

Michael Sennett

Conservation through WUE should be the primary focus in dealing with the water issues in the WRIA 1. The intransigent denial of water quantity and quality problems by a significant proportion of the rural/ east county residents will encounter the unavoidable realities of increasing population and the resulting increase of demand on one hand, and the changing paradigms of water supply due to climate change. We only need to look at March of this year and May 2018 to see that the parameters of our dry summers are expanding. The Mt. Baker snowpack has been variable through the past decades and thus is unpredictable, but every below average winter, such as the historic low of 303 inches in 2014-15, puts enormous stress on the pitiful remnants of the salmon runs. The Mt. Baker total for 2018-19 as of 4/14 is 533", well below the 663" average. Depending on the rate of melt and run-off, it could be another tough year for the fish. Will the salmon ultimately be sacrificed for the rights of human users?

As with energy, water conservation is the easiest and most direct method to reduce wasteful usage, and should be prioritized. Information to achieve this goal should be widely provided to county residents and businesses with rebates for water-saving fixtures made available. Absent the much needed adjudication of water rights and metering due to rural and ag resistance, conservation is the least controversial action to take. Mike Sennett, Bellingham