

From: Doug Hale [REDACTED]
Sent: Thursday, July 05, 2012 12:36 PM
To: Wessel, Ann (ECY)
Subject: WRIA 18

Ann,
I know you have been put in the difficult position of being the “front person” for the Department of Ecology and their Dungeness River In stream Flow Rule proposal. Having said that, I would like to voice my concern as a resident of the Dungeness Valley as well as being a Realtor who has sold property and hopes to continue to do so.

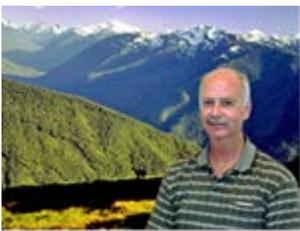
The rule as proposed will separate property into a world of “haves” and “have nots” Future sales of non-exempt property will be subject to a tax or “mitigation” fee that has yet been undetermined. There are many parcels of undeveloped properties that out of area people purchased with the idea of building a home in the future when they will be retiring. They purchased these lots knowing that water would be available to them either through a private well, a community well, or a public water system. I would expect these owners will be filing a class action law suit if the rule is adopted as written because in some cases, water may not be available to them. It is my understanding that Ecology has made no attempt to contact these owners, even though the information is readily available through the Clallam County Assessor’s Dept. As a taxpayer, I would be extremely unhappy about tax payer dollars being wasted on the defense of a flawed plan and negligence on the part of Ecology informing owners that there property may become worthless.

I am also concerned that there has been no outside study of the plan to check the “science” (remember historically the river has never flowed at the rate the rule is mandating) even though historically there have been salmon runs with much larger yields than currently seen. This suggests that outside forces are responsible for the depleted salmon numbers. Commercial fishing in the ocean, the practice of netting near the mouth of the river during the fall run (I have personal observed a trawler dragging a net in Dungeness Bay during last year’s fall run) and possibly environmental issues in the strait may be the cause of depleting numbers rather than the flow rate.

The firing of the economist who questioned the data smacks of a government entity that is trying to “pull one over on the public” and could also be seen as a direct threat to any Ecology employees who share our concerns about the validity of the study.

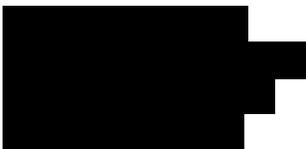
I hope Ecology will take another look at this proposal, and delay enactment until an outside source, agreed upon by not just the water users group, the tribe, and ecology, but Clallam County as well.

Thank you,
Doug Hale



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