

K. Rench

Information from DERT (Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team):

"The Deschutes Estuary Restoration Team (DERT) and the Squaxin Island Tribe provided preliminary comments to Ecology in October objecting to the proposed adoption of these new rules without providing further protection for streamflows. DERT has also objected on the basis that the Deschutes Watershed and Restoration Committee (WREC), convened pursuant to state law to develop a plan to restore and enhance the watershed, overwhelmingly recommended revising the existing rules instream flow rules--adopted in 1980. The WREC also recommended other ideas for better water resource management. DERT was the environmental representative on the WREC. However, in its latest notice Ecology continues to limit the proposed new rules to simply allowing additional wells, and not addressing the instream flow issues or other recommendations of the WREC."

Personal Comment:

I believe the Department of Ecology should consult local organizations and tribes on any and all decisions regarding the wellbeing and restoration of the Deschutes Estuary and Watershed. There are many local and indigenous groups who are directly working on the restoration of these places for the well-being of our environments and community and therefore should have direct input on any new development, drilling, and permits. The groups who are on the ground and most directly affected should always be included, if not leading, the decisions and resolutions around these issues. It seems clear that local organizations and tribes oppose this new allowance of drilling wells without additional waterflow and ecological considerations. The Dept. of Ecology should recognize and accommodate these concerns to the best of their abilities or not allow for new permitting. Please revisit the suggested protections and require more remediation and limits if new drilling is to be allowed.