



Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians

Natural Resources Department

April 2, 2014

Governor Jay Inslee
Office of the Governor
PO Box 40002
Olympia, WA 98504-0002

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APR 14 2014

CLERK OF THE COURTS

Re: Washington's Water Quality Human Health Criteria

Dear Governor Inslee,

Washington State is currently poised to not only protect the health of its current citizens, but also those citizens of generations to come from exposure to toxic chemicals in water and fish. The Stillaguamish Tribe is particularly concerned because fish consumption has been an essential part of our culture since time immemorial. The Stillaguamish Tribe is strong in its belief that water quality standards, including the Human Health Criteria (HHC), must be protective of all of our people and need to be respectful of our treaty rights. Stillaguamish Tribal members should be able to consume traditional foods without fear of increasing our risk of cancer or other diseases from toxic chemicals.

The Stillaguamish Tribe would like to stress its desire to see fish consumption rates set at a level at least as high as the Oregon standard of 175 grams per day. Several tribes have recently documented their actual fish consumption rates using scientific protocols and outside peer review, and these studies have shown that Puget Sound tribes have rates that are much higher, despite suppression from the loss of fisheries resources. The Stillaguamish Tribe can attest to the idea of suppression as the tribe just recently started practicing its treaty right again, after decades of voluntarily postponing it to help build salmon runs. We felt that years of not practicing our culture would result in us losing it. Now, we are harvesting fish again and our culture is alive and vibrant, but fear of putting our members at undue risk as their fish consumption increases.

The Stillaguamish Tribe would also like to see the cancer risk maintained at its current rate of 10^{-6} (one-per-a-million). It would send the wrong message to all citizens of Washington State to raise the risk of cancer by ten-fold, especially as we commonly see how important it is to make fish a major part of our diets. The increased cancer risk would affect those that have a higher proportion of fish in their diets the most, namely tribes.

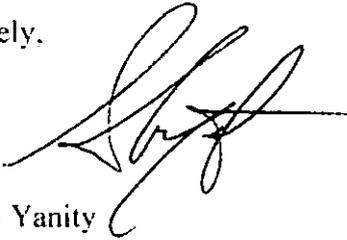
We recognize that achieving cleaner water will result in a substantial transition for businesses and municipalities. We also recognize that this may take some time to achieve. However, the way to

achievement is not by lowering standards. Compliance tools will provide flexibility for some, but progress in achieving cleaner water should take precedence and should be the priority.

The Stillaguamish Tribe appreciates the time and attention you have given to this issue. We will continue to support the State's efforts to complete the HHC rule by the end of 2014, and we will continue to support efforts to improve water quality and fish consumption rates for all residents of Washington State. This is not a time to waiver, but rather a time to act and we look forward to a complete fish consumption rate of no less than 175 grams per day and a cancer risk of 10^{-6} .

Thank you,

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'Shawn Yanity', with a long horizontal stroke extending to the right.

Shawn Yanity
Tribal Chair
Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians

Cc: Dennis McLerran, Region 10 Administrator, EPA
Maia Belton, Director, Washington Department of Ecology



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PO Box 277 • 3310 Smokey Point Drive
Arlington WA 98223-0277



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