Requiring SEPA Review for Water Rights Transfer at the Point of Origin

WHEREAS current Washington State law and rules require a single EIS (Environmental Impact Statement) or SEPA (State Environmental Policy Act) review for a project proposal in the county/region of the development;

WHEREAS, when a water right is transferred to a project different from the original county/region point of origin, only the county/region of the new project proposal area is reviewed; and

WHEREAS, when water rights of the northern tier of counties (Okanogan, Ferry, Stevens & Pond Oreille) and neighboring counties (including Spokane, Lincoln, Douglas, Chelan & Grant) are sold downstream to another jurisdiction the EIS or SEPA review does not include the county/region of origin, and does not address the adverse impact to the communities, irrigation districts and local economies at the original county/region water right point of withdrawal;

THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Agriculture and Rural Caucus (ARC) and WSDCC shall work with the Washington State Legislature and the Washington State Department of Ecology to change current laws and rules to require inclusion of an EIS or SEPA review and public comment period covering the jurisdiction of the original water right county/region.

Submitted by the Agriculture and Rural Caucus to the Washington State Democratic Central Committee for consideration at its January 30, 2010 meeting in Seattle. (Date Submitted 1/5/2010)

The WSDCC Resolutions Committee "RECOMMENDED A PASS" on this resolution at its January 30, 2010 meeting in Seattle.

The WSDCC "PASSED" this resolution at its January 30, 2010 meeting in Seattle.