

FACT SHEET

White River Management Agreement and Related Settlement Agreements between Cascade Water Alliance and the Muckleshoot and Puyallup Tribes

The Cascade Water Alliance, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians have entered into a set of agreements that will facilitate the development of Lake Tapps as a new source of municipal water supply while protecting and enhancing fishery resources in the White and Puyallup River Basins. The agreements also establish targets for Lake Tapps water levels designed to accommodate continued recreational use of the Reservoir. Information on Cascade and the two Tribes, together with a summary of some of the more important aspects of the agreements follows:

Cascade Water Alliance

The Cascade Water Alliance is an association of cities and water districts working together to ensure a clean, safe and reliable water supply today and well into the future. Members are the cities of Bellevue, Issaquah, Kirkland, Redmond, and Tukwila, the Covington Water District, and the Sammamish Plateau and Skyway Water and Sewer Districts. Today Cascade supplies over 350,000 residents and 22,000 businesses.

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe

The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe is a federally recognized Indian Tribe governing the Muckleshoot Indian Reservation. The White River flows through the Muckleshoot Reservation which is located downstream of the Buckley Diversion Dam. Muckleshoot is a successor in interest to tribes and bands that were parties to the Treaties of Point Elliot and Medicine Creek and possesses treaty reserved fishing rights on the White River and Upper Puyallup.

Puyallup Tribe of Indians

The Puyallup Tribe of Indians is a federally recognized Indian Tribe governing the Puyallup Reservation. The Puyallup Reservation is located on Commencement Bay at the mouth of the Puyallup River downstream of Lake Tapps. The Puyallup Tribe is a successor in interest to tribes and bands that were parties to the Treaty of Medicine Creek and has treaty reserved fishing rights on the Puyallup River and its tributaries.

Fish Protection Measures

The agreements will provide higher flows that more accurately follow the natural flow conditions in the White River, (compared to flows provided during hydropower operations) by establishing new minimum flows in the White River below the Buckley Diversion Dam limiting diversions into Lake Tapps. Minimum Flows range from 875 cubic feet per second (cfs) down to 500 cfs throughout the year. Subject to minimum flow requirements, diversions of up to 1000 cfs are permitted during the late winter and early spring to allow for annual refill of the Reservoir with an April 15 refill target date. Following annual refill of the Reservoir, diversions from the White River of up to 400 cfs are permitted during the summer recreational period for water supply and maintenance of summer Reservoir elevations. Diversions are reduced to 150 cfs from the commencement of the annual fall drawdown until the commencement of the spring refill. Under these and related agreement provisions annual diversions from the White River are expected to average approximately 400 to 450 cfs compared to average diversions of approximately 1200 to 1500 cfs when the project was operated as a hydroelectric project, resulting in a corresponding increase in flows below the diversion dam, while providing adequate water for water supply purposes and summer recreation.

The agreements memorialize Cascade's obligation to maintain the existing fish screens in the diversion canal to prevent salmon, steelhead, and trout from passing into Lake Tapps.

The agreements commit Cascade to engage in studies to determine the need for construction of a barrier across the Dieringer tailrace to prevent harm to salmon, steelhead, and bulltrout, and studies on the need for fish screens in the Reservoir intake to prevent warm water species from entering the White River from the Reservoir.

Finally, the agreements provide for Cascade to fund tribal fish enhancement and mitigation activities in the White and Puyallup River basins that will benefit tribal and nontribal fishers, as well as, the public.

Water Supply

The agreements provide for Cascade to take an annual average of up to 100 cfs from the Lake Tapps Reservoir with peak diversions of up to 150 cfs to meet the municipal water supply needs of Cascade's membership.

Public Recreation

The agreements provide enhanced flows in the White River improving public recreational opportunities in the River, as well as preserving the use of the Reservoir for public recreation.

Cascade will endeavor to maintain the Reservoir at full pool levels (between 543 and 541.5 feet mean sea level) between April 15 and September 14 each year, consistent with fish protection and water supply requirements. Annual drawdown will begin after mid-September and be completed by the end of November.

The agreements require Cascade to minimize discharges from the Reservoir outside of the annual drawdown to maintain desired Reservoir levels.

The agreements provide that Cascade will coordinate with both the parties to the agreements and the Lake Tapps Community and Pierce County regarding annual refill and drawdown plans.