

Island County Water Resource Management Plan

2514 Watershed Planning - - - Adopted June 20, 2005

Appendix A: 2514 Watershed Planning

Island County Water Resource Advisory Committee

The Island County Water Resources Advisory Committee (WRAC) was formed in 1999 by the Board of Island County Commissioners (Resolution # C-50-99, R-25-99). Its purpose is to develop and oversee the implementation of a comprehensive water resource program for the county. The WRAC facilitates consensus decision-making concerning water resource management and salmon recovery projects in Island County.

The WRAC is comprised of twelve appointed citizen members (voting), and is supported by citizen, municipal, county, state and federal technical advisors (non-voting). Voting members represent a wide range of water resource interests and are appointed by the three Island County Commissioners (four WRAC members from each Commissioner District).

WRAC Charter Mission Statement

The water resources of Island County must be managed and protected to ensure their sustainable use, while protecting habitat and environmental and human health.

2514 Watershed Planning

“2514 Watershed Planning” refers to the Watershed Management Act (ESHB 2514) passed by State Legislature in 1998. The Watershed Management Act provides a framework for local citizens, interested groups and government organizations to collaboratively identify and solve water-related issues in each Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) of the State. Island County represents WRIA 6.

State funding was provided to form local “Planning Units” to implement the Watershed Management Act. In 2001, the Board of Island County Commissioners accepted Watershed Planning grant funding (Resolution # C-89-00, R-44-00). The formal Planning Unit for Island County’s Water Resource Management Plan included the Island County WRAC, the Cities of Langley and Oak Harbor, the Town of Coupeville, the State Department of Ecology. Governmental agencies actively involved were the Whidbey Island and Snohomish Conservation Districts, and the State Department of Health. Technical agency advisors included Island County government and State Departments of Agriculture, Transportation, Natural Resources, and Fish and Wildlife. The Island County Health Department provided staffing support.

Planning Units are charged with developing Watershed Plans that provide strategies for increasing water supplies which may include, but are not limited to, increasing water supplies through water conservation, water reuse, the use of reclaimed water and voluntary water transfers (RCW 90.82.070). The objective is to supply water in sufficient quantities to ensure future supplies are available for agriculture, energy production and population and economic growth under the requirements of the State Growth Management Act (1990) and to satisfy the minimum instream flows for fish.

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Water Resource Management Plan Development

The goals of Island County's 2514 Watershed Planning process are to determine the availability of the county's groundwater resources and to comprehensively ensure safe and adequate water supplies. Surface water, aquatic habitat, and instream flow issues are also addressed. Island County's "Water Resource Management Plan" is a dynamic working document for ongoing and future water management.

Island County's Planning Unit has conducted its 2514 Watershed Planning efforts with much assistance from the local community. The WRAC, a citizen advisory group, was the lead entity in developing and promoting the Water Resource Management Plan. Public input and involvement in Plan development was designed to keep citizens, community groups and stakeholders informed of the watershed planning process and to provide opportunities for input along the way. Conducting public outreach during all phases of Plan development was important for reflecting the desires and values of Island County residents. Public comments were addressed and incorporated within the Water Resource Management Plan. SEPA Review in accordance with the State Environmental Policy Act was integrated in this task (see "SEPA Documentation," Appendix J).

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Island County Water Resource Advisory Committee

CHARTER

Initially Issued March, 2000

Revised December, 2001

Mission Statement

The water resources of Island County must be managed and protected in such a way as to ensure their sustainable use while protecting habitat, environment, and human health.

Statement of Purpose

The purpose of the Island County Water Resource Advisory Committee (WRAC) is to develop and oversee the implementation and evaluation of a comprehensive water resource program for Island County. The WRAC will function as the representative watershed planning unit that will be the organization used to facilitate consensus decision-making concerning future water resource management in Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 06. The WRAC will also encourage public awareness, education and involvement in water related issues. *Island County Resolutions C-50-99 (May 3, 1999) and C-89-00 (September 18, 2000)*

Structure

The Island County Water Resource Advisory Committee consists of the following members:

- ◆ Citizen Component – twelve voting members
Four members from each of the county's distinct geographic areas:
North Whidbey, South/Central Whidbey and Camano Island.
- ◆ Technical Advisors – non-voting members
 - One or more representatives of Island County Health, Public Works and Planning Departments, Whidbey Island Conservation District, Snohomish Conservation District, and WSU Cooperative Extension;
 - One representative each from the City of Oak Harbor, City of Langley and Town of Coupeville;
 - One representative of each local Native American Tribes (Tulalip, Skagit Systems Cooperative, Point No Point Tribe) claiming jurisdiction in Island County; and
 - One representative each from the following state agencies: Departments of Health, Transportation, Ecology, Natural Resources, Agriculture, Fish and Wildlife, and the Puget Sound Action Team.
- ◆ Terms
The initial appointments of the voting members shall be for staggered terms. Three terms (one from each geographic district) shall expire in one year, three (one from each geographic district) in two years and three (one from each geographic district) in three years. Initial members shall be assigned

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these terms at random. After these initial terms, all terms shall be for four years.

