Kittitas County, Washington
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July 20, 2010

Washington State Department of Ecology
Mr. Tom Tebb, Director, Central Regional Office
15 West Yakima Avenue, Suite 200
Yakima, WA 98902

Dear Mr. Tebb:

The Kittitas County Public Health Department has updated its requirements for water availability for the creation of new parcels and issuance of building permits in Upper Kittitas County. These updates are the result of recent discussions between Ecology and the County and subsequent research and discussions with the Kittitas County Prosecutor's Office. We appreciate your participation in those meetings and believe it has assisted us in making sound policy decisions in light of the current issues we are facing.

For land use applications in Upper Kittitas County, we will implement the following policy:

> A finding of water budget neutrality from the Washington State Department of Ecology or a statement that water budget neutrality is not required will be a condition of approval for all subdivision and short plat applications deemed complete after July 16, 2009.

For building permit applications in Upper Kittitas County:

> A finding of water budget neutrality from the Washington State Department of Ecology or a statement that water budget neutrality is not required will be necessary to meet water availability requirements for issuance of a building permit for all applications relying on exempt wells which have not put water to beneficial use prior to July 16, 2009.

Considering the current environment as well as the proposed permanent rule WAC 173-539A, we believe this approach is appropriate in considering the best interests of Kittitas County and landowners. We would like to thank you again for your input and assistance in responding to our request and initial findings as outlined in our letter dated June 14, 2010. We believe that better policy decisions have resulted from that cooperative effort.

We look forward to working with you in finding additional solutions to the ongoing issues related to groundwater withdrawals in Upper Kittitas County and the entire Yakima Basin. We believe, as you have stated, that these solutions need provide balance and opportunity for the many competing stakeholders who have a vested interest in the outcome and valid concerns related to the community, environment, and economy.

Respectfully,

Mark McClain, Chairman | Paul Jewell, Vice-Chairman | Alan Crankovich, Commissioner