

SNOHOMISH RIVER REGIONAL WATER AUTHORITY

MEMORANDUM

To: Austin Melcher
Department of Ecology

From: Bruce Gardiner
President, SRRWA
Commissioner, Northshore Utility District

Date: September 29, 2023

Re: Snohomish River Regional Water Authority Comments on Draft POL-2030

I am submitting these comments on Ecology's draft POL-2030 Update on behalf of the Snohomish River Regional Water Authority (SRRWA). SRRWA is comprised of three municipal water suppliers: City of Everett, Northshore Utility District, and Woodinville Water District. SRRWA holds a water right for municipal water supply purposes that it has donated to the Trust Water Rights Program until 2035 to support instream flows.

SRRWA members are concerned by Ecology's vaguely worded statement at pages 13-14 of the draft policy that public interest considerations may restrict future uses of municipal trust water rights "after an extended period of nonuse where environmental, social, economic, and other conditions may have changed." That suggestion is contrary to the legislative intent behind the Municipal Water Law and the Trust Water Right statute. It is also deeply at odds with Ecology's long-standing encouragement and assurances to water right holders about the security of water rights temporarily donated to the Trust Water Rights Program.

SRRWA members support and endorse the comments submitted by the Washington Water Utilities Council (WWUC) on Ecology's draft Policy 2030 update. We hope Ecology will give serious consideration to the WWUC's concerns.

cc: Judi Gladstone, WWUC
John Weidenfeller, WWUC
Kathy Curry, Woodinville Water District
Souheil Nasr, City of Everett