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Handout @ 6/3/09
RWQC mtg.

Synthesis Report on Regional Water Supply Planning in King County

To Regional Water Quality
Committee
June 3, 2009

Culmination of 3+ Years' Work

- Present today Final Synthesis Report on Regional Water Supply Planning Process
- Interjurisdictional, multistakeholder effort
- Last update to you was July 2008

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The Challenge

- Competing demands for water exacerbated by
 - Increasing population
 - Changing climate
 - Land development
 - Habitat loss and alteration
- Individual utilities have taken some actions to prepare

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The Challenge, cont'd.

- However
 - Water flows across jurisdictional boundaries
 - Water law involves a range of responsible entities
- So regional planning among multiple jurisdictions would help to address the challenge together

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The County's Response to The Challenge

- Cascade Water Alliance and King County
 - Signed Memorandum of Understanding
 - February 2005
 - Agreed to work together
 - Regional water resource and supply planning

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Scoping Committee

- County Executive Sims convened multiple stakeholders in 2005
 - State
 - Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
 - Representative Water Utilities
 - City of Seattle
 - Cascade Water Alliance
 - Environmental Groups
 - King County
- Agreed to issues to be addressed by self-selected Technical Committees

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Coordinating Committee

- Provided oversight
- Membership = Scoping Committee plus
 - ◆ Pierce County
 - ◆ Business community
 - ◆ Additional environmental group
 - ◆ Suburban Cities Association

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Clarifying Statement

- Agreed to by Coordinating Committee, May 2006
- Defined purpose of process:
 - ◆ Identifying, compiling information on, and discussing many key issues related to or affecting water resources of the region
- Set goal for process:
 - ◆ Develop best available data, information, and pragmatic tools

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Clarifying Statement, cont'd.

- Information developed is advisory only
- Shared among all those interested in receiving it
- Not required by statute
- May be used to support other processes to address water resource and supply issues
- Each participant is free to accept or reject results of this process

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7 Technical Issues

- Prioritizing tributary streams for flow needs
- Source exchange strategies
- Reclaimed water
- Small water systems
- Climate change
- Regional water demand forecast
- Assessment of regional water supplies

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7 Technical Committees

- Mix of entities leading committees
- Voluntary participation and use of results
- Received charters from Coordinating Committee
- Tech committees revised charters

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Funding for Technical Work

- \$250,000 grant from Ecology
- Additional \$\$ from Seattle, Cascade Water Alliance, King County
- ~\$800,000 from Central Puget Sound Water Suppliers' Forum for demand and supply work
- Staff time and in-kind contributions from multiple entities

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The Outcome

- Technical committees developed reports on their respective issues
- Coordinating Committee did not synthesize work products or make any recommendations or conclusions
- King County synthesized the technical products into a single report
 - Invited process participants to comment
 - Incorporated comments into final report

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Accomplishments

- Did not develop regional plan
- However, many accomplishments
- Tributary Streamflow Committee ranked streams in WRIs 8 and 9 needing more flow
- Three committees (Reclaimed Water, Source Exchange, Supply Assessment) separately developed or reviewed frameworks
 - To evaluate water projects that considered
 - Environmental and social costs and benefits as well as traditional financial costs and benefits

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More Accomplishments

- Climate Change Committee and UW concluded
 - Temperatures have warmed and are projected to warm further
 - Precipitation will be more intense in winter, less in summer
 - Leading to more runoff in winter and early spring, and less runoff in summer
- In response, largest water utilities gave presentations on readiness and modifications to their management and operations
- For the first time, water suppliers invited input from external stakeholders into a regional water demand forecast

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More Accomplishments

- Water suppliers determined there is sufficient water
 - For municipal needs
 - On an average annual basis
 - Across the King County region as a whole
- Good first step
- King County recommends future regional work to determine
 - How to address seasonal needs when demand is at its highest and supplies are lowest
 - How to convey water from one system to another to address site-specific shortfalls
 - Potential impacts of climate change on groundwater, since groundwater supplies about 1/3 of municipal needs
 - Demand forecast and supplies available for uses not met by municipal suppliers

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Conclusions

- Voluntary effort not mandated by law or ordinance, yet about 150 individuals from wide range of entities participated or actively tracked the activities
- A wide range of interests can work together to deliver useful information and recommendations on regional water planning issues
- Useful tools and methodologies developed or reviewed (table in report)

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