

Kennedy-Goldsborough Watershed, WRIA 14

This focus sheet provides information on the availability of water for new uses in the Kennedy-Goldsborough 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 Kennedy-Goldsborough Watershed consists of the Kennedy, Skookum, Mill/Gosnell, Goldsborough, Johns creeks and other creeks and streams. Annual precipitation in the Kennedy-Goldsborough Watershed ranges from 40 to 80 inches per year. Most of this precipitation arrives during the winter months when water demands are the lowest. During the summer there is little rain, and naturally low stream flows are dependent on groundwater inflow. This means that groundwater and surface water are least available when water demands are the highest.

Factors affecting water availability

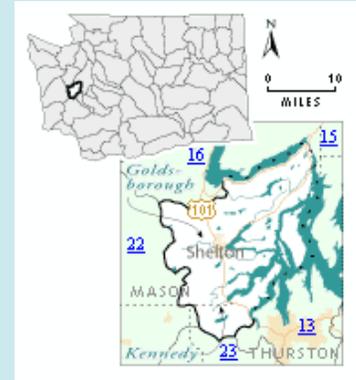
Much of the water in the Kennedy-Goldsborough Basin has already been spoken for. Increased demands from population growth, low summer and early fall streamflow levels, and impacts from climate change add to the challenge of finding new water supplies in WRIA 14.

[WAC 173-514](#), adopted in 1984, is the instream flow rule for the Kennedy and Goldsborough Creeks as well as other creeks that flow into Puget Sound. This rule closes and partially closes numerous streams, as well as adopting instream flows on other streams and creeks.

There is no water set aside in reserves for future uses in this watershed.

Applicants seeking new water appropriations will likely need to provide mitigation for the impacts their use of water will have on surface water bodies.

At present there are no restrictions on permit-exempt well use in the WRIA.



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.

Permit-exempt use: The state Ground Water Code allows for certain uses of small quantities of groundwater without obtaining a permit from Ecology. (RCW 90.44.050)

Seawater intrusion: The movement of salt water into freshwater aquifers.

WRIA: Water Resources Inventory Area; also known as a watershed or river basin. For environmental administration and planning purposes, Washington is divided up into 62 major watersheds, or WRIsAs.

Areas of the Kennedy-Goldsborough Basin located near Totten and Hammersley Inlets, Hartstene Island, Oakland Bay, and Hood Canal may also have the potential for seawater intrusion.

Water supply available for new uses

Areas of potential water supply in this watershed include municipal sources and larger private water supply companies. Connecting to an established water supplier is generally the fastest and simplest option.

The groundwater permit exemption allows certain users of small quantities of groundwater (most commonly, single residential well owners) to construct wells and develop their water supplies without obtaining a water right permit from Ecology. In a recent decision, the Washington State Supreme Court ruled that counties must ensure new uses of water (including permit-exempt wells) will not impact instream flows or closed water bodies when it approves building permits or subdivision applications. Even though the [rule adopted by Ecology for this watershed](#) does not limit the use of permit-exempt wells, counties are required under the Growth Management Act to protect streams and other waterbodies in their county. Counties may not issue permits for projects that will rely on a permit-exempt well, unless it determines that the water use will not impact instream flows or closed water bodies.

For more information on the decision, visit <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/WR/nwro/hirst.html>. For more information on the groundwater permit exemption, visit <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/documents/1511016.pdf>.

For more information on how instream flow may impact county approvals, visit Department of Ecology's [Domestic Water Availability Maps](#) and contact your county to find out how these restrictions apply to your project.

Options for processing a water right application through the Cost Reimbursement Program are described in the following document: www.ecy.wa.gov/pubs/0511016.pdf. 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. (There are certain exceptions, see "Additional options for processing water right applications" above.)

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.

