

**WRIA 1 Watershed Management Project  
Administrative Decision-Makers and the Staff Team  
Roles and Operating Procedures**

**I. Introduction:**

The goal of the Watershed Management Project is to develop and implement a Watershed Management Plan for WRIA 1 that balances the competing resource demands in the watershed. The planning process will conform to the requirements (water quantity assessment) and options (water quality, instream flow, and habitat assessments) of ESHB 2514, and will combine and coordinate data collection efforts. The resulting plan will be information based and will not conflict with existing state statutes, federal laws, tribal laws, or tribal treaty rights.

The five Initiating Governments (Whatcom County, City of Bellingham, PUD #1, Lummi Nation, and Nooksack Tribe) will be represented by an Administrative Decision-Maker and a Staff Team member, and an alternate if possible. The state and federal governments will be asked to participate on the Staff Team.

The purpose of this document is to describe the roles of the Administrative Decision-Makers and the Staff Team, as well as the operating procedures that will be used by these entities during the project.

**II. ROLE OF ADMINISTRATIVE DECISION-MAKERS AND STAFF TEAM**

Administrative Decision-Makers

The Administrative Decision-Makers are either appointed or delegated by their respective governments. Their roles include to:

1. Review, modify as necessary, and approve the following, as developed and recommended by the Staff Team and/or the Planning Unit.
  - Scope of work
  - Planning Unit structure and composition
  - Budget
  - Appointment of Technical Team members
  - Operating procedures
  - Media, public involvement, and education process
  - Selected staff for hire
2. Sponsor public forums.
3. Authorize expenditures within applicable guidelines.
4. Update and communicate with respective councils.
5. Recommend final plan to councils.

### Staff Team:

The Staff Team representatives are either appointed or delegated by their respective Administrative Decision-Maker. The Staff Team will act as support staff to the Planning Unit and to the Administrative Decision-Makers. The role of the Staff Team includes to:

1. Develop and recommend the following to Administrative Decision-Makers
  - Scope of work
  - Planning Unit structure and composition
  - Budget
  - Technical Team members
  - Operating procedures
  - Media and public involvement and education process
2. Select and recommend staff for hire by the Administrative Decision-Makers.
3. Coordinate and direct staff functions.
4. Administer budget and contracts.
5. Coordinate and support the Planning Unit.
6. Authorize expenditures less than or equal to \$5,000.
7. Review input from the Planning Unit, the public involvement team, and the technical teams.
8. Communicate, explain, and recommend responses and actions to the Administrative Decision-Makers.

### **III. OPERATING PROCEDURES**

The Administrative Decision-Makers and the Staff Team may meet by telephone conference or in person, and shall meet at the request of any Initiating Government. Written notice stating the time, date, place, and the agenda of these meetings will be delivered (in person, by mail, by e-mail, or by facsimile) to the designated representative of each Initiating Government not less than five days and not more than 30 days before the meetings. The anticipated schedule for upcoming meetings will be proposed as far in advance as possible.

Meetings will be labeled Administrative Decision-Maker meeting or Staff Team Meeting. The Staff Team participates in both types of meetings; the Administrative Decision-Makers participate in Staff Team meetings as time allows.

The goal for Administrative Decision-Makers meetings is representation at all meetings by all five Initiating Governments. Notwithstanding the goal, it is understood that there may be times when an Initiating Government is unable to participate in a scheduled meeting. In the event that the Administrative Decision-Maker is unable to attend an Administrative Decision-Makers meeting, he/she may identify and designate a Staff Team representative to act on his/her behalf (with defined discretionary limits) at the Decision-Maker meeting. In the absence of an Initiating Government representative(s), meetings may continue with discussion of the established agenda items. Consensus

among the Administrative Decision-makers also can be formalized through other means such as circulating letters and documents for signature without an actual meeting.

Decisions by the Administrative Decision-Makers will be made in accordance with the October 27, 1998 Memorandum of Agreement between the Lummi Nation, the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, and Public Utility District No. 1.

Decisions will be based on the best available science. For the purposes of this Watershed Management Project, best available science is defined as objective and repeatable analyses based on adequate empirical data collected with appropriate quality assurance/quality control procedures in place.

Decisions will be made by unanimous vote with each member of the Initiating Governments having one vote. The parties agree that the term “consensus” as used in ESHB 2514 means “unanimous agreement”, and further agree to use this definition throughout their planning effort notwithstanding any contrary interpretation or definition of the term which may be placed on it by any other person or entity. Unanimous agreement means that everyone in the group supports, agrees to, or can live with the decision.

One of the goals in adopting this consensus based decision-making process is to improve the quality of the resulting management plan. The consensus requirement is intended to promote communication and dedication to the negotiating process until consensus can be achieved. In this way consensus based decision-making should help the project move forward, and resolve the inevitable differences in outlook and interests.

Staff Team Meetings: Staff Team meetings should be attended by a designated representative from each of the Initiating Governments plus State and Federal representatives. However, recognizing that circumstances may result in one or more of these representatives being unavoidably absent, the Staff Team may proceed with the development of projects and other administrative and coordinating functions, if the meeting is attended by at least two local government representatives, one tribal representative, and one state or federal representative. Any Initiating Government, knowing that their representative may be unable to attend a Staff Team meeting, may request that any item(s) on the proposed meeting agenda not be discussed or acted upon in their absence.

Representatives unable to attend a meeting should notify staff. Meetings will begin on time, and if representatives are delayed, the least significant items will be discussed until the expected attendees arrive. A summary report describing the agenda, summarizing discussions, and identifying any decisions or recommended actions will be prepared by the staff. The summary report on the previous meeting will be modified as necessary and approved at each meeting. At the end of each meeting, representatives will propose agenda items for the next meeting.

WRIA 1 Initiating Governments Administrative Decision Makers:

Date: \_\_\_\_\_

Tom Anderson, PUD #1 \_\_\_\_\_

Mark Asmundson, City of Bellingham \_\_\_\_\_

Merle Jefferson, Lummi Nation \_\_\_\_\_

Bob Kelly, Nooksack Tribe \_\_\_\_\_

Pete Kremen, Whatcom County \_\_\_\_\_