



ECOSTUDIES INSTITUTE

A nonprofit scientific organization

P.O. Box 1614, Olympia, WA 98507

ph: 305-213-8829; em: ecostudies@ecoinst.org

Mayor Pete Kmet – pkmet@ci.tumwater.wa.us

City Administrator John Doan – jdoan@ci.tumwater.wa.us

Fire Chief Brian Hurley – bhurley@ci.tumwater.wa.us

We are writing to request permission to conduct prescribed burning within Tumwater city limits to improve habitat quality for threatened and endangered species. Both Kaufman Entities and Puget Western have entered into Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) agreements with the United States Fish and Wildlife Service to mitigate development. To meet the habitat quality standards outlined in the agreements, prescribed burning is desirable. Prescribed burning accomplishes multiple goals in restoration and is the historic disturbance regime that originally maintained our South Sound prairies. Prescribed burning kills the noxious weed Scotch broom, removes accumulated vegetation and provides conditions conducive for native seeding and prairie restoration, while improving conditions for and vigor of native fire-adapted species. Burning also reduces the need for other methods of invasive plant control such as herbicide use, which can be more costly over the long-term and threaten public safety and environmental health. Prescribed burning also reduces the threat of wildfire in these urban open spaces.

All burning is conducted under risk-mitigated conditions, with trained and experienced firefighters. Our prescribed burn program has completed more than 1000 burns in the South Sound and on Joint Base Lewis McChord over the past 15 years without incident. All burns would be reviewed and permitted by the appropriate jurisdictions. Burn operations are generally completed in an hour with minimal lingering smoke. Given the nature of prescribed burning, smoke is managed to cause the least nuisance, generally floating away from population centers with favorable winds. All boundaries are prepped with burn breaks to prevent escape. Burning is also conducted under mild conditions, temperature and winds, to minimize risk. Neighbors are notified early in the summer of the potential for a prescribed burn and anyone requesting notification is given day before notification by email. Additional notifications for the requested burns are expected.

The City of Tumwater and Thurston County are both currently engaged in HCP preparation. Developing a procedure to grant permission for ecological prescribed burning is also very likely to be necessary for achieving city and county HCP conservation goals.

Thank you for your time and consideration on this important issue. Please let us know if we can provide further information or engage in further discussion to help inform your decision on this matter. We are looking forward to hearing back from you soon!

Mason McKinley
Ecostudies Institute Fire Program Manager

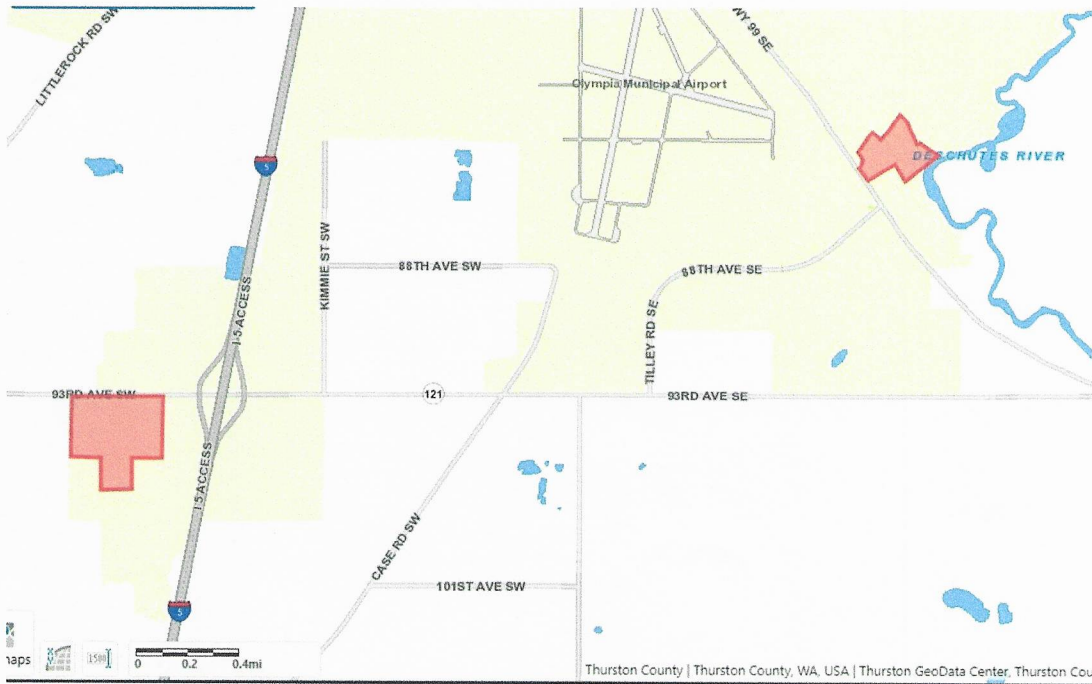
Joel Molander
Puget Western Inc.

Sanders Freed
CNLM Restoration Manager

John Kaufman
Kaufman Inc

committed to ecological research and conservation

www.ecoinst.org



Deschutes Corridor Property (east) - 8410 Old Highway 99 SE- 98501
Tumwater West Property (west) - 3111 SW 93rd- 98502