



Dungeness River Management Team
Cooperative Management of Our Watershed's Resources
Coordinated by Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Clallam County
1033 Old Blyn Highway • Sequim, WA 98382 • (360) 683-1109

March 30, 2017

Board of Clallam County Commissioners
223 East Fourth Street, Suite 4
Port Angeles, Washington 98362

RE: Addressing Water Quality Impairments at Golden Sands Slough

Dear Clallam County Commissioners:

The Dungeness River Management Team (DRMT) is a nationally recognized and non-regulatory partnership of individuals, organizations and other stakeholders cooperatively working on Dungeness Watershed management issues. We write today seeking the Board's commitment to address immediate threats to human and aquatic health from fecal coliform (FC) pollution entering Dungeness Bay via the Golden Sands slough.

We recently received an update by Clallam County Environmental Health (CCEH) staff about the Pollution Identification and Correction (PIC) Program, currently focused on the Golden Sands area. The water quality challenges in the slough are apparent, yet longstanding. Despite Washington Department of Ecology's 2002 recommendation to reduce FC in Golden Sands by 82%, monitoring results frequently show elevated levels in the area, including recently documented sewage plumes. The perpetual nature of the problem is due in large part to continued, unpermitted land-use activities, including improper disposal of human sewage.

As you may know, many of the lots at Golden Sands are restricted to seasonal recreational vehicle use, and do not meet minimum size requirements for permanent structures. Unfortunately, over the past several decades, many of the dwellings on these lots have evolved into permanent residences, often without septic systems and relying instead on illegal, aboveground storage tanks. Contaminants from these tanks wind up in Golden Sands slough, eventually discharging into Dungeness Bay and its tidelands, a once highly productive shellfish growing area. This continued threat to human and aquatic life will inevitably result in lost ground, with regard to recent shellfish upgrades in Dungeness Bay.

Improving sewage treatment in Golden Sands Slough requires difficult work by Clallam County Environmental Health. It also demands the attention of the Clallam County Department of Community Development in order to address illegal land-use activities. Illegal dumping of human waste into water bodies is unacceptable and a risk to public health, as well as to the livelihood of shellfish growers. Yet, the problem has persisted due to lack of timely enforcement of regulations.

The DRMT appreciates and strongly supports the water-quality-improvement work currently underway in Golden Sands via the PIC Program by CCEH and the Clallam Conservation District. It is clear this high priority work needs support from *all* levels of county government. We respectfully request a response to the DRMT that commits to correcting the pollution problems in the Golden Sands area by enforcing water quality regulations without further delay.

Sincerely,

Scott Chitwood, Chair, DRMT

Cc: Clallam County Health and Human Services
Clallam County Environmental Health
Clallam County Department of Community Development
Clallam County Prosecuting Attorney's Office

2017 DRMT Membership

<i>Clallam Conservation District</i>	<i>North Olympic Land Trust</i>
<i>Clallam County</i>	<i>Protect the Peninsula's Future</i>
<i>Clallam PUD #1</i>	<i>Riverside Property Owners</i>
<i>City of Sequim</i>	<i>Water Users Association</i>
<i>Dungeness Beach Association</i>	<i>Sports Fisheries</i>
<i>Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge</i>	<i>US Forest Service</i>
<i>Olympic Peninsula Audubon Society</i>	<i>WA Department of Ecology</i>
<i>Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe</i>	