercial turf standards. These homes are primarily on the municipal water system, not PEWs. Bainbridge Island City Council has strong environmental interest and may lean towards a more conservative estimate.
  + Mason County prefers a USDA methodology for calculating consumptive use, but is open to using the USGS Model Methodology. Mason County is not open to considering the outdoor irrigation method estimate unless the USDA estimate also remains under consideration. [More information is needed from Mason County on the USDA numbers if they wish to pursue an alternative method as these numbers have not been shared before.]
  + Using a range of numbers for PEW growth projections and consumptive use, plus additional safety factors, rapidly increases the overall target and increases the amount of projects needed to offset use.
  + Members are eager to begin discussing projects and want to have working PEW growth projection and consumptive use numbers to use in these upcoming evaluations. Some members are concerned that by delaying the consumptive use decision, the committee won’t be able to productively discuss projects, NEB, and adaptive management decisions.
  + Several tribal representatives want to see “salmon-centric” plans.
* Paul Pickett presented the results of his [sensitivity analysis](https://app.box.com/s/vzfpnopnx400jsezm0w9y1pxxh8mjl8f) and proposed the following working estimates for committee consideration: low end of range = 1.06 cfs (Outdoor Irrigation Method estimate); high end of range = 1.9 cfs (USGS method + 3 conservative factors of uncertainty related to increase in temperature due to climate change, higher outdoor water use, and higher PEW growth).
  + Committee member suggestions included:
    - Using a target within a range to address uncertainty.
    - Using a tiered project list that reflects the low, medium, and high estimates in combination with a strong adaptive management plan.
    - Using the USGS method estimate as the official offset target, while aiming for a more conservative planning target number.
    - Using the concept of a range of values.
    - Considering a regional approach within the WRIA. Stacy reminded the committee that while they are required to evaluate NEB at the WRIA scale, the committee would like to find projects closes to anticipated impacts.
* Some Committee members suggested that the consumptive use discussion be tabled until the adaptive management elements are better understood.
* Stacy will summarize current considerations and options on the table for consumptive use for further discussion in a technical progress memo.

# Project Considerations

Burt Clothier (Pacific Groundwater Group) debriefed on the December Hydrology/Hydrogeology Workshop. During the workshop, the technical consultants reviewed and summarized available hydrology and hydrogeology info for WRIA15 and John Covert presented on managed aquifer recharge (MAR) projects. Workshop participants discussed how to apply available data (1) to the projects/NEB evaluation and (2) as a screening tool for looking into MAR sites. It was noted that the USGS model scale is WRIA wide and too large for evaluating individual projects; however, the committee can still use model parameters to look at a smaller scale. Technical consultants can provide the committee with a sense of the scale of work required. Notes from the meeting are available on [Box](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15HydroResources).

Stacy debriefed on the Project Workgroup Meeting that was held in early January 2020. During the meeting, workgroup members shared project details and John Covert provided an overview of MAR projects. Committee members expressed interest in (1) finding natural storage projects that do not require as much infrastructure and maintenance and (2) gravel pits as opportunities for storage. The project workgroup would like to get comments from the committee on the project inventory before applying the screening criteria to projects.

The committee discussed ways to direct the technical consulting team to help narrow down the project inventory(currently about 170 projects on the list). The tech team’s scope includes time to help research about 20 projects and develop about 10 projects in detail.

