

# Stillaguamish River Clean Water District Advisory Board

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Snohomish County Public Works,  
Surface Water Management  
3000 Rockefeller Avenue,  
Everett, WA 98201  
(425) 388-3464  
[www.cwd.surfacewater.info](http://www.cwd.surfacewater.info)

May 1, 2012

Debbie Terwilleger, Director  
Snohomish County Public Works, Surface Water Management  
3000 Rockefeller Ave., M/S 607  
Everett, WA 98201

**RECEIVED**

**MAY 01 2012**

**SURFACE WATER MGMT.**

Dear Ms. Terwilleger,

The Stillaguamish River Clean Water District Advisory Board (Board) offers the following recommendations to Snohomish County Surface Water Management (SWM), regarding the 2013 work plan and budget.

### Finances and Accounting

The Clean Water District (CWD) fund balances for RCW 90.72 (shellfish protection) revenues, including those for Water Quality, the Snohomish Conservation District (SCD), and the Discretionary Fund (DF), remain substantial and provide adequate funding to support our recommendations for 2013. **The Board continues to recommend** expeditious use of these funds, consistent with the mission of the CWD, and that the current CWD rate structure be maintained. We ask that the budget for the Discretionary Fund be increased to include a greater share of the DF fund balance.

### Shellfish Protection

In view of the Governor's recently announced shellfish recovery initiative, and heightened focus by the Washington Department of Health (WDOH), the Board reaffirms its strong commitment to the Shellfish Protection Program. **We recommend** that sufficient reserves be included in the 2013 budget to provide for aggressive implementation as needs are identified.

**The Board recommends** SWM pursue approval of the Stillaguamish Shellfish Protection Program by Snohomish County Council. The Board also asks SWM to ensure an annual report on the Shellfish Protection Program is submitted in a timely manner to WDOH.

The Board supports the scope of work that SWM negotiated in early 2012 with the City of Stanwood for Irvine Slough water quality monitoring. We request a report on the results later this year or early in 2013 and encourage a collaborative effort to promptly reduce any contaminate sources identified through this effort that would impair the water quality over shellfish beds.

### Stewardship and Education

**The Board recommends** that SWM work with the SCD and the SHD to continue their emphasis in 2013 on program development and implementation to build public awareness of water quality issues in the CWD. Coordination/strategic planning meetings with these organizations, along with the Tribes, non-governmental organizations, and community groups working in the CWD could reduce duplication of effort.

**The Board also recommends** that SWM explore with the Board development of an annual CWD report and tools for citizen feedback.

### Lakes

The Board appreciates the continuing commitment for control of invasive aquatic plant growth in Lake Goodwin and Lake Shoecraft. SWM Staff and property owners on the lakes have noted the return and progressive growth of milfoil since the initial application, in 2000, of chemicals to eradicate this invasive milfoil plant. According to SWM staff, the 8 – 9 days budgeted for surveying and diving for manual removal of milfoil during the 2012 season is inadequate in order to contain the growth, and should be increased so that appropriate progress can be made toward eradication. The lack of total surveys during the last few years' leaves a large informational void needed to accurately develop strategic plans. **The Board recommends** milfoil management be increased to 15-16 days and budgeted for in 2013. The Board requests that SWM provide updates on the Washington Department of Labor and Industries issues of private contract divers. We encourage SWM to complete permitting and licensing allowing SWM management to apply herbicides by personnel within the department to save money.

The Board appreciates the increase in project funding addressing the upland runoff contributing to the explosive toxic algal growth in Lake Ketchum. **The Board recommends** that the funding be continued in 2013 and increased to help with implementation of the Algae Control Plan. We request a report as to the results.

The Board would like a report on the results obtained from the Lake Howard Community project and further requests expansion of the education and outreach project to all lakes.

### Stormwater

The Board thanks SWM for its active response to the two critical CWD stormwater flooding problems described in our March 29, 2012 letter to SWM, and for the progress updates. However, to address the underlying surface water run-off problem at its source, **the Board recommends** that SWM make control of CWD upland run-off a higher priority, complete the drainage basin analyses of flows and infrastructure, and promptly pursue upgrades whenever detention facilities are found to be inadequate. The Board supports SWM's current study of the upland drainage north of Stanwood, and urges development of proactive plans for that basin and others, in cooperation with special purpose districts and municipalities. These plans should address stabilization of run-off flows and encourage low-impact practices for developers and all landowners.

**The Board recommends** SWM revise its website to include a specific section for reporting rural drainage problems and investigations. **The Board further requests** that SWM respond to those complaints with due haste, and work with the landowner to develop a solution that is both

sensitive to water quality and our Stillaguamish ecosystem, as well as sensitive to the needs of the landowner.

#### Water Pollution

**The Board again recommends** SWM work with the Snohomish County Planning and Development Services Department to encourage more proactive enforcement of 7.53 SCC, Water Pollution Control, regarding violations that cause or allow “solid, liquid or gaseous contaminants” to be dumped or flow into the drainage system and natural streams. In particular, trash in our river is unsightly and its ingestion by or entrapment of freshwater and marine life is a preventable tragedy that impacts the food chain.

#### Agriculture

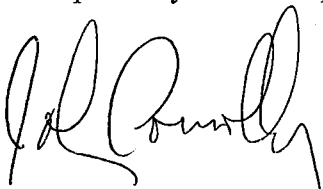
Agricultural activities such as hobby farms, horse barns, small-scale crop and livestock farms, and plant nurseries, are increasing in the Stillaguamish valley, and often are not as effectively regulated for water quality as the larger commercial farms. Although such cases are usually referred to SCD, shortcomings in the referral and compliance (R&C) process can stymie their efforts when the landowner is wary or uncooperative. To improve water quality protection while providing regulatory certainty for landowners, **the Board recommends** that SWM fund and complete clarification of the R&C compliance component, with the Washington Department of Ecology fully involved, and implement it in the coming year.

#### Other Recommendations

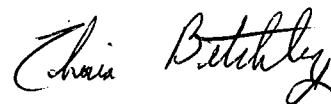
- **The Board recommends** that SWM and SHD implement a process for a timely annual update of the CWD Sanitarian Services Agreement, similar to that with the SCD.
- **The Board asks** SWM to consider an update of important areas of the 2007 State of the Stilly report during 2013 through an addendum process.
- **The Board requests** a presentation on SWM’s process for water quality complaint investigation.

Thank you for considering our recommendations and for your continued efforts to develop solutions to water quality and quantity issues in the Stillaguamish River watershed. We look forward to having your written response, as agreed to, by July 1, 2012 to allow the Board sufficient time to begin preparing our annual letter to the Snohomish County Council.

Respectfully submitted,



John Connolly, Chair



Chris Betchley, Vice Chair