

REGIONAL WATER SUPPLY PLANNING



Regional Water Supply Planning

Local, state, and tribal partners working together to develop lawful pragmatic tools to address water supply planning issues.

The regional water supply planning process is an unprecedented undertaking to develop substantive technical information and appropriate planning efforts to address major water resource management issues in the King County region. It is a multi-stakeholder effort; key participants include King County, the City of Seattle, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, the Cascade Water Alliance, three state agencies, environmental organizations, several local governments and water utilities, and representatives from the business community. This group of stakeholders produced a Planning Framework Summary on October 31, 2005 that outlines a multi-year schedule for addressing compelling water resource issues, including:

- assuring adequate water supplies to meet population and economic growth
- evaluating and prioritizing instream flow needs for fish
- incorporating climate change impacts on both water supplies and instream flows
- addressing public health and resource management problems associated with failing systems and exempt wells
- adding the use of reclaimed water as a feasible source of supply for nonpotable purposes.



Each of these topics, and several others, will be addressed by technical committees that are meeting regularly to develop information and recommendations to be considered for inclusion in a formal planning process.

Who is participating?

The planning process was initiated under a February 2005 Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) on water resource and water supply planning between King County and the Cascade Water Alliance (Cascade) – a group of eight local governments and special purpose districts in King County. The members of Cascade are the cities of Bellevue, Kirkland, Issaquah, Redmond, and Tukwila, and the Covington Water District, the Skyway Water and Sewer District, and the Sammamish Plateau Sewer and Water District. Cascade provides wholesale water supplies to more than 300,000 residents of King County.

Pursuant to the MOU, the King County Executive invited a large group of stakeholders to participate on a Scoping Committee. All of the invitees chose to participate. The entities represented included the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, three state agencies (Departments of Ecology, Health, and Fish and Wildlife), City of Seattle, City of Auburn, King County Council, Tacoma Public Utilities, Cedar River Water and Sewer District, Lakehaven Utility District, Woodinville Water and Sewer District, Seattle-King County Public Health, Shared Strategy for Puget Sound, Washington



Environmental Council, and King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks and Cascade Water Alliance. The Committee was chaired by Louise Miller (former King County Councilmember, former state legislator, and former water district commissioner) and facilitated by Dan Silver, former Deputy Director of the Department of Ecology, and Kaleen Cottingham, former Pollution Control Hearings Board member and former Deputy Commissioner of Public Lands for the state Department of Natural Resources.

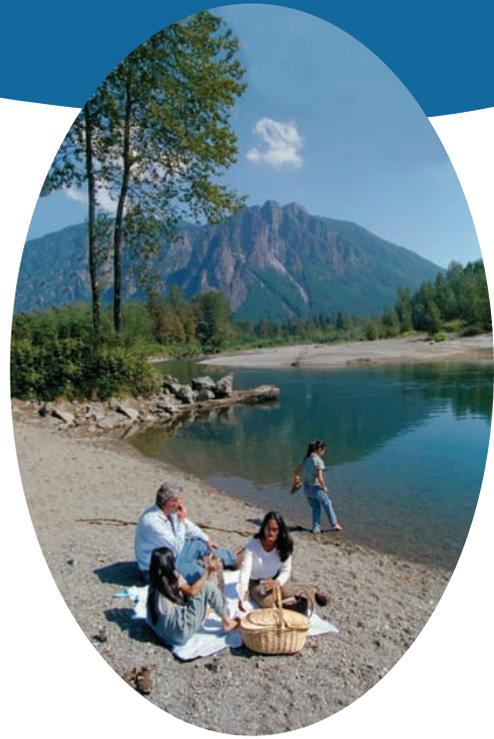
The Scoping Committee members have agreed to continue as members of a Coordinating Committee to oversee the next phase of the process. This committee's membership has been expanded to add a business community representative, another environmental organization, a Pierce County Councilmember, and an elected official from the membership of the Suburban Cities Association. The Scoping Committee also selected a subset of the broader Coordinating Committee to serve as an Executive Committee, whose members are the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Department of Ecology, King County, City of Seattle, City of Auburn, and Cascade Water Alliance.

What is the expected outcome of the planning process?

Each of the technical committees will produce reports and recommendations on elements that could be included in a water planning process. For example, King County and Cascade Water Alliance expect to use the technical work to plan under the Public Water System Coordination Act and to incorporate reclaimed water as a water supply alternative in King County. The application may be broader, depending on recommendations and agreements produced by the technical and coordinating committees.

How will the King County process relate to broader regional water planning?

There is currently no regional water planning process. Some of the technical issues – e.g., demand forecast, supply options, and climate change – are broader issues, and will not be limited to King County. Technical committee work on these topics will be linked with other groups or processes already engaged, such as the Central Puget Sound Water Suppliers Forum, which is taking the lead for developing a regional demand forecast and analyzing supply alternatives.



How is the process being funded?

King County, City of Seattle, Cascade Water Alliance, and Department of Ecology are all contributing to funding the process. In addition, the Central Puget Sound Water Suppliers Forum is funding work on the regional demand forecast and analysis of municipal water supply alternatives.

For additional information

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