



May 27, 2020

Joint Legislative Audit and Report Committee
106 11th Ave SW Suite 2500
PO BOX 40910
Olympia, WA 98504-0910

Re: Walla Walla Watershed Partnership Financial and Performance Audits

To Whom It May Concern,

I am a member of the Walla Walla City Council and the city's voting member on the Walla Walla Watershed Partnership board. (Hereafter, the Partnership.) This letter is sent on behalf of the City of Walla Walla in support of the Partnership's response to the financial and performance audits done of the Partnership.

The Partnership was created by the state legislature in 2009 and given a ten-year life. The legislature in 2019 reauthorized the Partnership for an additional two years (until June 30, 2021). As part of that reauthorization, the Partnership was to have both a financial audit and a performance audit done. The recommendations of these audits are that the Partnership disbands and the Department of Ecology take over and perform what the Partnership was initially empowered to do.

The City of Walla Walla believes and strongly argues that whether the Partnership as presently constituted continues, the formulation and implementation of plans and procedures for the Walla Walla River should be done locally by people and interests that are local. Local domestic, agricultural and environmental points of view and interests (fish, farms and families) should be at the table and in charge of deciding what and how water in the Walla Walla River watershed should be appropriated and used. Yes, the Department of Ecology is and should remain an important participant but planning for and control of the Walla Walla River should not be turned over to the Department.

The Partnership has had successes and however it is reconfigured or staffed, it should be by local interests, businesses and residents, not a state agency far removed.

Thank you for your serious consideration of this important local issue.

A handwritten signature in blue ink that reads "Tom" followed by a stylized surname.

Tom Scribner
Mayor, City of Walla Walla

Cc: Chris Hyland
Judith Johnson

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