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Fact Sheet Regarding 222nd Wellfield Water Right and Hydrogeological Assessment Relating to Lake Sawyer

Covington Water District prepared this Fact Sheet to address concerns and respond to inquiries regarding the drop in lake levels at Lake Sawyer.

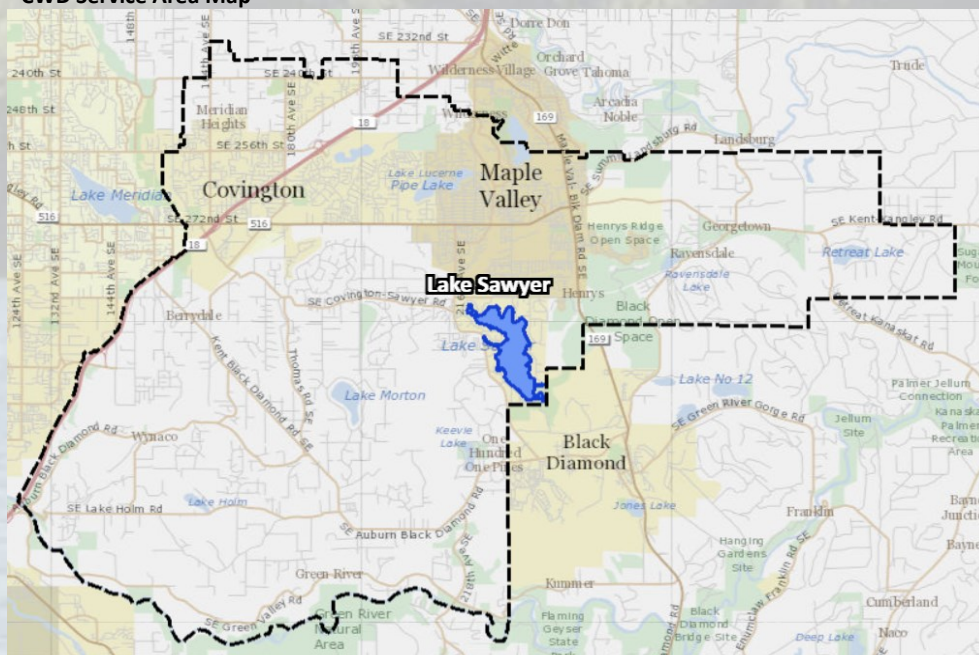
The District's Water Management Activities – The District is a responsible steward of water resources to meet both its customers' needs and regional water demands.

- The District is already prioritizing use of imported water from the Green River to supply Lake Meridian Water District and other customers.
- The District is already monitoring well levels at all sources and managing sources to preserve ground water availability.
- Under RCW 43.20.260 and WAC 246-290-106, the District is legally obligated to provide properties within its service area with safe and adequate drinking water, fulfilling its statutory duty to ensure public health and safety.
- The District is a public, non-profit municipal corporation formed under Title 57 RCW.

The District's Water Right - The District has developed and secured water rights for 2,939.1 acre-feet at the 222nd Wellfield, which are in good standing with the Department of Ecology.

- The District's groundwater rights are not dependent on lake levels and are not subject to interruptions.
- In recent years, the District has utilized only 1000 - 1400 acre-feet of water per year and predominately relies on Tacoma Water to supply water to its 20,000 customer accounts in the cities of Covington, Maple Valley, Black Diamond and unincorporated King County.

CWD Service Area Map



Covington Water District serves an expansive area, providing water to its 20,000 meters and ensuring a reliable supply for more than 50,000 residents.

