

Ellyn Murphy

Although there appears to be considerable confusion among Whatcom County residents on the new WRIA 1 language, I am in favor of limiting indoor use for new, permit-exempt wells to 500 gal/day and an outdoor area of 1/12 of an acre. This limit is entirely reasonable for new residential developments. Maintaining sufficient in-stream flow for the survival of salmon is critical. Fresh water will be increasingly scarce under climate change.

I also urge DoE to consider rules for metering wells used in agriculture. As a member of the Whatcom County Climate Impact Advisory Committee, I have interviewed numerous water experts and stakeholders in the County. Again and again I am told that upwards of 40% of water withdrawals are from agricultural landowners who do not have legal water rights.