

SUMMARY OF ORAL TESTIMONY FROM 10-12-04 HEARING ON WRIA 18 PLAN

Concerns about science used:	Staff response:
TetraTech buildout study (using groundwater model) assumed 10% less irrigation but didn't reduce amount withdrawn from River	The modelers were contacted by staff and assured us the omission was in the report, not the study. The following addition was made to the report: <u>"No changes were made to Dungeness River diversions within the numerical model. Reduction of irrigation diversions by 10 percent were accounted for in the reporting of river flows in the postprocessing after the model runs.</u>
Body of literature used in planning doesn't include Bob Crittenden's white paper on impacts to streamflow from development	This document was never published, but was superseded in 2003 by TetraTech modeling of buildout
City of Sequim still taking water out of Dungeness; see Nov. 2000 Water Comp Plan	This is known and referenced in the Plan in Sections 3.1.3 and 3.1.4, along with several references to their 2000 Water Comp Plan
Serious underestimations of water use by City of Sequim (and others?)	Sources used by Entrix include jurisdictions and Depts. of Health and Ecology
The amount of water used by exempt wells is negligible	Relative to stable streamflows on the order of several cfs, this appears true, but the cumulative effect of many wells can be significant when they are in continuity with a stream whose flow drops in the dry season
Consider WA State Groundwater Assn. white paper on Instream Flows and Exempt Wells	Describes industry position (rather than scientific information or data); considered a draft according to Keith Winter
Consider increase in shallow aquifer from septic return	This is done in all hydrogeologic studies used
Concerns about recommendations:	Staff response:
Exempt wells are a property right and shouldn't be limited	State law does not grant property owners the automatic right to drill an exempt well
Housing prices are going up; plan will drive land values up further and be detrimental to growth	Growth is continuing (and increasing?) despite increasing land costs; Plan provides for resource protection as growth occurs
Recommendations should emphasize "effective recycling" of water	It does with more examples than warrant listing here
County already has too many regulations; don't need more burden	County role in water management is inevitable if goals are to be met

Less than 5000 gpd would make it hard for small farmers to get started	See Staff Report
Metering elements will evolve into requirements for all, then fines and/or fees will follow	DQ Plan (1994) had voluntary metering elements and there are none metered to date
Don't forbid people on a water system from developing their own well	Water systems need reliable customers and effective
Piping irrigation ditches has caused "problems"	An EIS was prepared for the irrigators' conservation plan; impacts are known
Don't trade away exempt wells for County permit process for community wells	See Staff Report
Don't give up anything without Ecology's commitment to giving out water rights	See Staff Report
Instream flows are too high, resulting in inability to get water rights	See Staff Report
Keep the dams in the Elwha because they recharge the aquifer	The dams are underlain by bedrock, and bedrock aquifers are rarely reliable as a major water source
Recommendations in Chap. 3 should be subbasin-specific	Recommendations are either WRIA-wide or subbasin-specific in the Plan
Don't "take water from existing rights" for new development	Language not found (A repeated strategy involves serving new development by existing water rights, and expanding them)
Biggest waster of water is PA (since treated wastewater disposal is salt water)	The Plan says all jurisdictions who discharge wastewater should study the feasibility of reuse
Concerns about implementation:	Staff response:
Potential conflict between water supply and building permit requirements (like in JeffCo now)	True; implementation phase and code development are key opportunities to avoid this
Will set precedent that will spread to other areas in County	Plan only addresses issues unique to east and/or west WRIA 18
Concerns about the process:	Staff response:
Steve Marble asked to leave DRMT about 1995	Not relevant to this process; DRMT has a recorded history of formally requesting involvement by Realtors and others (by Martha and then by Steve)
Steve Tharinger should recuse himself from Board approval process due to involvement in plan development	Not an issue according to prosecuting attorney opinion

Need to integrate WRIA 18 Plan and Comp Plan	Ongoing
Need professional help for complicated tasks ahead	IGs and teams will know when they need assistance
Major water users have not signed on	Outreach and technical worksessions are planned for discussion of their concerns
Plan should be reviewed by "Freeholders Commission"	Legislature determined 2514 process
Need to do environmental impact analysis, including economic impact analysis	Determination of Significance on the Plan has been filed; Rule process will include economic impact analysis
Include public comment in Plan document	Will be considered

Comments in support:

- Supports balance of document (people, growth, and fish)
- Supports conserving water, cleaning up bay, monitoring water systems know how much water is used, conserving irrigation water
- Groundwater reserve addresses problems with water rights; Plan says Ecology "shall" resume processing water right applications
- Gives us local control of management strategies
- It's a planning document, not regulations, so approve it as written and let Phase 4 address specific concerns raised
- Open up to lawsuits if don't approve
- Avoids federal, state, or court systems telling us what to do
- Plan has built-in ability to be amended as new info becomes available
- If remanded, maintain the process and say what is necessary for approval; critics should help construct amendments
- Our land values are cheap, so don't sell our heritage cheaply
- Local natural resource economics issues point to need for comprehensive plan (logging, shellfish, salmon)
- Looks at big picture and long term
- Will make it so we can attract newcomers in long term, too
- If remanded, need to have a deadline and include Ecology in discussion of instream flow levels