

**WHATCOM COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**Elizabeth Kosa
Director**



NATURAL RESOURCES

322 N. Commercial, 2nd Floor
Bellingham, WA 98225

Telephone: (360) 778-6230

FAX: (360) 778-6231

www.whatcomcounty.us

MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Satpal Singh Sidhu, Whatcom County Executive, and The Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council, collectively serving in their capacity as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director *L.B.F.*

FROM: Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager *GS*

DATE: November 17, 2025

RE: Agreement Between Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District and Associated Earth Sciences, Inc. for Phase 2 of an Investigation into the Impacts of Agricultural Tile Drains on Stream Flows

Requested Action

Public Works respectfully requests that the County Executive, and the County Council, acting as the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors, enter into an agreement between the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District and Associated Earth Sciences, Inc. to complete Phase 2 of an investigation into the impacts of agricultural tile drains on stream flows.

Background and Purpose

The Water Resources Inventory Area (WRIA) 1 Watershed Management Board recently completed the development of the Whatcom Groundwater Model. This model is being used to investigate different water management strategies. One strategy that is being investigated is modifying current agricultural tile drain management techniques to improve summer instream flows while allowing agricultural production to continue. This scenario was modeled using the Whatcom Groundwater Model. A field investigation of tile drain management techniques is needed to verify the modeling results and further determine if this strategy may be feasible to address water management issues. This work is being conducted in coordination with the Whatcom Groundwater Model Team, an ad hoc committee of the WRIA 1 Watershed Staff Team, that is working to cooperatively address regional water supply challenges. Member agencies include Whatcom County, Public Utility District No. 1 of Whatcom County, Lummi Nation, Nooksack Indian Tribe, City of Bellingham, Washington Department of Ecology, and the Ag Water Board. This contract includes the final phase of the project.

Funding Amount and Source

This contract in the amount of \$128,531.00 will be funded with FCZD funds. The FCZD Natural Resources cost center has adequate budget authority in the 2025 budget for this contract.

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

Encl.

Last edited 06/23/2023