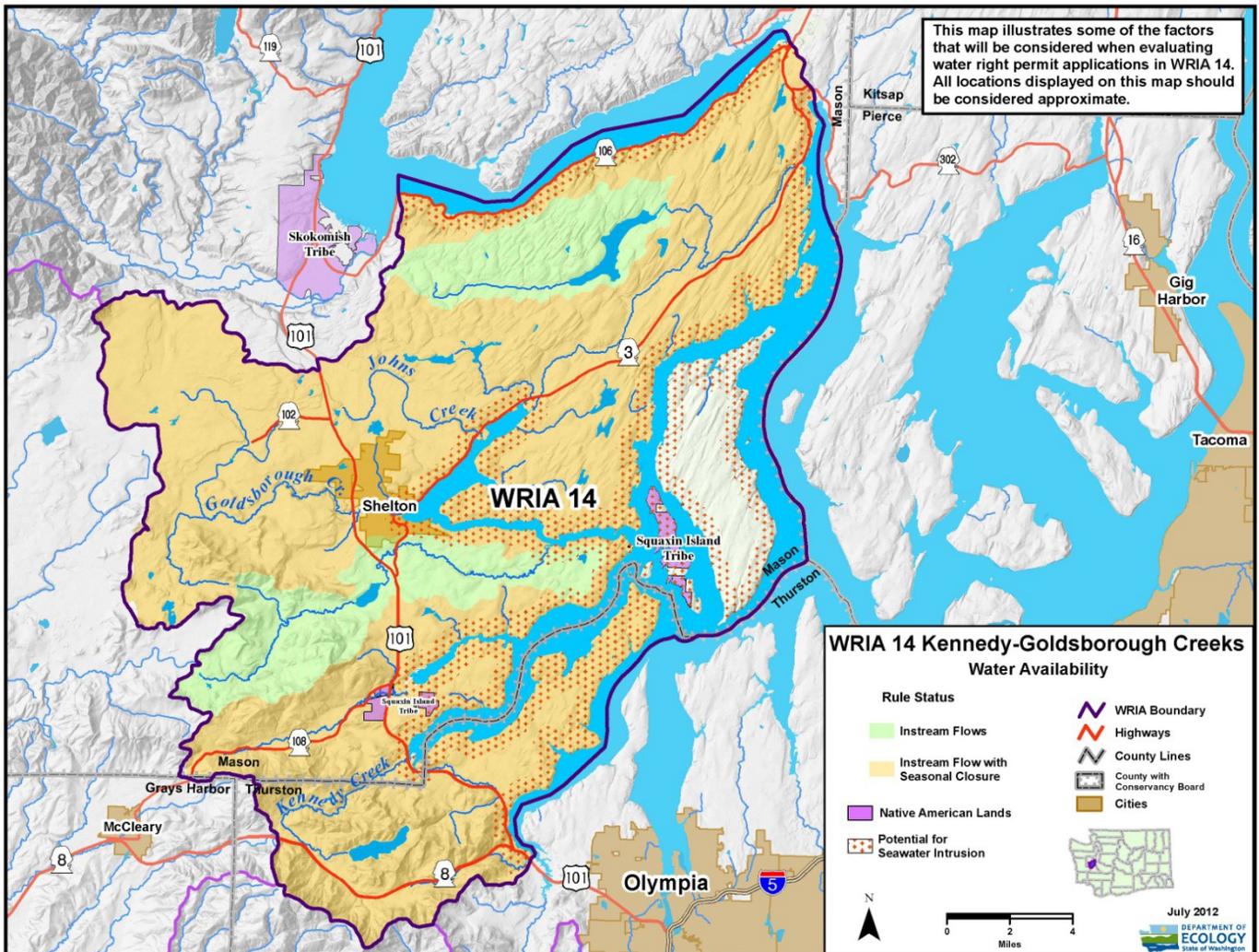
- Apply for a New Water Right
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/newrights.html>
- Apply to Change or Transfer a Water Right or Claim
http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rights/change_transfer_use.html

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
<https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/waterresources/map/WCLSWebMap/default.aspx>

For more information

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