



CITY OF BAINBRIDGE ISLAND

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City Selects First Ground Water Modeling Scenarios: Informative Sessions Scheduled

Bainbridge Island, WA, October 1, 2009 – The City of Bainbridge Island and United States Geological Survey (USGS) have finalized the first modeling scenarios to be run on a ground water model for the island currently under development by the USGS.

“When completed, this transient numeric model will be an important tool for understanding the characteristics of the island’s aquifers,” said Water Resources Specialist Cami Apfelbeck. “It will give us a better understanding of the way in which changing conditions may impact our ground water through factors such as saltwater intrusion, recharge, drawdown, ground water-surface water interaction and climate change.”

The initial scenarios were developed with comments and input from the general public, citizen advocacy groups, City Council and staff following public meetings held in March and August. “I was pleased with the level of interest and feedback we received,” Apfelbeck said. “I am particularly grateful for the level of inquiry and participation by our City Council members, as well as from citizens on the Environmental Technical Advisory Committee, the Watershed Council, and the Water Resources Committee.”

When modeled by the USGS, the initial scenarios will help develop baseline parameters for future analysis and modeling. “These initial scenarios are intentionally designed to be broad enough to encompass the most extreme ranges of potential population, land use, and climate change in order to provide a basis of comparison for subsequent model runs,” Apfelbeck said.

Initial runs will address the following scenarios:

1. Pre-development Steady State (what the resource looked like before human inhabitation)
2. Base Case-Current Conditions (what the resource looks like currently, with no additional population, land use, or climate change)
3. Expected Impact (how the resource will be impacted by the most probable population, land use, and climate change)
4. Highest Potential Impact (how the resource will be impacted by the highest potential population, land use, and climate change)

5. Least Potential Impact (how the resource will be impacted by the least potential population, land use, and climate change)
6. Future Land Use Modification (how the resource will benefit from protection of critical aquifer recharge areas (conservation area designation))

To support the scenario selection process, City planners developed a population and land use model which uses growth figures from the State Office of Financial Management and follows the growth management strategy adopted through the City's Comprehensive Plan as well as the recommendations of the 2025 Growth Advisory Committee related to future land use planning.

The City's Planning and Community Development and Water Resources staff will present the report to the City Council on Thursday, October 15. An information session will be held for the public on Thursday, October 29. Both meetings are scheduled for 5:00 – 7:00 pm in Council Chambers, City Hall.

The finalized scenarios and selection methodology are described in a Ground Water Numerical Model Initial Scenario Selection Report which is available at City Hall and at www.ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us. For more information on the ground water model, contact Cami Apfelbeck at (206)780-3779. For information on population or land use calculations, contact Libby Hudson at (206)780-3767.

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Background:

The City has been working on the transient numeric modeling project in partnership with the USGS since December, 2006. Research to date has gathered data on well levels, springs and seep flows, stream flow and weather patterns. Based on this data, USGS staff have developed a conceptual hydrogeologic model, incorporating additional information from well logs and previous studies. In addition to public meetings in March and August, 2009, public involvement has included presentations at the City's Annual Water Resources Open House events in 2007 and 2008.