

**WHATCOM COUNTY  
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**Elizabeth Kosa  
Director**



**NATURAL RESOURCES**

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**MEMORANDUM**

**TO:** The Honorable Satpal Singh Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive, and The Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council

**THROUGH:** Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director *EK*

**FROM:** Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager *GS*

**DATE:** June 14, 2024

**RE:** State of Washington Department of Ecology Grant Agreement for WRIA 1 Collaborative Water Supply Planning

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Please find attached for your review a copy of the grant agreement between Whatcom County and the State of Washington Department of Ecology for funding Adjudication Technical Assistance. The authorized agreement will be signed electronically through DocuSign.

**Requested Action**

Public Works respectfully requests that the County Council authorize the County Executive to sign this agreement.

**Background and Purpose**

The Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 1 Watershed Management Board (WMB), and its predecessors, have been working for decades to resolve long-standing contentious water issues. Recently, the Washington Department of Ecology filed a water rights adjudication in WRIA 1 that raises the urgency of resolving these issues. In light of the adjudication, the Washington State Legislature provided \$700,000 in grant funding to the WMB, with Whatcom County as the fiscal agent, to conduct technical studies to support the development of water supply and in-stream flow solutions and to develop and implement a collaborative process to identify local solutions for water availability issues in WRIA 1. This agreement will provide funding to Whatcom County, on behalf of the WMB, to conduct these technical studies and develop and implement a collaborative process to identify local solutions for water availability issues in WRIA 1. The work to be included in this grant is being phased in over the granting period. The WMB has approved three technical studies to be conducted using \$485,600 of the grant funds. These studies include: 1) conducting a groundwater-surface water interaction study, 2) extrapolating initial instream flow recommendations prepared in the 2000s, and 3) conducting refinements to the Whatcom Groundwater Model. Additional studies and/or collaborative process development will be included in this grant under an amendment.

**Funding Amount and Source**

This agreement will provide Whatcom County with \$485,600 to conduct technical studies and to develop and implement a collaborative process. Whatcom County will be reimbursed for expenses under this

agreement and no match is required. Budget authority for this agreement is provided in the 2024 Natural Resources budget.

Please contact Gary Stoyka at extension 6218 if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.  
Grant Agreement