



Utility Advisory Committee

McAllister Wellfield Water Rights Mitigation Projects Update

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Title

McAllister Wellfield Water Rights Mitigation Projects Update

Recommended Action

Briefing only.

Report

Issue:

Receive briefing on habitat restoration projects occurring at the Deschutes River Property and groundwater recharge occurring at Woodland Creek Community Park

Staff Contact:

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Presenters:

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Background and Analysis:

In 2012, the Department of Ecology (Ecology) approved Olympia's request to transfer its McAllister Springs water rights to the McAllister Wellfield, contingent on providing mitigation. To fulfill some of its mitigation obligations Olympia has partnered with the Cities of Lacey and Yelm.

In 2010, the three cities jointly purchased 185 acres of former farmland (then known as the Smith Ranch) located on the Deschutes River near Lake Lawrence in southeast Thurston County. The Deschutes River Property, along with its water right, were purchased to fulfill both direct flow mitigation (in-kind) and land acquisition and habitat restoration (out-of-kind) mitigation to mitigate predicted depletions in the Deschutes River basin resulting from operation of the McAllister Wellfield.

A portion of the water right associated with the Deschutes Ranch not otherwise required for the habitat restoration projects was relinquished in 2014. Habitat restoration projects have been taking place at the property over the last several years and include: 1) riparian planting along the Deschutes River and spring-fed channel and, 2) wetland restoration.

In addition to Deschutes River mitigation obligations, Olympia is also responsible for mitigating impacts from predicted depletions to stream flows to the Woodland Creek basin. Olympia provides on-going mitigation by recharging groundwater at the Woodland Creek Groundwater Recharge Facility located in the City of Lacey's Woodland Creek Community Park. This facility was constructed in late 2013 and is jointly owned by Olympia and Lacey. Olympia compensates Lacey for operation of the facility.

Neighborhood/Community Interests (if known):

Not applicable.

Options:

Not applicable.

Financial Impact: Olympia has on-going financial obligations associated with its water right mitigation obligations. Staff will present past and future expenditures associated with these projects at the meeting.

Options:

Not applicable.

Attachments:

None