

Washington Public Utility District Assoc.

Summary of all comments made and final conclusion comments

I have already made comments for this group on:

5/7/2020 Individual Comment on Agric. Land Preservation in urbanizing areas of other states (New York) for historic apple production; Question about water right transfers to the Oregon side of the Columbia River; Food security concerns for our state's urban population.

7/8/2020 Individual Comment on concerns over water rights in Lewis Co. Government; Land use history/Past Mining activity - Abandoned Mines and concentrating facilities inside Washington state; WA DNR database on this subject; Serious pollution from old mine tailings especially Lead and Mercury mines in Whatcom, Stevens, Ferry, Pend Oreille, Lewis and Snohomish counties.

6/11/2020 Organization Comment on Water as a resource that merits public oversight and accountability; Dictionary definition of the term: Usufruct; modern perspective on western water law; direct Persian Gulf states investment in groundwater mining in Arizona for large alfalfa farming; Water rights seen as a privilege similar to driving; over allocation of basins, depletion of aquifers; what the public expects this group to do to protect water resources.

7/15/2020 Organization Comment on follow up on evidence for groundwater depletion in Arizona seen from space on a TV program "What on Earth"; California central valley land subsidence from over pumping groundwater; loss of businesses in small towns by farm consolidation in rural North Dakota.

Go look up and read these comments if any of these topics interest you!

My final comment is that many of your solutions on how to operate water banking in our state with the proper oversight and transparency would best be accomplished through current local public entities such as county government or a Public Utility District.

Currently there are 18 P.U.D.'s in our state that are water utilities. Only six are in eastern Washington: Stevens PUD (also operates in northern Spokane Co.); Asotin PUD; Pend Oreille PUD; Douglas PUD; Chelan PUD and Klickitat PUD.

Twelve PUD's operate water utilities on the western side of Washington: Whatcom PUD; Skagit PUD; Snohomish PUD; Kitsap PUD; Thurston PUD; Clallam PUD; Jefferson PUD; Mason PUD #1; Pacific PUD; Wahkiakum PUD; Skamania PUD and the largest water PUD provider, Clark PUD.

PUD's, just like County government operate with public meetings where minutes are kept of each meeting. They are accountable to the public through the Open Records Act. They are run by citizen elected officials who know their communities very well and are well educated on resource and watershed issues in their jurisdiction. They are connected to the public they serve.

I think everyone who has followed this Advisory Group and is not naïve about bringing a bill through the legislative process will admit that the public isn't willing to create new governmental entities, they would like us to work with what we already have! While just the mention of the subject of water rights have been able to make a Republican Senator's eyes roll at a legislative

hearing. Nobody wants to tackle a Gordian knot, with many interests at stake. We need to work through the local entities that we already have in place.
Chris Stearns - Water Committee Chair Washington Public Utility District Association and
Thurston PUD Commissioner