**Reference Materials**

* Project [Workgroup meeting notes](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37327/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_15.aspx)
* [Project inventory](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15ProjectInventory)
* [Hydrology Workshop notes and resources.](https://ecy.box.com/v/WRIA15HydroResources)

**Discussion**

* Paul Pickett from the Squaxin Island Tribe reported that he’d developed an inventory of flow gages in WRIA 15 (active or with recent data) and that file is also available in Box.
* Pierce County and Great Peninsula Conservancy will provide GIS maps of their properties in WRIA 15 to post on the WebMap application for possible use in an MAR screening analysis.
* Squaxin Island Tribe noted concerns with the difficulty in scheduling discussions for projects in the South Sound. No projects in South Sound is unacceptable, and the Tribe believes more support is needed in that region.
* Stacy will work on breaking out the project inventory by subbasin, to enable the committee to identify gaps. She can schedule the project workgroup meeting to have dedicated time to subbasins.
* Project ideas proposed for further consideration:
  + Pierce County acquires flood-prone properties from willing landowners to reduce property damage during flood events. Funding is limited and demand is high, but from 2016-2018, Pierce County decommissioned about 30 wells county-wide, including a small number near Rocky Bay and School House Creek. Wells are decommissioned to protect the aquifer from surface water influence. The committee may consider tracking decommissioned wells as part of an adaptive management strategy.
  + Several committee members expressed interest in using reclaimed water for stream augmentation with existing infrastructure (where pipes cross streams) like gravel pits or stormwater ponds.
    - Potential MAR challenges in gravel pits: existing reclamation plans; willingness of owner to participate; gravel pits can dewater a stream—would want to use gravel pits that are a bit upland, close enough to divert water from the stream.
    - Ecology NPDES nutrient general permit could be an incentive for reclaimed water projects.
    - KPUD supports Kingston White Horse Golf Course reclaimed water project (in project inventory). Stacy will connect with Kitsap County and the Suquamish Tribe to discuss further details.
    - Mason County is supportive of reclaimed water projects; Randy Neatherlin has identified an owner interested in a reclaimed water project for their riverside gravel pit (owner has a reclamation plan that includes water storage).
    - KPUD has identified a stormwater pond in the Silverdale Water District at the headwaters of two streams that could be used for infiltration (which would help maintain the stormwater pond infrastructure). The project has a lot of support but lacks funding.
  + The City of Bainbridge Island owns Johnson Farm property but leases to agriculture users. The City has identified two potential projects on this property (included in project inventory).
  + The committee discussed potential for projects Big Beef Creek. Burt noted this area would not be suitable for aquifer storage and water would be more likely to runoff than infiltrate. However, there could be potential for stream augmentation.
  + Mason County is working to get residents of Evergreen Mobile Home Park onto the public water system and retire individual wells.
  + Kitsap County proposed considering beaver dam analogues (BDA) in the peninsula’s low linear wetlands with streams running through them to take advantage of natural topography and systems. These low areas are not useful for home building or timber. As such, the County could start acquiring those areas through acquisition, easements, or transfers of development rights (TDR), providing value to that land for property owners. Kitsap County staff or consultants could review these geographic areas and try to ID projects.
  + Pierce County is looking into an opportunity with potential for wetland restoration in the headwaters of Minter Creek. The County is considering applying for Streamflow Restoration Grant funding for the land acquisition. The Great Peninsula Conservancy is potentially interested in partnering to take over ownership of land once acquired.
  + Pierce County is also considering a project to remove fish passage barriers and restore habitat on a private parcel for tributary to Purdy Creek. This project could offer some floodplain reconnection which would provide benefit. The project workgroup expressed mixed support for fish barrier removal projects.
  + There is a possible project near the Port Orchard airport that the Squaxin Island Tribe would like some help with. Ecology staff will do an initial review of what we know to do determine if the committee wants to further explore the project.
* Recommendations on narrowing down list of projects:
  + Brief descriptions of projects in the inventory would help to narrow the list down as committee members will then have a better sense whether the project is appropriate for streamflow planning.
  + Shift conceptual projects to a different sheet in the inventory (i.e., the project inventory is for projects that have a location, description, and project sponsor).
  + With help from committee, categorize projects as: conceptual, planning stage, feasibility stage, pre-construction stage. Consultant review would differ depending on the stage of project and data available.
  + Stacy and Bob pulled in projects from the Salmon Recovery 4-year Work Plans and NTAs; could solicit help from those familiar with these plans (i.e., Lead Entities) to help remove projects that do not have a streamflow component from the inventory. Stacy will discuss with DFW.
  + Remove projects that could not be permitted (e.g., fish barrier removal) because WDFW and Suquamish would object.
  + Committee members should do a ‘red flag’ / ‘no-go’ review and flag the projects your entities would not support.
  + Use the “Notes” field in project inventory for qualitative criteria (e.g., “project needs a lot more work;” “no willing landowner).
  + Grey out projects that might be fully funded or on the shoreline (may not have streamflow benefit).
  + DFW could help review intensively monitored watershed (IMW) projects from the Hood Canal workplan.
  + Break out projects by basin / geographic area (existing column available in inventory spreadsheet, but not filled out for all projects); committee members could then focus on the projects in their geographic area. Create separate sheets for each subbasin.
  + Need to track project implementation into the future (including the amount of water coming from project). Build in flexibility to bring on additional projects into the future if needed. Include general language in the project list to allow the committee to be opportunistic about projects that arise in the future.
* How can technical consultants help?
  + HDR could screen proposed gravel pit MAR sites and work to develop an inventory of other potential gravel pit / MAR projects. Note that if a gravel pit is not good for infiltration, it could still be good for storage.
  + HDR could create a GIS webmap layer for projects to see how they align with subbasins. HDR will look at projects by region to ensure all regions have projects in the inventory. Note – there may not be enough information for some projects in the inventory to put them on the map. For next project workgroup meeting – hold time for regional sub-groups to meet or review project list by region.
  + Review stormwater plans.