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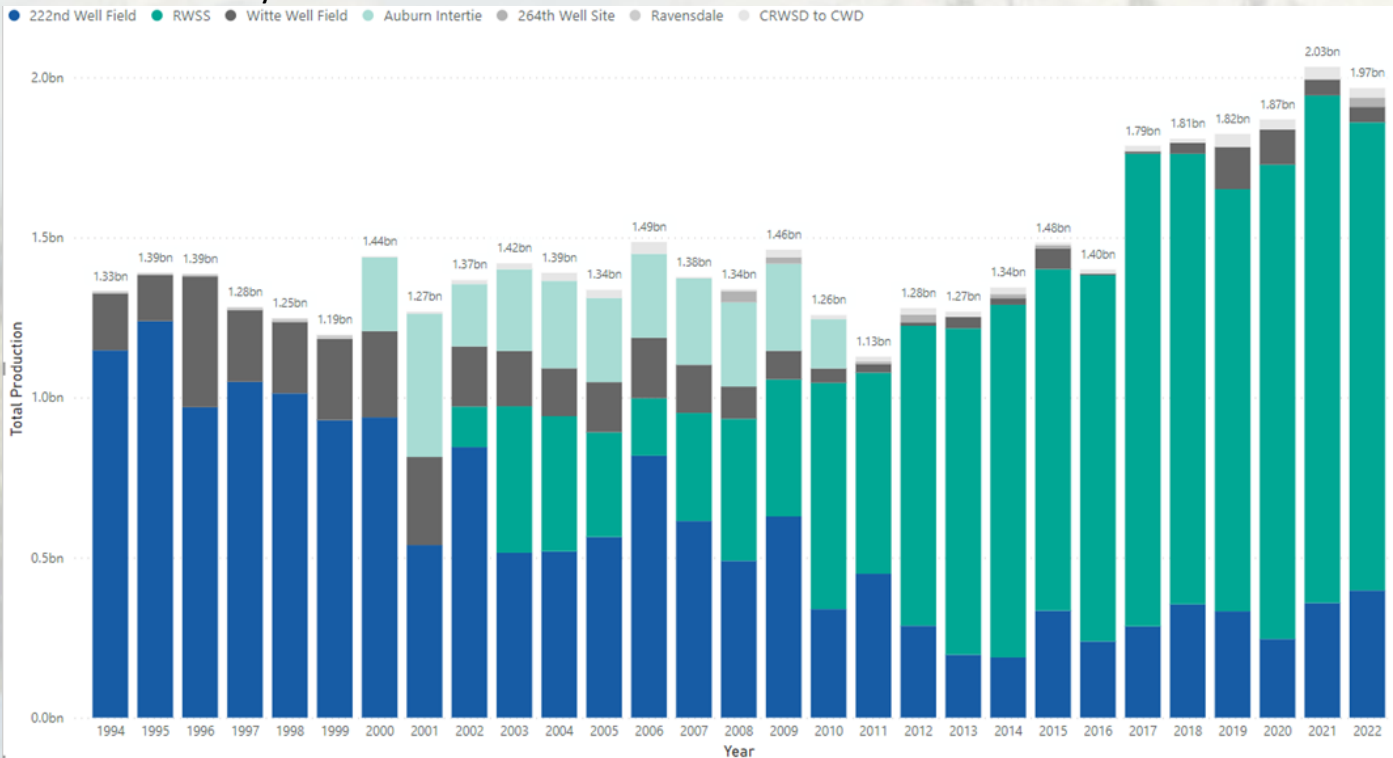
Relationship between 222nd Wellfield and Lake Sawyer – Extensive research over several decades has found no direct correlation between the production at the 222nd Wellfield and lake levels at Lake Sawyer.

- Hydrogeological evidence shows that the District's wellfield is separated from the lake and the shallow groundwater table by a substantial aquitard preventing a direct correlation between the lake and the wellfield.
- Recently, the District conducted a radiocarbon dating study of the wellfield and Covington Creek, which outflows from the lake. The wellfield water has been found to be several hundred years old while the water age in the creek measured at less than 40 years old.

Potential Explanations for Lake Level Drop – There are several potential causes for the drops in Lake Sawyer's water levels:

- Historical precipitation records show the strongest correlation with lake levels, rather than well production. (*Visit the District website at covingtonwater.com to view a detailed chart.*)
- A growing number of permit-exempt wells used for irrigation or domestic purposes in the same watershed.
- Suspected non-permitted irrigation from the lake on a large scale by lakefront properties.
- Diversions of surface or ground waters (e.g., development, beaver dams, mining operations, culvert elevation at Lake Sawyer Regional Park, etc.).

Total Water Production By Source



Since the 2002 partnership, the District has reduced water production from the 222nd Wellfield and increasingly relied on Tacoma Water to meet the needs of its 20,000 customer accounts.

The District has expressed its willingness to participate in a well-organized and jointly funded regional assessment of land use, climate change, and other factors in the watershed to identify potential actions and funding sources to address water supply and water quality resiliency. For more information, please see the District website at covingtonwater.com or contact General Manager Tom Keown at thomas.keown@covingtonwater.com.