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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

**Lake Tapps Community Council and Cascade Water Alliance
Sign Agreement to Ensure Future of Lake Tapps**

April 13, 2009, Lake Tapps -- After 10 years of discussions and hard work, the Lake Tapps Community Council and Cascade Water Alliance signed documents that will ensure Lake Tapps is preserved for the community's use and enjoyment. The documents will ensure lake levels and address actions to be taken during potential droughts as well. A formal document will be prepared within a month.

"As the future owners of this beautiful natural resource, we want to assure the community we are here to be a good neighbor now and in the future," said Lloyd Warren, chair of Cascade. "We are proud of this agreement and proud to call the Lake Tapps Community Council a partner."

"I bought my lot in 1965, and built my house in 1966," said Chuck Romeo, Lake Tapps Community Council president. "I've raised my family on Lake Tapps, and my daughter still lives next to me today. This is a great and very tight-knit community, and I couldn't imagine what it would be like without the lake here -- it would be a great loss. I give a lot of credit to Cascade and am very pleased to know that this agreement provides an on-going legacy for my kids, grandkids, and this community into the future."

Ralph Mason, a director of the Lake Tapps Community Council observed that "It's been a long process. Ten years ago the community joined together in an effort to determine what it would take to save Lake Tapps. Countless hours were spent researching economic, operational, and ecological issues. Enormous credit is due Dick Tyler, Ken Castile, and many others who tirelessly generated spreadsheets and graphs showing the affects of various operational river flows into the lake. This analysis together with the modeling activities of Cascade Water Alliance and the Washington Department of Ecology played a key role in arriving at this agreement."

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According to Leon Stucki, the vice president of the Lake Tapps Community Council, the primary goal of the Lake Tapps Community has long been the guaranteed viability of Lake Tapps. He notes that the stated goal for ten years has been that "failure is not an option!" As residents around this lake, "we value this environment with its fish, eagles, osprey, and other wildlife; the lake itself is an important part of our region, and we are deeply appreciative of its preservation." Stucki thanked Chuck Clarke, the new CEO of the Cascade Water Alliance, for sitting down, rolling up his sleeves, and working with the Community Council through its information and studies: "Chuck has come back with a proposal that makes sense." He also expressed thanks to the elected officials, "without whom we would not be here today. A big thanks to Pierce County Council Member Shawn Bunney, Representative Chris Hurst, Senator Pam Roach, Representative Dan Roach, Senator Maria Cantwell, and Representative Dave Reichert."

Pierce County Councilmember Shawn Bunney, who has been a long-term participant in these efforts, said he is confident the Lake Tapps Community Council and Cascade effort will be a success. "This is a model of regional cooperation -- good people working together to complete this effort. The community has invested thousands of hours in saving this lake, and we are 30 days away from making this a reality."

Local legislators also played a key role in facilitating the discussions. Senator Pam Roach called the first community meeting in 1999; these early meetings eventually led to the creation of the Lake Tapps Community Council. Senator Roach stated, "I remember the newspaper account in January 1999 that PSE might sell Lake Tapps. I set up the first community meeting at the Emerald Hills Elementary School library at that time to help bring the community together. The community has worked hard over the last 10 years to protect their lake, and we've come a long way. This is a magnificent victory for the Lake Tapps community. It's a victory for our community and the region."

State Rep. Chris Hurst applauded the agreement. "There's nothing more vital to the American Dream than owning your own home. Maybe a dream home on the water. For families on Lake Tapps, that dream turned into a nightmare 10 years ago when the lake was put in peril, but finally, that nightmare is now coming to an end. I am proud of this historic agreement. I am proud of the determination and character of the people who live here and to have fought alongside them for 10 years. I can see the end of the nightmare today, because we have demonstrated that we can protect this lake. We can protect the dream."



Lake Tapps is a [reservoir](#) created in 1911 and is currently maintained by [Puget Sound Energy](#), Inc. (PSE.) PSE had considered shutting down the project as unprofitable, while local residents organized efforts to maintain the lake as it is. Lake Tapps is about 4.5 square miles in surface area and has about 45 miles of shoreline.

Cascade is a nonprofit corporation which will provide safe, clean and reliable water supply to its members, comprised of five cities and three water and sewer districts that serve 370,000 residents and 22,000 businesses. Cascade is in the process of purchasing Lake Tapps from PSE for an eventual water supply source. The sale must be approved by the Washington Utilities and Transportation Commission.

Cascade and the Lake Tapps Community Council will work over the next month to finalize details of the agreements. Boards of both organizations must then approve the documents, which will be implemented when the purchase of the lake is final. "It's taken a decade, but now we are 30 days away from ensuring the certainty of this beautiful lake," said Bunney.

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