



Upper Skagit Indian Tribe
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September 12, 2014

Ron Wesen

Commissioner, District 1
Board of County Commissioners
1800 Continental Place, Suite 100
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Ken Dahlstedt

Commissioner, District 2
Board of County Commissioners
1800 Continental Place, Suite 100
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Sharon Dillon

Commissioner, District 3
Board of County Commissioners
1800 Continental Place, Suite 100
Mount Vernon, WA 98273

Dan Berentson

Director of Public Works
Public Works Department
1800 Continental Place
Mount Vernon, WA 98273-5625

RE: Voluntary Stewardship Program comments

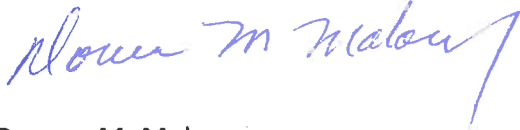
Dear Commissioners and Director,

The Upper Skagit Indian Tribe (hereafter "Tribe") appreciates the opportunity to provide comment on the Skagit County Board of Commissioners proposed resolution that would start the County's participation in the statewide Voluntary Stewardship Program to protect and enhance critical areas in areas of agricultural activity.

At this time, the Tribe will not be participating in the County's Voluntary Stewardship Program (VSP). It is imperative that the Tribe retains its co-management status in issues related to reserved Treaty Fish and Shellfish Rights within its adjudicated usual and accustomed Fishing areas. Unfortunately, our experience in participation in non-governmental forums generally results in the Tribe having to turn to a government to government process for recognition of its co-manager authority. We would prefer government to government consultation with the County to ensure fish and shellfish harvest rights are upheld and to foster natural resource sustainability. Actions undertaken by the County and its partners in the VSP process should strive to maintain the protections prescribed under Federal, State and Local regulations, including, but not limited to, Critical Area Ordinances and water quality laws. Additionally, considering the current lack of State appropriated funds and expected future funding uncertainties for the VSP, we urge careful consideration in diverting funds from currently operating programs, such that there is not a reduction in the capacity of these programs to protect and restore habitat and water quality in Skagit and Samish watersheds.

If you have any questions please contact Doreen M. Maloney at (360) 854-7001.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Doreen M. Maloney". The signature is written in a cursive style with a long, sweeping tail on the final letter.

Doreen M. Maloney
Treaty Entitlement Director
Upper Skagit Indian Tribe