

From: Shirley Nixon [REDACTED]
Sent: Friday, June 29, 2012 9:41 AM
To: Wessel, Ann (ECY)
Cc: Nelson, Cynthia (ECY)
Subject: Comment on Dungeness Rule

This is one of several comments that I intend to submit on the proposed Dungeness Rule. I am sending it before submitting other comments because I would like Ecology to be able to consider the context of a number of comments submitted by others that essentially repeat the views of Clallam County resident Kaj Ahlburg on the issue of mitigation for new water rights in the basin.

In a June 21, 2011 email directed to "Dear Friends", Mr. Ahlburg urged recipients to attend last night's rule hearing, and he listed certain talking points for those desiring to comment. Among them:

"2. Commissioner McEntire has proposed a solution that, while not as good as abandoning the rule entirely (not very likely in the absence of a political change at the top of Ecology) would remove its most serious adverse effects on property owners and the local economy. This would involve the State of Washington, with money appropriated through its capital budget, purchasing the mitigation rights required by the rule from existing senior water rights holders and not charging individual home owners for domestic or garden watering use."

Mr. Ahlburg has espoused a similar view in a recent letter to the editor published in The Peninsula Daily News: that is, that the public and not new water users should bear the cost of providing mitigation for those who wish to expand their water use or develop land in the Dungeness Valley. In other words, Mr. Ahlburg supported spending taxpayer money (state dollars) to subsidize costs for newcomer junior water right holders so that they might enjoy, for free, the uninterrupted use of a scarce public resource: water.

Mr. Ahlburg's position on the mitigation provision in the Dungeness Rule is in striking contrast to his view on other government subsidies. In today's Peninsula Daily News is an article about yesterday's US Supreme Court Ruling on the constitutionality of the Affordable Care Act.

<http://www.peninsuladailynews.com/article/20120629/NEWS/306299986/peninsula-residents-disappointed-related-by-health-law-ruling> Mr. Ahlburg was an individual plaintiff in that lawsuit, reportedly because he objected to the ACA's provision that citizens must, by 2014, obtain health insurance coverage or pay a penalty. Expressing disappointment in the Supreme Court's ruling, he is quoted as saying:

"I believe the federal government should not have the power to make us buy health insurance or any other product. I don't believe we should be forced to do something simply because they want us to subsidize the cost for others."

I for one strongly disagree with Mr. Ahlburg's views that the public should pay for mitigation water on behalf of new water users in WRIA 18. And, it is puzzling to me why someone with such strong opposition to "government subsidies" would suggest to so many of his friends and neighbors that state-supplied mitigation is preferable to the terms of the proposed Dungeness Rule.

Thank you for considering my comments.

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