

April 22, 2021

**Re: Support for the Dungeness Flow Restoration and Aquifer Recharge Off-Channel Reservoir Project**

To Whom It May Concern:

We write to share our strong support of the *Dungeness Flow Restoration and Aquifer Recharge Off-Channel Reservoir Project* (Off-Channel Reservoir) funding application.

Washington Water Trust (WWT) is a conservation group dedicated to restoring stream flows for salmon and steelhead across the state. Our collaboration in the Dungeness with Clallam County and many other partners, has resulted in the successful implementation of the Dungeness Water Exchange water mitigation program, aquifer recharge, dry-year leasing programs with the Dungeness Water Users Association (DWUA), strategic source switch projects as well as the combined efforts of irrigators and the conservation district to improve the irrigation water use efficiency. The Off-Channel Reservoir project is a significant leap forward towards developing a sustainable watershed and community, while restoring instream flows.

Climate change projections for the Dungeness watershed indicate decreased snowpack with increased rain events and flooding. The Off-Channel Reservoir will deliver a climate change resilient solution by storing early-season, high-flow water for use by irrigators during the late season as an alternative to river diversions when flows are already low. This source switch will improve flows up to 50 percent in drought years from August to September when irrigation demand is highest and ESA-listed Chinook and steelhead are returning to spawn in the Dungeness River. Additionally, the Off-Channel Reservoir will expand capacity for the existing aquifer recharge mitigation and restoration programs to offset permit exempt well impacts and restore independent streams.

Funding will contribute to construction enabling this important project to move forward and improve instream habitat for listed and protected species.

WWT has pursued collaborative water management solutions throughout the state for 20 years to further stream flow restoration. Our collaboration in the Dungeness basin to develop and implement local sustainable management solutions, including Dungeness Off-Channel Reservoir Project, demonstrates the value of this cooperative approach.

We appreciate your support for this important project.

Sincerely,



James Kraft, Executive Director  
Washington Water Trust