

**RECORD OF THE PROCEEDINGS
SKAGIT COUNTY BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
Wednesday, June 2, 1999**

8:00 a.m. – 8:30 a.m.	Work Session – Public Works Projects (Sauk Conference Room, 1111 Cleveland, Mount Vernon).
*T 9:00 a.m. – 9:30 a.m.	Proclamation – National Trails Day in Skagit County, June 5, 1999.
10:00 a.m. – 11:00 a.m.	<i>Executive Session – Personnel, Litigation and Land Acquisition.</i>
11:00 a.m. – Noon	Discussion – Draft Summary of Consultation for Recommended Lower Skagit River Instream Flows.

The Skagit County Board of Commissioners met in regular session on Wednesday, June 2, 1999, with Commissioners Ted W. Anderson, Harvey Wolden and Robert Hart present.

PROCLAMATION – NATIONAL TRAILS DAY IN SKAGIT COUNTY, JUNE 5, 1999.

Commissioner Hart read the Proclamation for National Trails Day in Skagit County, June 5, 1999. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the Proclamation and read, and Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion. The Proclamation was approved unanimously.

Commissioner Anderson cautioned about the need for trail users to consider adjacent property owners when using trails.

Jeri Krampetz, Pacific National Trails Association, thanked the Board for their support of National Trails Day. She explained that there are 75 miles of the PN~~T~~A Trail located in Skagit County. She detailed the exact location of the trail, stating that the Skagit County portion of the trail is the most scenic part of the *entire trail*

Mike Woodmansee, County Administrator, explained that existing trails are being linked, and that logging roads are being utilized in this effort.

DISCUSSION – DRAFT SUMMARY OF CONSULTATION FOR RECOMMENDED LOWER SKAGIT RIVER INSTREAM FLOWS.

Robert B. Powell, Public Utility District No. 1 Special Projects Coordinator, reviewed the history of the Memorandum of Agreement that was signed in 1996, explaining that the agreement signatories included the Tribes, Skagit County, State Department of Fish & Wildlife, Anacortes, and Public Utility District No. 1. He detailed the hiring of a consultant for instream flow studies of the Skagit River, including the estuarine area.

Mr. Powell stated that the original contractor was Cascades Environmental Services, which has since been purchased by Duke Engineering. Pete Rittmueller conducted the studies and has analyzed the data received. He discussed the numerous meetings that were held with the Tribes, Department of Ecology, and Department of Fish & Wildlife, and the consensus that was reached wherein minimum instream flows were recommended to the Department of Ecology under the Memorandum of Agreement. Mr. Powell stated that the parties were interested in keeping the available water for use in Skagit County, and not ever risking over a 50 year period any other municipality outside of Skagit County looking to Skagit County to fulfill their water needs

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Mr. Powell explained the Recommended Flows for the Lower Skagit River Based on IFIM and Estuary Studies Measured at USGS St. 12200500 Skagit River near Mount Vernon.

Mr. Powell stated that all permits would be processed after these instream flows have been reviewed in great detail. Mr. Powell went on to explain, at Commissioner Hart's query, the cubic foot per second (CFS) average of 646,000 gallons per day, and the combined water rights for 50 years for the City of Anacortes and P.U.D. amounting to 153,000 CFS. He stated that the average flow over the year on the Skagit River at Mount Vernon runs around 18,000 CFS, which is far less than the 10% target. He stated that these levels must be established before proceeding any further.

Mr. Powell commended the Commissioners, the P.U.D. Board, and the Anacortes City Council on stepping up to see what the future would hold. He stated that instream flows as set in this document protect the Chinook salmon from further deterioration.

Mr. Powell stated that it is economically unfeasible for any water purveyor to supply a pipeline to Skagit County to transfer water out of the County.

Commissioner Hart asked if Mr. Powell was looking for a letter of concurrence from the Board, or some other indication of approval by the Board.

Mr. Powell stated that he would like the signatories to the Memorandum of Agreement to provide letters of concurrence to present to the Department of Ecology. He stated that this could be done by motion, or a letter from Mr. Woodmansee or directly from the Board.

Commissioner Anderson indicated that he has many questions as there is nothing taken into allowance for his district. He expressed his concerns for seeing the whole picture before he would agree to sign anything. He cautioned that if this is a contiguous aquifer, there is the need to proceed slowly.

Pete Rittmueller, Duke Engineering, spoke to technical, political and regulatory issues to be dealt with. He stated that his company was hired to come up with the technical information that policymakers and decisionmakers could use to make wise choices.

Mr. Rittmueller discussed the Skagit estuary and its biological impact to the area. He explained the technical aspects of the study of the lower Skagit River instream flows. Mr. Rittmueller reviewed several overhead slides of the technical findings

He next discussed the main stem of the river, and the instream Flow Incremental Method (IFIM). Results included that the peak habitat of the main stem is for juvenile rearing and that only two species rear for a long time in the Skagit River, those being steelhead and Chinook.

Mr. Rittmueller reviewed the recommended flow results.

A discussion ensued on the future water use for residential/commercial areas, and that there will be 90% of the flow left for other areas.

Mr. Powell spoke regarding the major economic impact of lack of water for irrigation, which is a scenario that must be considered. He stated that the results of this consultation confirm that the permits/applications pending before the Department of Ecology can now be processed at the end of the year.

A discussion ensued on the movement to do away with exempt wells, and it was determined that this study reveals that there are no reasons to support such a movement in Skagit County's watersheds, as the exempt wells affected would be insignificant.

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Commissioner Anderson spoke regarding his mistrust of the Indian Tribes and the eventuality that people in his district may be precluded from building houses or putting in their own water systems if the Tribes control the entire water system in Skagit County. He also commented that the City of Anacortes is now allocated with four times the amount of water they need, and are positioning themselves to sell water out of the County. He stated that it should be clear that everyone in Skagit County has the water they need before any party can sell water out of the County.

Mr. Powel stated that he cannot speak to the Tribes' intentions, but that in his opinion it is better to have the Tribes at the table than not.

Commissioner Anderson countered that the Tribes would have never signed this agreement if all of the wells in his district had been exempted.

A discussion ensued regarding the provision of water to rural areas of the County.

Commissioner Hart stated that it would behoove the Board to support this study to get the water rights issued that are currently pending.

MISCELLANEOUS.

1. Stephanie Wood, Personnel Director, presented for the Board's consideration a Separation Agreement with Robert Porter, an employee of the Prosecuting Attorney's Office who recently resigned. Commissioner Hart moved to approve the Separation Agreement as presented by Ms. Wood. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion, which passed unanimously (**Contract No. 04436**)
2. Staff presented an Out-of-State Travel Request for Mike Woodmansee, County Administrator, to attend the Harvard University Senior Executives in State and Local Government Program, in Boston, Massachusetts, June 13 through July 2, 1999. The cost of the travel and tuition is \$9,000, including airfare, of which Mr. Woodmansee will be paying \$3,500 personally. Commissioner Wolden moved to approve the Out-of-State Travel Request as presented by Staff. Commissioner Hart seconded the motion, which passed with a unanimous vote.

ADJOURNMENT.

Chairman Anderson made a motion to adjourn the proceedings. Commissioner Wolden seconded the motion and it passed unanimously.

**BOARD OF COMMISSIONERS
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**


Ted W. Anderson, Chairman


Harvey Wolden, Commissioner


Robert Hart, Commissioner



ATTEST:

Patti J. Chambers

Patti J. Chambers, Clerk of the Board
Skagit County Board of Commissioners