

Water Resources in Thurston County 2008

Our League believes that concerning water resources, the overriding consideration should be protecting the quantity and quality of the water resource.

Our League Advocates:

- Enforcement of existing and future water laws supported with adequate funding, reliable data, and public education.
- Additional state legislation to reduce or eliminate the use of exempt wells. Re-defining water use realistically to reflect the maximum withdrawal limit for private residential use. There should be provisions for recognizing historic use. Local governments should require all wells, including exempt wells, to be metered for compliance with withdrawal limits and to charge for water use with incentives for conservation.
- Population forecast models should reflect water availability. There should be concurrency of water availability and demand required under the Growth Management Act (GMA) for comprehensive planning and plat approval. Demand analysis should incorporate both consumptive and in-stream uses and consider the effects of climate change. Adequate water availability can be improved by conservation, low-impact development and gray water recharge to aquifers. Boundaries can be defined by Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs).
- A cost effective management system for the collection of water resources data. There is a need for consistent data with standardized protocols, available in a centralized repository with internet access. Adequate funding for data collection is essential.

The Study supporting these positions can be found by clicking on “LWVTC Positions”, as well as some Water Resources comments on Olympia’s Comprehensive Plan update.