



PORT GAMBLE S'KLALLAM TRIBE
NATURAL RESOURCES DEPARTMENT
31912 Little Boston Rd. NE – Kingston, WA 98346

July 9, 2012

Ann Wessel
Instream Flow Rule Lead
Department of Ecology
1440 10th St., Suite 102
Bellingham, WA 98225

RE: Comment on the water management rule for the Dungeness watershed, east WRIA 18

Dear Ann,

The Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribe is writing in support of the management rule for instream flows in the Dungeness watershed. We are all aware these flows are necessary for the integrity of the watershed as a whole, to meet the need of all water users including fish and wildlife. As one of the three S'Klallam Tribes with Treaty affirmed Usual and Accustomed hunting, fishing and gathering rights in this area, we have been working collaboratively with our colleagues to protect and recover resources, especially salmon, that we have depended on for millennia. Securing water flows has been and remains a critical need.

The Dungeness watershed has been a key focus for water management for many of us since, in particular, the Chelan pilot project in the 1990's. The Dungeness – Elwah Watershed Plan (WRIA 18) was completed in 2005. It is time for the instream flow rule to be completed. We have worked directly with the Department of Ecology on the WRIA 17 instream flow rule and indirectly through our related Tribes on other rules. None of the rules are perfect or provide what everyone desires in water quantity; however it is incumbent on the Washington State Department of Ecology to set the flows in rule to stop the loss of fish and habitat, and provide benchmarks for constructive restoration and sharing of this vital resource.

We look forward to your adoption of the rule. We further look forward to the many opportunities to implement the rule and restore flows as allowed.

Sincerely,

Paul McCollum
Natural Resources Director

Dave Fuller
Water Resources Manager