

**Citizens Advisory Committee Public Information Session on Nisqually Water Planning
October 11, 2018 6:00-8:00pm
Nisqually Indian Tribe Natural Resources Conference Room**

Summary of Comments:

Present: Phyllis Farrell, Lois Ward, Ed Kenney, Marjorie Smith, Bob Smith, Howard Glastetter, Karelina Resnick, Ben Dennis, Jeaneil Thomas, Glen Thomas, Emily McCartan (staff)

Guests: George Walter (Nisqually Indian Tribe), Kevin Hansen (Thurston County), Tom Kantz (Pierce County)

The sense of the CAC is that the most important priority for water planning is salmon recovery and ensuring adequate streamflow for fish populations. Other water uses, both new permit-exempt wells and larger scale development or industry and mining, should come second to this priority. Attendees also hope that the PU will be thinking about the context of climate change and other broad ecological issues affecting water quantity and quality beyond exempt wells. Glacier and snowpack loss, deforestation (including impacts of forest clearing for wildfire prevention), mining and industrial uses of water, and the long-term impacts of habitat loss should all be considered in watershed planning. Members noted that exempt wells are a relatively small portion of the region's overall water budget (compared with irrigation, large well systems, and other uses) and hope that consideration will be given to these other major uses in water planning for salmon recovery.

Questions discussed:

- Is the PU looking at the potential impacts of new development on existing wells?
- Is metering being considered? How do you determine how much water needs to be mitigated without monitoring withdrawals by metering? What are the major concerns expressed in opposition to metering?
- How many streams in the Nisqually basin have established instream flow rules that are adequate for salmon recovery? How will these be monitored and enforced vis-à-vis new development and wells?
- What mitigation strategies is the PU considering? Who is responsible for implementing them?
- How does the Yelm *Foster* decision impact the PU and exempt wells?
- If Thurston County adopts the proposed expansion of mining operations, how will that factor into water availability and streamflows?
- What happens to County CWA fees? What fee structure alternatives is the PU considering?
- Is it advisable to pursue drilling deep-aquifer wells to mitigate surface streamflows? What unintended consequences for this and other basins result from deeper drilling?

Suggestions for further research:

- In the lower Nisqually, some homeowners have added connections to Lacey city water but have also kept their old wells online for outdoor watering.
- There is a currently untapped artesian well discharging into the Nisqually near the Riverbend Campground.
- Address stormwater runoff from I-5 and Highway 101 as a potential source to capture and infiltrate instead of flowing untreated into the Sound.