



"Volunteers, educators and stewards for birds and habitat conservation"

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Subject: Renewal of Support for the Dungeness Flow Restoration
and Aquifer Recharge Off-Channel Reservoir

The Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society (OPAS) renews our support for the concept of the Dungeness Flow restoration and Aquifer Recharge Off-Channel Reservoir Project that would restore roughly 50% of river flows in drought years and support aquifer recharge. OPAS commends the Dungeness River Management Team for its recognition of the threats posed by Climate Change and for taking proactive mitigation action.

OPAS is a local chapter of the National Audubon Society and a partner in the operation of the Dungeness River Audubon Center. We are also a member of the Dungeness River Management Team.

The off-channel reservoir along River Road has the potential to serve more than hydrology needs in the Dungeness Valley. It will concurrently provide habitat for birds and other wildlife. The 2014 Audubon Birds and Climate Change Report states that climate stress puts 189 species of birds seen in Washington State at risk. Our grandchildren might not see your favorite birds in your backyard by 2050. Species including the Clarks Nutcracker, the Red-breasted Nuthatch and the Common Loon may be gone from Olympic National Park. As our now common birds move north, there is a

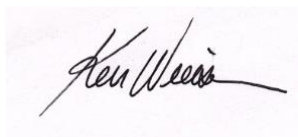
predicted 23% turnover in new species that will be displaced from other regions moving into our climatic zone. We strongly support the off-channel reservoir design including features to enhance seasonal and year-round habitat for birds.

Management plans for the reservoir and its surrounding uplands will also influence water quality, including the effects of that water when it is released downstream. Toxic algal blooms, such as those at Jefferson County's Anderson Lake, could potentially influence downstream river conditions, the use of water for irrigation, and recreation potential of the reservoir. Plans for capturing water for the reservoir and for its release must be sensitive to the needs of river biology in all seasons.

OPAS is prepared to participate in the planning process to ensure that wildlife habitats are included in the design of the 396-acre tract to the greatest extent practical. We advocate protecting those revegetated seasonal wetlands abutting the reservoir to maintain high quality water resources required for environmental, wildlife, agricultural, and recreational needs.

Since 2019 OPAS has endorsed the concept of constructing an off-channel reservoir to meet the needs of the native fish and farmers downstream, and is fully prepared to be part of maintaining habitat needs for birds and animals throughout the Dungeness River watershed.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, reading "Ken Wiersema", is displayed on a light pink rectangular background.

Ken Wiersema

President