

SUMAS OUT: What You Need to Know — And Why Time Is Running Out

What Is SUMAS OUT?

SUMAS OUT is a coalition of Sumas Basin water-right holders — farmers, families, local businesses, and the City of Sumas — taking legal action to **remove the Sumas Basin from the WRIA 1 (Nooksack) water rights adjudication**.

Our position is simple:

Adjudicating the Sumas Basin is unnecessary, harmful, and brings no benefit to the people who rely on this water every day.

The City of Sumas supplies water to more than 1,700 residents, industrial facilities, dairies, commercial users, and the water associations that serve most rural households. If Ecology forces the Sumas Basin into adjudication, **rate hikes and even water-use interruptions become real risks.**

Why This Matters — and Why It's Urgent

If the Sumas Basin stays inside the adjudication boundary:

- Your water right will be ranked *behind* tribal treaty rights in the Nooksack Basin — even though the tribes **have no treaty rights in the Sumas Basin**.
- Ecology may restrict Sumas Basin groundwater use to protect **Nooksack River low flows**, even though our basin is **hydrologically separate**.
- You could face **curtailments**, meaning you may be ordered to stop using water during summer low-flow periods.
- Farming operations, rural homes, and city systems may experience **severe and unfair water limits**, similar to the Yakima Basin where some users received only 50% of their normal water and cities were restricted to indoor-use only.

And this could happen **even though the map clearly shows most of the Sumas Basin lies in Canada**, outside U.S. jurisdiction, making a complete or fair adjudication structurally impossible.

(See highlighted basin in PDF map).

Why the Sumas Basin Should Be Excluded

1. We are not part of the Nooksack low-flow problem.

The Sumas Basin is hydrologically separate, has abundant water, and does **not** contribute to Nooksack River salmon-flow issues.

2. There is no legal reason to include us.

The Lummi and Nooksack Tribes have reservation lands and treaty rights to instream flows in the Nooksack Basin, but not in the Sumas, according to historical court filings.

3. Ecology has a long record of regulating Sumas water using speculation rather than local science.

Allowing adjudication to expand Ecology's power over the Sumas Basin is dangerous for agriculture, business, and families.

4. Canadian water users are exempt.

Without jurisdiction over Canada, any adjudication here is incomplete and cannot truly manage the resource.

Frequently Asked Questions (FAQ)

Will I be affected if SUMAS OUT succeeds?

Yes — *positively*. Removal of the Sumas Basin would protect your water rights, keep local rates stable, and prevent unnecessary curtailments.

Do I still have to prepare adjudication claim forms?

For now, **yes**.

SUMAS OUT will request the court extend the filing deadline, but we cannot guarantee the court will agree. Claims are currently due **May 1, 2026**, and the stay on filings expires **December 15, 2025**.

What does curtailment actually look like?

Forced shut-offs during dry months, reduced or eliminated irrigation, emergency city restrictions, and major economic harm — as already experienced in the Yakima Basin.

How You Can Take Action NOW

SUMAS OUT has the resources to file the legal motion — but **we need community support to finish the fight**.

1. Contribute financially

Send checks to:

Sumas Out / DAWG (c/o Foothills Bookkeeping)

410 W 3rd St, Nooksack, WA 98276

2. Join the legal motion

Contact attorney **Thomas Pors**

✉ tompors@comcast.net

3. Spread the word

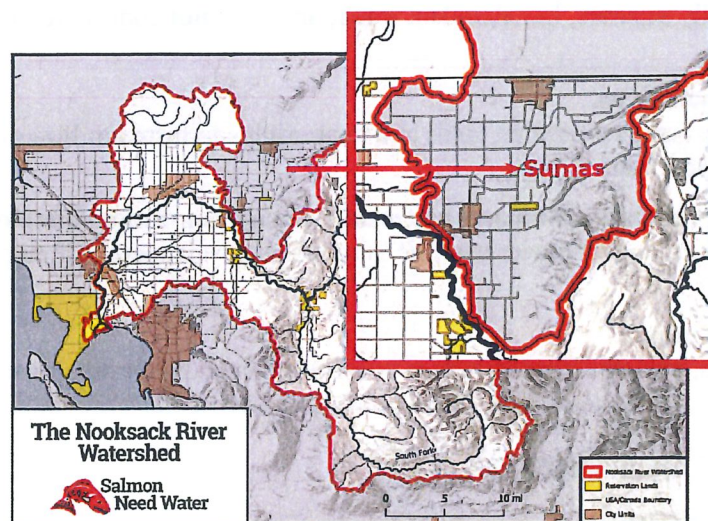
Talk to your neighbors, local farmers, and businesses.

The more people who understand what's at stake, the stronger our position becomes.

Time Is Short — Your Water Future Depends on Action Today

If Sumas Basin is not removed from the adjudication now, we may never get another chance. Protect your farm, your home, your city, and your water.

Stand with SUMAS OUT.





The Nooksack River Watershed

