

RESOLUTION NO. _____

A JOINT RESOLUTION OF BELLINGHAM CITY COUNCIL, WHATCOM COUNTY COUNCIL, AND LAKE WHATCOM WATER AND SEWER DISTRICT COMMISSIONERS REAFFIRMING OUR SHARED COMMITMENT TO THE HEALTH OF LAKE WHATCOM, SETTING MILESTONES FOR 2014 THROUGH 2016 TO IMPROVE ITS WATER QUALITY, AND SETTING GOALS FOR THE WORK PLAN OF THE LAKE WHATCOM POLICY GROUP.

WHEREAS, Lake Whatcom is the drinking water source for approximately 100,000 Whatcom County residents; and

WHEREAS, the lake's water quality has been generally declining since at least 1988; and

WHEREAS, in 1992 the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County, and the precursor to the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District jointly formed the Lake Whatcom Management Program and thereby declared their intention to work together to protect and manage Lake Whatcom; and

WHEREAS, Lake Whatcom was first listed on the 303(d) list of impaired water bodies under the federal Clean Water Act for excessive levels of phosphorus and fecal coliform in 1998; and

WHEREAS, a Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) Report of Findings for total phosphorus and fecal coliform in the Lake Whatcom Watershed was issued in 2008 by the Washington State Department of Ecology (DoE) and the US Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) which, when finalized as an Implementation Plan, will require dramatic reductions in phosphorus loading to the Lake; and

WHEREAS, excessive phosphorus levels in Lake Whatcom have required substantial investments from the City of Bellingham, Whatcom County and the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District to ensure long-term access to sufficient amounts of high quality drinking water; and

WHEREAS, the City, County and District strive to ensure that their investments result in effective, sustained annual reductions of phosphorus loading to the lake; and

WHEREAS, sustained reductions in phosphorus loading to the Lake will reduce the long-term costs to the City, its water customers, and the customers of the Lake Whatcom Water and Sewer District; and

WHEREAS, substantial additional investments over a number of years will be needed to clean up the Lake; and

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WHEREAS, the Lake Whatcom Management Program's series of 5 Year Plans have established and implemented actions in major Program Areas needed to improve water quality in the Lake; and

WHEREAS, in 2014 development of the next 5 Year Plan will identify and schedule implementation of actions for the five year period, 2015 to 2019; and

WHEREAS, completion of a TMDL Implementation Plan will require melding of the load reduction actions contained in the 5 Year Plans with identification of long-term costs needed to achieve reduction targets identified in the 2008 TMDL Report, identification of funding sources, and establishment of a timeline for achieving those reduction targets; and

WHEREAS, the Lake Whatcom Policy Group is well positioned to work with staff and the Administrations to identify and facilitate the work needed to complete the TMDL Implementation Plan;

NOW THEREFORE, BE IT RESOLVED BY THE CITY COUNCIL OF THE CITY OF BELLINGHAM:

In cooperation with their respective administrations the councils/commissions of the Lake Whatcom Management Program establish the following milestones for actions necessary to complete and implement a TMDL Implementation Plan and direct the Lake Whatcom Policy Group to initiate and oversee the accomplishment of these milestones.

1. **2014.** Establish policy principles for all areas of investment, and identify expenditures needed to achieve load reduction goals in each area.
2. **2015.** Analyze expenditure levels, identify funding sources and set specific timetables for each area of investment.
3. **2016.** Complete an Implementation Plan for phosphorus reduction and control of fecal coliform that will meet the requirements of the TMDL, protect our drinking water, and restore lake and tributary water quality.

PASSED by the City Council this ___ day of _____, 2014.

Council President

City of Bellingham
City Attorney
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APPROVED by me this _____ day of _____, 2014.

Mayor

ATTEST: _____
Finance Director

APPROVED AS TO FORM:

Office of the City Attorney

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