



STATE OF WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

PO Box 47600 • Olympia, WA 98504-7600 • 360-407-6000

711 for Washington Relay Service • Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341

July 21, 2014

TO: David Schumacher, Director, Office of Financial Management
Dan Mason, Budget and Fiscal Director, Office of the State Treasurer

FROM: Tom Loranger, Water Resources Program, Department of Ecology 

SUBJECT: Updated Report on 500 Water Right Decisions in Fiscal Year 2014

In 2013, the Washington State Legislature passed the Operating Budget, 3ESSB 5034, with the following proviso:

(b) Of the amounts provided in (a) of this subsection, \$500,000 of the general fund--state appropriation for fiscal year 2015 is provided solely for processing water right permit applications only if the department of ecology issues at least five hundred water right decisions in fiscal year 2014, and if the department of ecology does not issue at least five hundred water right decisions in fiscal year 2014 the amount provided in this subsection shall lapse and remain unexpended. The department of ecology shall submit a report to the office of financial management and the state treasurer by June 30, 2014, that documents whether five hundred water right decisions were issued in fiscal year 2014.

The following text was also included in the budget proviso:

For the purposes of this subsection, applications that are voluntarily withdrawn by an applicant do not count towards the five hundred water right decision requirement. For the purposes of water budget-neutral requests under chapter 173-539A WAC, multiple domestic connections authorized within a single water budget-neutral decision are considered one decision for the purposes of this subsection.

As of June 30, 2014, Water Resources Program staff has made 713 water rights decisions based on the proviso language above.

The Water Resources Program also worked on 48 applications that were voluntarily withdrawn by the applicant, resulting in a total of 761 water right applications being taken out of the pending application line this fiscal year. During that same time period Ecology received 464 applications. However, consistent with the budget proviso, the water right decision totals below do not include withdrawn applications, and count multiple domestic connections authorized within a single water budget-neutral decision under WAC 173-539A as one decision.

Linda Steinmann
 Dan Mason
 July 21, 2014
 Page 2

For ease of reference, and consistent with another 2011 Operating Budget provision, Ecology posts information to the department's internet site that provides an ongoing accounting of water right applications received and acted on. The following two tables from that accounting show our tracking of the number of applications received, and the number of water right decisions made during fiscal year 2014.

Water Right Applications Received				Water Right Decisions Made			
Month Year	Change Applications	New Applications	Total	Month Year	Change Applications	New Applications	Total
2013				2013			
July, August, September	48	44	92	July, August, September	90	185	275
October, November, December	90	40	130	October, November, December	57	111	168
2014				2014			
January, February, March	57	46	103	January, February, March	62	61	123
April, May, June	98	41	139	April, May, June	70	77	147
Total	293	171	464	Total	279	434	713

If you have any questions regarding this report, please contact Tom Loranger at (360) 407-6602.

cc: Keith Phillips, Governor's Executive Policy Office
 Linda Steinmann, Office of Financial Management
 Sherry McNamara, Staff – Senate Ways & Means Committee
 Dan Jones, Staff – House Appropriations Committee