# Public Comment

No public comment.

# Action Items for Committee Members

* **Next meeting**: Thursday, March 5, Kitsap County Commissioner’s Chambers, Port Orchard, 9:30AM-2:30PM (estimated).
* **Before next meeting:** 
  + Review revised subbasin memo and growth projections memo that Ecology will distribute.
  + Narrow down (circle, star or cross out) the committee’s brainstormed list of (1) policy/regulatory considerations, (2) adaptive management, and (3) climate change ideas to identify which items are valuable to continue talking about/further define.
    - For which ideas would you be willing to take on a leadership role?
    - For which ideas would you be willing to bring forward a proposal (as an individual or with a team) to have committee time dedicated for discussion?
    - Identify those items that are red flags/ would cause you to not approve the plan if you saw them included and that you do not want to spend committee time discussing.
  + Review project inventory and do a ‘red flag’ / ‘no-go’ review, flagging the projects your entities would not support.
  + Send gravel pit project ideas to Stacy for technical consultant review.
  + Paul Pickett to send Pierce County GIS file (County-owned surface water management parcels) to HDR. Nate Daniel to send Great Peninsula Conservancy’s GIS file (trust lands) to HDR.
  + If Mason County wants to bring forward more information on the USDA method for calculating consumptive use, they should distribute it prior to the March meeting, and present it at the meeting.

# Action Items for Ecology and Consultants

* Ecology will share with the committee:
  + A document outlining consumptive use methodology, by WRIA.
  + PDF of the Committee Brochure document with printing instructions.
  + PEW Growth Projections Technical Memo.
  + Revised Sub-basin Delineations Technical Memo.
  + Technical Progress Memo (discuss at March meeting).
* Ecology will put the brainstormed list of policy/regulatory considerations for all committees on Box at least 2 weeks before next meeting.
* HDR to incorporate GIS files from Great Peninsula Conservancy (trust lands) and Pierce County (County-owned surface water management parcels) into GIS webmap.
* Stacy will send a doodle poll to schedule the next project workgroup meeting.
* HDR will begin screening (e.g., look for existing reclamation plan, get DNR data, review size and scale of site, etc.) proposed gravel pit MAR sites discussed during meeting and work to develop an inventory of other potential gravel pit / MAR projects. Identify regulatory hurdles and costs.
* Stacy will work with staff and consultants on refining the project inventory.