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To whom it may concern, Department of Ecology

Good morning,

I have an intricate knowledge of hydroexcavation operations in the energy industry to include overhead and underground power facilities, and would like to highlight the importance of facilities like the Looker Properties Canyon Rd pit in Puyallup, WA. I would like to start by laying a back drop in the type of material brought into that site and similar sites.

Hydroexcavation is a process of breaking up earth with clean, high pressure water, and collecting both the material and the water into a hopper with a high powered vacuum unit. As a contractor, Potelco uses this process for trenching, pole holes, daylighting existing facilities, or installing vaults or other underground facilities. The material collected into the hopper is no different than any other material excavated by any method minus the clean water. 5 yards of soil tested from a dump truck coming from a given site would display the same characteristics of a vac truck coming from the same site with the addition of clean water.

Hydroexcavation is a requirement of many municipalities across Washington State and the US. Due to the number of facilities that have been put underground in the last 30 years, risk to those facilities and the safety of workers requires this method to fulfill needs of customers, businesses, and citizens across Western Washington. We would not be able to maintain critical infrastructure without this method. Customers needing new power, water, sewer, gas, and storm rely on this method, as well as millions of customers that need these systems maintained.

Any material that occupies storm or other catch basins, oil/water separators, or anything that displays a sheen and is handled very differently and is not appropriate for a site such as the Looker Pit. The processing plants that accept material of this nature are designed to process and clean the material for re-use. They are not designed to handle massive volumes of clean soil. Many critical infrastructure and public improvement projects in every location would grind to a halt if contractors were required to take clean material to these processing plants, far exceeding their capacity hundreds of times over.

As a contractor moving hundreds of thousands of yards of material by this method every year, the disposal of this safe, reusable material is critical to cities, counties, energy providers and their customers, schools and hospitals. We would not be able to make emergency repairs in storm events like the one in November 2024 and numerous others.

Potelco is motivated in providing its services and operating in compliance with all our excavation methods and will assist in ensuring appropriate disposal methods are met with any material displaced. The Looker Pit is exceptionally valuable to us due to its central location in relation to the I5 corridor and its compliance measures taken to ensure this material is dewatered and reused.