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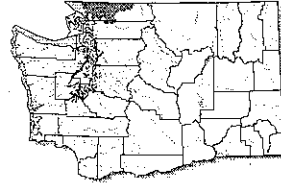
JAN 16 2009

LONG RANGE  
PLANNING DIVISION

STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Bellingham Field Office • 1440 10th Street, Ste 102 • Bellingham, WA 98225  
(360) 715-5200 • FAX (360) 715-5225

January 15, 2009



Your address  
is in the  
**Nooksack**  
watershed

Matt Aamot  
Whatcom Co. Planning & Development Services  
5280 Northwest Dr.  
Bellingham, WA 98226

RE:            **Project**            **The Draft Foothills Subarea Plan**  
                  **DOE file#**        **200809071**  
                  **Applicant**        **Whatcom County**

Dear Mr. Aamot:

Thank you for the opportunity to provide comments on the above-referenced Draft Subarea Plan. Based on review of the Plan we offer the following comments regarding water resources:

In Chapters 8 (Water & Sewer Facilities) and 10 (Water Quantity) of the Draft Plan, the availability of water resources for future development is calculated and discussed only as it pertains to the State Department of Health's approved water connections for water districts in the Foothills Subarea. The approved number of water service connections, alone, cannot be used to calculate water availability for future development.

The number of water service connections is limited by the water rights held by these water purveyors. Although DOH may have approved a system to have any number of connections, the system must have the legal right to withdraw/divert the amount of water required to service these connections. The Draft Plan should be based on the quantity of unused and uncommitted water available from the systems' state-approved water rights in considering future development capacity. Ecology would be happy to assist you in reviewing the water rights and providing additional information on water availability in the Foothills Subarea.

Thank you for considering these comments from the Department of Ecology. If you have questions please call me at (360) 715-5222.

Sincerely,

Kasey Ignac  
Water Master

ecc:    Richard Grout, ECY BFO  
         Andrew Dunn, ECY NWRO WR

