



June 18, 2015

To Washington State Departments of Ecology and Commerce:

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is pleased to provide this letter in support of the ***Regional Dairy Engagement Initiative*** pilot project.

The LIO supports this project because it aligns with a number of recommended near term actions for the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds, as well as with the three Strategic Initiatives (Stormwater, Habitat and Shellfish) in the 2014/2015 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

The goal of this two-year pilot project is to provide dedicated and technically trained/certified resource planners to engage dairy producers in the Central Puget Sound (Island, King, Pierce and Snohomish counties – 61 producers) for the purpose of improving the management of potential pollutants. As most dairy operations exist within the floodplains of Puget Sound where water quality issues are intensified by flooding and where salmon recovery goals include restoration of habitat, resource managers need to develop strategies to actively work with dairies to manage their operations and install practices that support recovery and floodplain management goals. The Snohomish Conservation District will be taking the lead on this project, working in partnership with other Central Puget Sound-area conservation districts to implement an outreach and engagement strategy for dairies that will support both the recovery of Puget Sound and a viable dairy industry.

Completion of the ***Regional Dairy Engagement Initiative*** will advance four of the LIO's recommended near term actions (concerning agricultural runoff, floodplain management for farm-fish-flood, the Pollution Identification and Correction project, and coordinated education and outreach leading to behavior change) as well as addressing all three Strategic Initiatives in the 2014/2015 Puget Sound Action Agenda. The LIO endorses the completion of this project which will benefit multiple stakeholders and implement key near term actions to help achieve targets identified in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Thank you for considering this project for funding.

Sincerely,

Christie True
Co-Chair, Executive Committee Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization