



FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Everett Voters Grant Legal Rights to Their Watershed – Redefining the Future of Environmental Protection

EVERETT, Washington — In a historic move for environmental protection in the Pacific Northwest, Everett voters have approved Initiative 24-03, making the city the first in Washington state to grant legally enforceable rights to a natural ecosystem. The measure, which passed with more than 56% of the vote, grants the Snohomish River Watershed legal standing, empowering the community to advocate for its protection by allowing Everett residents, organizations, and city agencies to represent the watershed in court.

While other Washington cities have passed symbolic, non-binding proclamations supporting the rights of nature—such as Gig Harbor and Port Townsend recognizing the rights of Southern Resident Orcas—Everett has gone further by enshrining the legal rights of a natural entity into local law. This initiative positions Everett as a leader among a growing number of jurisdictions across the United States embracing this forward thinking approach to environmental protection.

"This is a game-changer for the environment," said Abi Ludwig, spokesperson for Standing for Washington, the grassroots group driving the initiative. "By granting legal standing to the watershed, Everett is boldly safeguarding its natural resources. This critical move empowers nature with both a voice and the legal tools it needs to defend itself."

The success of Everett Initiative 24-03 has sparked interest in other Washington cities, including Olympia, where local environmental challenges like salmon habitat destruction have prompted a need for stronger protections. As traditional regulations continue to fall short, communities are looking to Everett's pioneering move as a new model for ensuring lasting environmental protection.

To help the public understand how they can get involved in protecting the Snohomish River Watershed and potentially use this new legal tool, Standing for Washington will host a community event in Everett next Spring. Further details will be announced soon.

Visit [StandingforWashington.org](https://www.StandingforWashington.org) to learn more and support the efforts of Standing for Washington.

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Legal Standing for Nature

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With this groundbreaking initiative, Standing for Washington is leading the charge with innovative environmental solutions that prioritize sustainability and long-term stewardship, fostering a harmonious balance between human progress and the health of the planet.

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