



Mayors sign agreement with Cascade

Bonney Lake-Sumner Courier-Herald Reporter

By Dannie Oliveaux

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More than 100 people gathered Friday inside a large, white tent for a joint celebration between the Lake Tapps community and Cascade Water Alliance. For the cities of Auburn, Bonney Lake, Buckley and Sumner, the event marked the signing of an agreement with the water alliance to ensure the cities meet their water needs for the next 50 years.

The agreement is the result of several years of regional collaboration following CWA's purchase of Lake Tapps from Puget Sound Energy.

The celebration also marked the sale and ownership for Cascade, which became the owner of PSE's White River Project, including the Lake Tapps reservoir. It was also a major step forward in the implementation of the May 12 agreement regarding Lake Tapps between CWA and the Lake Tapps community.

Lake Tapps was created in 1911 when PSE built a series of dikes around several smaller lakes. PSE diverted water from the White River into Lake Tapps, with the outflow used to generate hydroelectric power.

When PSE stopped producing power, it sold Lake Tapps to CWA, which has agreed to manage the lake for recreation and develop the lake for a future water supply.

Under the landmark agreement, CWA will leave water in the White River that will be available for the four cities to use when they apply for a water right from the state's Department of Ecology.

If their water rights are approved, the cities are assured water will be available if and when needed.

Water for today...
and tomorrow



In addition, the cities will work with CWA to portion some of its existing water supply now provided by Tacoma Public Utilities.

CWA will also create a Lake Tapps Municipal Advisory group, consisting of the mayors of the four cities and Cascade members to share issues regarding the management of Lake Tapps.

"Lake Tapps is a wonderful regional asset," said CWA Board Chairman Lloyd Warren, who has been involved in the alliance since its inception in 1999. "We will use it for water supply. It is imperative and important to us to be a part of the community we now operate in, and to ensure those communities thrive, too."

CWA also has agreements with the Lake Tapps Homeowners' Association regarding protection of lake levels and with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians ensuring adequate stream flows in the White River to protect fish. The water alliance is completing its 2010 Transmission and Supply Planning, and incorporates all the agreements into the water right application it submitted to the state's Department of Ecology.

"No one can be certain what will happen in the future," Cascade CEO Chuck Clarke said. "But what we do know is that we all need to plan today to ensure water tomorrow. These agreements, and this regional cooperation, means everyone benefits, and we can work together to protect our water resources."

The complete agreement can be found at www.cascadewater.org.

Signing the agreement for the four cities were Auburn Mayor Pete Lewis, Bonney Lake Mayor Neil Johnson, Buckley Mayor Pat Johnson, and Sumner Mayor Dave Enslow.

As for the Lake Tapps Task Force, it was more than 10 years of hard work that came to an end in their efforts to "save the lake." The group will meet as needed and CWA will assume the role of administrator.

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Many current and former members of the group attended the celebration.

Joining the celebration were Eighth District Congressman Dave Reichert, First District Congressman Jay Inslee, Pierce County Executive Pat McCarthy, King County Executive Dow Constantine, Pierce County Councilman Shawn Bunney, 31st District Sen. Pam Roach and State Reps. Chris Hurst and Dan Roach, both of the 31st District, along with other city and county officials.

The gathering was at the new Cascade Water Alliance office at 2111 E. Valley Ave. in Sumner.

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