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For Immediate Release

WestWater Research Advises On Crucial Environmental Water Leasing Program for Endangered Salmon

WestWater Research advised on a crucial water-leasing program in the Dungeness River basin, Washington that will benefit both local farmers and threatened and endangered salmon.

By focusing on water transactions and valuation, the water marketing firm provided essential data and recommendations the Washington Department of Ecology needed to finalize negotiations for the 2003 water leasing program.

To help offset low stream-flow conditions across Washington, the state legislature initiated a water-leasing program several years ago. During the 2001 drought, the Ecology Department leased 460 acre-feet of water from agricultural users to enhance late summer flows for fish passage. This year's dry weather conditions have resulted in near record flows in the Dungeness basin again and leasing more water at the end of the season will be critical to fish survival.

To help establish an efficient and effective program to meet continued future water needs, Ecology brought in WestWater Research of Laramie, Wyo., to review the Dungeness leasing program and similar leasing programs throughout the West. The water marketing firm developed a comprehensive pricing and water leasing rate structure for the basin that will serve the needs of local users for years to come.

"West Water's participation was critical to the success of this year's leasing program and provided a solid basis for negotiating future leases," said Heidi Adelsman from the Department of Ecology.

WestWater Research is one of the few firms nationwide that specializes in emerging water markets. "We are committed to developing water markets for endangered species recovery and other environmental needs," said Clay Landry, chief executive officer.

The Dungeness River basin is not only home to several threatened species of fish, but it is also well known for its biological diversity. To protect both species at risk as well as the abundance of other species throughout the river basin, maintaining adequate stream flows is critical. The water-leasing program is proving its worth with native species and also with local farmers for whom it is a popular option.

"These leases are one element of a broad effort by Ecology to reach win-win solutions for agriculture and salmon," stated Ecology's Adelsman.

WestWater Research is a leading water-marketing firm, specializing in water resources development, water transactions, and valuations for water rights and assets. WestWater Research is forging new markets for water by providing solutions to the energy industry and water suppliers as well as agricultural producers, landowners, and real estate developers.
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