



## Lake Tapps, water for fish, cities and recreation

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Editorial

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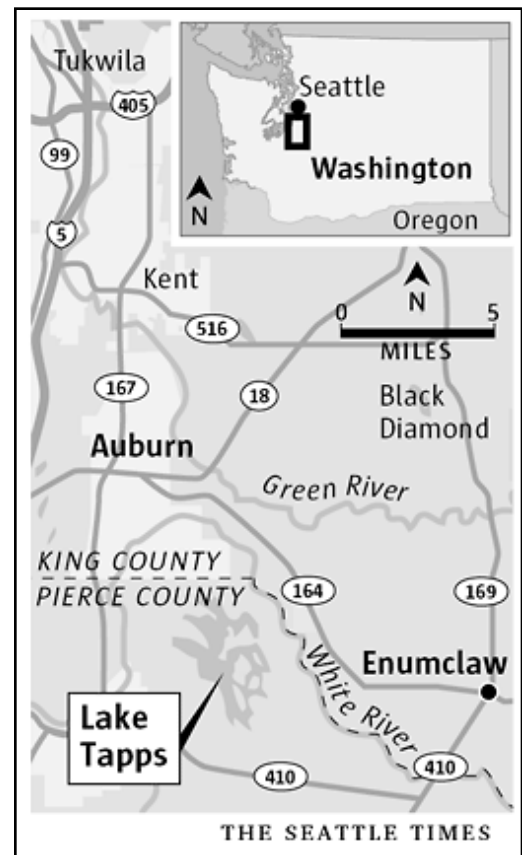
Cascade Water Alliance and property owners around Lake Tapps have agreed to long-term plans to make the reservoir a municipal water supply and a reliable recreation amenity. Negotiations found certainty for both uses.

**YEARS** of stormy negotiations about the future dual use of Lake Tapps as a municipal water supply and a recreational amenity have been successfully resolved. Good news for regional water planning.

Cascade Water Alliance signed an agreement with the Lake Tapps Community Council, representing a number of homeowners' groups, to wrap up a deal that looks as far out as 2040.

Cascade commits to a normal lake level from April 15 through September 30 each year for 30 years. Efforts will be made to keep lake levels up through October.

Lake Tapps, south of Auburn, was created nearly 100 years ago to power a hydroelectric dam. Puget Sound Energy stopped generating electricity at the site in 2004. Cascade, a consortium of five Eastside communities and three water districts, is buying the reservoir from the utility as a future source of drinking water. The deal is pending state approval.



Water for today...  
and tomorrow



The reservoir receives water diverted from the White River. Last summer, Cascade worked out agreements with the Puyallup and Muckleshoot tribes to protect salmon runs.

Unresolved for more than a decade through hit-and-mostly-miss negotiations was the future of Lake Tapps for lakeside residents. A fresh round of intensive, data-filled talks and a nudge from new Cascade CEO Chuck Clarke are credited with progress. So is the work of Pierce County Council Member Shawn Bunney, state Rep. Chris Hurst and state Sen. Pam Roach.

One of the factoids that helped extend the future date when Lake Tapps might be tapped is a general recognition that regional water use is down. Conservation, housing choices, efforts to reduce sprawl and water-efficient plumbing standards all play a role.

Access to future water supplies is vitally important to the region's growth and economic health. Cascade serves 370,000 residents and 22,000 businesses, and it's part of a regional water system that moves water around and across utility service areas the way electricity is shifted about.

Cascade's agreement with the tribes and the agreement to agree with property owners around Lake Tapps is good news for fish, cities and recreation.

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