◆ Subcommittees

Subcommittees can be created by the advisory committee at any time a need for this structure is deemed necessary. The subcommittee will remain operational for the duration of time that they are needed. When they become obsolete they can be dissolved at the discretion of the WRAC.

IV. Goals/Objectives for Water Resource Planning

Water Resource Planning

Goal:

To address water resource management and planning issues in WRIA 06.

Objectives:

1. Determine the water resource situation in Island County and recommend program actions to address that situation;
2. Function as the planning unit for 2514 Watershed Management Planning; (RCW 90.82/ESHB 2514)
3. Provide guidance and oversight to Nonpoint Pollution Prevention Watershed Planning (WAC 400-12); and
4. Investigate alternative sources of water and new water conservation and sanitation methods.

Tasks:

1. Reviewing existing water resource plans: Groundwater Management Program, North Whidbey Nonpoint Pollution Prevention Action Plan, Central/South Whidbey Nonpoint Pollution Prevention Action Plan, Comprehensive Stormwater and Flood Hazard Management Plan, and DOE Stormwater Manual;
2. Monitoring implementation of said plans as well as similar future plans and programs dealing with surface and groundwater (i.e. Camano Nonpoint Pollution Prevention Action Plan);
3. Recommending management of, and improvement to, the plans and programs;
4. Coordinating efforts with other water resource management activities in Island County; and
5. Conducting public meetings and educational forums.

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Salmon Recovery

Goals:

1. To oversee, review and recommend salmon recovery/habitat restoration efforts per 2496 Salmon Recovery Act (RCW 75.46.060).
2. To provide oversight as needed to Island County's Salmon Recovery Program.

Objective:

Include strategies to protect and restore ecological functions for healthy salmon stocks.

Tasks:

1. Review Salmon TAG's Limiting Factors Report for Island County and updates.
2. Solicit, review and rank salmon habitat project list on a cycle determined by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board. and submit recommendations.
3. Provide assistance in the development of the Island County Salmon Recovery Plan.

Marine Resources

Goal:

The committee will work with the MRC to assure that the county's nearshore and marine resources are adequately addressed in Island County's Water Resource Management Program/Plan

Objectives:

1. Coordinate and collaborate with Island County's Marine Resource Committee (MRC).
2. Advocate for the county's unique nearshore environment.

AMENDMENT OF THE CHARTER

This Charter may be amended by consensus of the members of the WRAC.

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DRAFT STANDARDS AND OPERATING PROCEDURES

I. Procedures

The WRAC meets monthly on the first Thursday of the month. Meeting notices with agenda, time and location are posted in local newspapers two weeks prior to each meeting date. Agendas, minute and support materials will be sent to the advisory committee members a week prior to the meeting.

II. Decision Making

The committee has chosen to use the consensus process for making decisions for all the issues brought before them which requires that a decision be made.

Definition of Consensus **for Island County Water Resource Planning is defined in terms of agreement along a continuum. Committee Members may register the degree of their agreement with the language in any of the first six columns:**

Endorse	Endorse with a minor point of contention	Agree, with reservation	Abstain	Stand aside	Formal disagreement but will go with the majority	Block
"I like it"	"Basically I like it"	"I can live with it"	"I have no opinion"	"I don't like this but I don't want to hold up the group"	"I want my disagreement to be noted in writing but I'll support the decision"	"I veto this proposal"

(Adapted from "Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making," 1996)

The last (shaded) column on the right side of the continuum is not considered acceptable for consensus in this process. However, anything to the left could be considered "agreement by consensus."

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Conduct for Collaborative Decision Making

The WRAC agrees to the following points of conduct for collaboration on difficult and complex decision-making:

1. The purpose of WRAC discussions is to find agreement between interests;
2. Discussions of substance and development of solutions will focus on interests and concerns rather than positions and demands;
3. WRAC members will act in “good faith” in all aspects of the process. This includes early disclosure of issues or problems, following through on commitments, sharing information on matters related to discussion, and characterizing caucus viewpoints fully and accurately;
4. WRAC members will listen carefully to each other to understand each participant’s views and interests about a topic. Members will ask questions for clarification and make statements that attempt to educate or explain an interest or issue, rather than taking positions;
5. WRAC members commit to fully explore issues, searching for solutions in a problem-solving atmosphere, fully commit to listening carefully and check rumors with the facilitator prior to making any decision to act;
6. In order to facilitate the broadest possible consideration of options and solutions, all suggestions and offers will be regarded as tentative until a full and clear decision is made;
7. WRAC Members will not make attacks or characterizations directed at people or organizations;
8. WRAC members will make a good faith effort to accurately characterize the process and substance of the planning process to their constituents, the public, and the media and will accurately characterize the interests of their constituents to other members of the WRAC;
9. WRAC members will not agree to any provision of action for which they are unwilling to seek the concurrence of those they represent;
10. WRAC members will raise with the Committee any perceived violations of this Charter or of “good faith” discussions.

Authorized Spokesperson

WRAC communication with the Island County Board of Commissioners as a group, or individually, shall be through the Chair, or in the absence of the Chair, the Vice-Chair.

Articles written for the media about issues pertaining to Water Resources will be drafted by the county staff and submitted to the WRAC for review, revision and approval.