

Lyre-Hoko Watershed, WRIA 19

This focus sheet provides information on the availability of water for new uses in the Elwha-Dungeness Watershed. This information provides a starting point for potential water users in determining the best strategies for securing water for a future project or proposal in this area.

The Lyre-Hoko Watersheds, located on the Olympic Peninsula, consists of the Lyre, Hoko, Pysht, West Twin and East Twin Rivers, and many additional creeks and streams. This watershed has an annual precipitation ranging from 40 to 140 inches per year. Most precipitation arrives during the winter months when water demands are the lowest. Little of the Lyre-Hoko Watershed benefits from snowpack so during the summer months when little rain falls, low stream flows are dependent on groundwater inflow. This means that groundwater and surface water are least available when water demands for irrigation and fish habitat are the highest.

Increased demands from population growth, low summer and early fall streamflow levels, and impacts from climate change add to the challenge of finding new year-round water supplies in WRIA 19.

Factors Regarding Water Availability

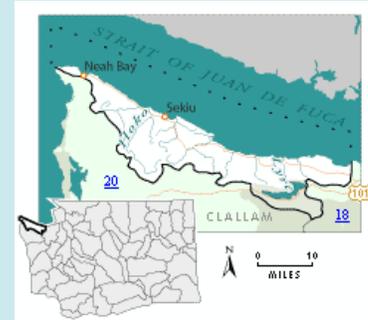
Due to low summer rainfall; and soils, geology, and geography; at times there can be limited water available for new uses, especially given that river levels need to be maintained to ensure adequate water quality and fish migration.

Some areas located on the Strait of Juan de Fuca may also have the potential for seawater intrusion.

The Makah and Lower Elwha Klallam Tribes are very concerned about maintaining flows and fish habitat in the watershed, and water right applications and mitigation plans are routinely sent to them for review.

The state Department of Fish and Wildlife has recommended that Ecology not issue water rights in a portion of this WRIA, in order to protect fish populations. See [RCW 77.57.020](#) for more information.

MORE INFORMATION



Definitions

Instream flows: Flow levels adopted into an administrative rule that create a water right for the stream to protect fish, wildlife, stock watering, recreational uses, and other instream uses and values.

Mitigation plan: A scientifically-sound plan to offset the impacts of a proposed water use.

Surface water source limitations (SWSLs): A determination by State Fish and Wildlife that water is not available based on needs for fish. See RCW 77.55.050.

Water supply available for new uses

Connecting to an established water supplier is often the simplest and fastest way to obtain a new water supply. Applicants seeking new water rights may need to mitigate for the impacts their water use will have on surface water bodies.

The groundwater permit exemption allows certain users of small quantities of ground water (most commonly owners of single-residence wells) to construct and drill new wells without obtaining a water right permit from Ecology. For more information about the groundwater permit exemption, refer to <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/SummaryPages/1511016.html>.

Additional options for finding a water supply include processing a water right application through the [Cost Reimbursement Program](#). The applicant may need to develop mitigation to offset the impacts of their water use to surface water.

For more information on these and other options, refer to “[Alternatives for Water Right Application Processing](#).”

Pending water right applications in this watershed

Washington water law is based on the “prior appropriation” system, often called “first in time, first in right.” Applications for water from the same source must be processed in the order they are received.

Ecology asks anyone who needs a water right (new, change, or transfer) to submit the pre-application consultation form and meet with us to review your water supply needs and project proposal.

- Apply for a New Water Right
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/newrights.html>
- Apply to Change or Transfer a Water Right or Claim
http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/change_transfer_use.html

The map in this document shows some of the factors that will be considered when evaluating water right permit applications. Here are some information sources to assist you with your research:

- Locate and research water rights on land parcels anywhere in the state (Water Resource Explorer)
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/info/webmap.html>
- Pending Water Right Applications by County
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/tracking-apps.html>
- Subscribe to a water right application RSS feed for a county or WRIA
http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/wr_app_rss.html

- WRIA map showing the total number of water right claims, certificates, permits and applications
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/Images/pdf/waterright-wria-maps.pdf>
- Search and view well reports using a variety of search tools
<http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/welllog/>

For more information

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*If you need this document in a version for the visually impaired, call the Water Resources Program at 360-407-6872.
Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341.*

