

Supplemental Budget Request

Status: Pending

Public Works

Natural Resources

Suppl ID # 3297 Fund 169 Cost Center 169121 Originator: Gary Stoyka

Expenditure Type: One-Time Year 1 2021 Add'l FTE Add'l Space Priority 1

Name of Request: 2021 Collaborative Water Process

X  9/1/21
 Department Head Signature (Required on Hard Copy Submission) Date

Costs:	Object	Object Description	Amount Requested
	4333.6612	Puget Sound Watershed Grant	(\$50,000)
	4334.0310	DOE Grants	(\$125,000)
	6630	Professional Services	\$175,000
	Request Total		\$0

1a. Description of request:

Whatcom County has been awarded grant funding to implement a collaborative process and conduct related technical studies to resolve our region's water challenges. The Washington State Legislature is providing \$125,000 in funding to implement the collaborative process and conduct related technical studies. This money will come to the County in the form of a grant from the Department of Ecology. Public Works also received a grant from the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife to conduct drainage-based management (DBM) in three pilot sub-basins in 2020. It was anticipated that \$50,000 would be used in 2020 and \$50,000 would be used in 2021; however, no grant funds were utilized in 2020. This budget supplemental is to reallocate the \$50,000 in 2020 grant funds to 2021 to continue the DBM work.

1b. Primary customers:

All residents of Whatcom County.

2. Problem to be solved:

Whatcom County has been plagued with long standing conflicts over water and other related environmental issues. The County has been engaged in watershed management processes for more than 20 years. While much good work has been accomplished during this time, including the adoption of a Watershed Management Plan, many technical studies, and an attempt at resolving water rights issues, resolution of these issues has been elusive. The Department of Ecology is preparing to implement an adjudication of water rights in the Nooksack Basin to determine their extent and validity. Implementing an adjudication without addressing related issues will have significant impacts on the community. The Executive is proposing that the County take the lead on implementing a collaborative process to resolve these problems. While the primary focus of the initiative is to resolve water quantity and instream flow issues, it is recognized that these issues are inextricably linked to water quality, salmon habitat and other issues. Consequently, the proposed process includes attempting to resolve all of these issues simultaneously. The proposed process involves bringing key parties together to determine what each party's needs are and finding ways to meet those needs.

3a. Options / Advantages:

Many other processes have been attempted over the past 20+ years without success.

3b. Cost savings:

Certainty regarding water supply, water quality, instream flows, and fish habitat will save people, businesses, and governments money in the long run.

4a. Outcomes:

The work included in this budget request will support the Executive's proposed collaborative water

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process by providing facilitation services and technical information. These services will be provided during the latter part of 2021 and potentially into early 2022.

4b. Measures:

The information and services provided will allow the collaborative process to be initiated and make progress on resolving the community's water conflicts. Success will be measured by making progress on finding solutions to meet our water needs.

5a. Other Departments/Agencies:

Implementing this request will require involvement from the Department of Planning and Development Services. Other agencies that are anticipated to participate in the collaborative process include: Whatcom PUD, Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, City of Bellingham, Ag Water Board, Washington Departments of Ecology and Fish & Wildlife.

5b. Name the person in charge of implementation and what they are responsible for:

Mark Personius would need to provide staff to participate in the process.

6. Funding Source:

\$125,000 from the Washington State Legislature through a grant from the Washington Department of Ecology

\$50,00 in National Estuary Program funding through a grant from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife