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Whatcom County Council
Surface Water Work Session

July 16, 2019

CALL TO ORDER

Council Chair Rud Browne called the meeting to order at 10:30 a.m. in the Civic Center Garden Level Conference Room, 322 Commercial Avenue, Bellingham, Washington.

ROLL CALL

Present: Barbara Brenner, Rud Browne, Barry Buchanan, Tyler Byrd, Todd Donovan, and Carol Frazey.

Absent: Satpal Sidhu

SURFACE WATER WORK SESSION (AB2018-024)

1. WATERSHED PLANNING UPDATE

Gary Stoyka, Public Works Department, updated the Council and answered questions:

- Watershed Management Board schedule and agenda, including the five-year work plan and discussion of adjudication of the Nooksack Basin
- Natural Resources Committee discussion next week on revisions to the five-year plan
- Water use efficiency projects
- Regional water supply plan scope of work
- Groundwater modeling project and peer review

Henry Bierlink answered questions about water banking.

Councilmembers and staff discussed open sourcing the groundwater model, Nooksack Tribe water rights adjudication, and providing the Council timely information.

2. COUNTY FISH BARRIER CULVERT UPDATE

John Thompson, Public Works Department, read from a presentation, gave a staff report, and answered questions on the recovery plan for Chinook, the history of fish culvert barrier litigation, culvert replacement schedule, and other fish habitat projects.

Jim Karcher, Public Works Department, answered questions.

Councilmembers and staff discussed monitoring the number of fish using the streams, the State's arguments against culvert replacement requirements, problems with creosote, who is responsible for non-County culverts, the need for a bridge at Slater Road over Jordan Creek, new culvert technology, and implementing temporary fixes until a culvert can be replaced.

