

Vancouver Audubon Society
c/o 308 NE 124th Avenue
Vancouver, Washington

April 28, 2006

EPA Coordinator
Martha Lentz
Office of Environmental Assessment
EPA, Region 10 (OEA-095)
1200 Sixth Ave.
Seattle, WA 98101
e-mail: lentz.martha@epa.gov

RE: Petition to Designate the Troutdale Aquifer as the Sole Source Water Supply for Clark County Washington

Dear Ms. Lentz:

The Vancouver Audubon Society supports the petition to declare the Troutdale Aquifer as the sole source water for residents of Clark County.

In the first place, most of the population of Clark County depends on the Troutdale Aquifer for water for every household use. The City of Vancouver, which provides water for all residents of the city as well as many people living in unincorporated Clark County, obtains water from wells that tap the Troutdale Aquifer. Other cities also use the Troutdale Aquifer. All people who take their water from private wells also are using the Troutdale Aquifer.

In the second place, it would difficult to obtain water for the population of Clark County from any other source. Columbia River water would require extensive treatment. In addition, it would be difficult to remove some of the pollutants from industry and farm runoff from upstream. Taking water from the other rivers of Clark County would further imperil the salmon and steelhead runs that are listed under the Endangered Species Act, as well as other aquatic organisms and birds and mammals that use riparian areas.

In the third place, the Troutdale Aquifer needs the additional protection. There already have been instances of contamination of the ground water, most notably by a chrome-plating business over a decade ago.

While our main mission is to protect birds and other wildlife, we recognize that protection of human drinking water can, indirectly, protect habitat. Aside from the fact that all our members are human and would be adversely affected should our only source of drinking water become polluted, we recognize that any effort to obtain water from sources other than the Troutdale Aquifer could hurt wildlife habitat. Thank you for the opportunity to comment on this important issue.

Sincerely,

Gretchen Starke

Conservation Chair,

Vancouver Audubon Society