



## Lake Tapps Frequently Asked Questions

### Where is Lake Tapps?

It is located in eastern Pierce County, near the cities of Bonney Lake and Auburn.

### How big is it?

Lake Tapps is 4.5 miles long and 2.5 miles wide with a surface area of 2,750 acres, 45 miles of shoreline.

### Was it always a lake?

No. Puget Sound Energy (PSE) built a series of dikes around four small lakes in 1911 as it prepared to generate hydroelectric power. Lake Tapps is actually a reservoir, storing water diverted from and later returned to the White River.

### Is it still used for generating power?

No. PSE ceased operations in January 2004, after 92 years of creating power.

### What will happen to the lake now?

PSE sold the lake in December 2009 to the Cascade Water Alliance, a nonprofit corporation comprised of five east and south King County cities (Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond and Tukwila) and three municipal districts (Covington Water District, Sammamish Plateau Water and Sewer District and the Skyway Water and Sewer District.)

### What is the long term future of Lake Tapps?

Preserving the lake was a primary concern of PSE, Cascade, the community, Pierce County, the cities around the lake and the tremendous number of recreational users. The Lake Tapps Task Force concluded municipal water supply use was acceptable and compatible with recreation. The community and Cascade have ensured Lake Tapps will remain a recreational lake even as it is eventually used for municipal water supply.

### Who will manage the lake?

Cascade will manage the lake for recreation, as it develops the lake for eventual municipal water supply. Cascade is committed to maintaining lake levels for recreation providing enhanced in-stream flows in the White River for fisheries, as well as working with all regional partners to ensure clean water for fish, for people and for fun.

### When will water be taken from the lake for drinking water?

Water management for the future is being planned today, and Cascade will work with the communities around the lake as future plans are developed.

Cascade is completing its Transmission and Supply Plan, where various options will be reviewed and a preferred plan selected. It is not likely that water will be taken from Lake Tapps for many decades.

### **Is there community support for this plan?**

Yes. Cascade has agreements with the Lake Tapps Community Council to ensure recreational lake levels; with the four cities surrounding the lake (Auburn, Bonney Lake, Buckley and Sumner) to provide them with access to future water should they need it; and with the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians to protect stream flows in the White River for fisheries. Overall, the project not only protects the lake, but enhances the entire White River system. It also is the product of outstanding regional cooperation around Lake Tapps.

### **What about water quality—now and in the future?**

Cascade provides only the highest water quality to its current customers, and will continue to do so. It will work with residents around the lake to ensure good stewardship of the lake to have a healthy lake. If and when water is taken from Lake Tapps, it will be treated with the latest technology available to ensure it meets or exceeds state and federal standards.

### **What about conservation?**

Cascade has a wide arrange of conservation programs for its members and the result has been great savings in water use—an important part in water planning. One result has been that demand for water use has actually dropped in recent years—not just for Cascade but the region and the nation. Why? An educated population understands and supports conservation measures, more stringent plumbing codes and more efficient appliances (like toilets, washing machines and dishwashers, as well as smart irrigation systems in homes and businesses.)

### **What will happen to lake levels?**

In consultation with the Lake Tapps Community Council, Cascade will develop an annual schedule for maintaining recreational lake levels. Generally, the lake will be maintained at full recreational levels from mid-April to late October. Cascade and the LTCC will develop mechanisms for notifying property owners around the lake of the drawdown and refill schedule. Drawdown began on Nov. 1, 2009 and refill will begin on March 1, 2010.

### **What about milfoil?**

Cascade will lower the lake water line to expose milfoil to freezing temperatures, as drying and exposure to cold can retard the growth of milfoil. Lake levels haven't been brought down regularly since 2004, so Cascade will follow this procedure and monitor success. In addition, Cascade will do an aquatic plant survey to identify the plant species and location of weed beds so the extent of the issue will be known. From this information, a long term milfoil eradication/control strategy will be developed. Cascade has received a grant from the Washington State Department of Ecology Aquatic Weeds Management Fund for development of an integrated Aquatic Vegetation Management Plan. Cascade will meet with the Lake Tapps community to seek input on the plan. Once a recommendation is agreed upon, Cascade will implement the treatment or combination of treatments to tackle milfoil.

### **How can I reach Cascade staff?**

We are here to help. You can reach us via our toll free number at [1.877.299.0930](tel:18772990930), or email us at [contact@cascadewater.org](mailto:contact@cascadewater.org).