

Pre-Application Consultation

Focus on Water Rights

What is a pre-application consultation?

A pre-application consultation is an opportunity for you to talk with Department of Ecology's Water Resources Program staff about water supply options and considerations for your project before paying fees and filing a water right application.

Water rights can be difficult and expensive to obtain, and the process can take many years. Water right application **fees are also non-refundable**. We want to ensure to the extent possible that your water right application is potentially viable before accepting your application and fees.

A pre-application consultation also helps make sure that applicants have realistic expectations regarding permitting timelines and what information we would need to process your application.

The average pre-application meeting takes one to two hours, but the time spent may save you significant time and money in the long term.

Is pre-application consultation required?

We strongly encourage you to take advantage of a pre-application consultation, but it is not required.

How to request a pre-application consultation

You can access the [Water Right Pre-Application Consultation Form](#) on our website or request one to be mailed to you. Attach the completed form to an email and send it to the regional office where your project is located, or mail it to the appropriate regional office.

We will acknowledge receipt of the pre-application form and contact you to schedule a consultation meeting.

Prior to the meeting, our staff will review the form to determine the location and purpose of your proposal. We will also research water supply constraints and opportunities for the proposed location, and plan for the appropriate staff to attend the meeting.

What should be brought to the pre-application consultation?

Any information you have available that is relevant to the proposed project can be helpful to have on hand. You may also choose to bring a consultant if you have one, but it is not required.

Topics typically discussed at a pre-application consultation

- Water availability challenges and opportunities
- The status and number of other pending applications in the project area
- Anticipated processing timelines
- Application requirements and fees
- Requirements for data and analysis as described on the application form
- Preliminary permits
- Water resources regulations specific to the project area
- [Alternatives for Water Right Application Processing](#)
- Qualifications for priority processing
- [Cost reimbursement](#)
- [Water conservancy boards \(change applications only\)](#)

Does pre-application expedite an application or ensure that an application will be approved?

Applications are processed in the order they are received within a water source, and a significant backlog of applications exists in many areas. Many applications have been on file with Ecology for 10 years or longer.

Taking part in a pre-application does not ensure that your application will be approved for a water right permit.

Related Information

- [Water rights - Washington State Department of Ecology](#)

Locations and Contact information

Central Region - Yakima

Counties: Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Kittitas, Klickitat, Okanogan, and Yakima

1250 W. Alder St.
Union Gap, WA 98903-0009
(509) 575-2490
wrCRO@ecy.wa.gov

Northwest Region - Shoreline

Counties: Island, King, Kitsap, San Juan, Skagit, Snohomish, and Whatcom

PO Box 330316
Shoreline, WA 98133-9716
(206) 594-0000
wrNWRO@ecy.wa.gov

Eastern Region - Spokane

Counties: Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Lincoln, Pend Oreille, Spokane, Stevens, Walla Walla, and Whitman

4601 N. Monroe St.
Spokane, WA 99205-1265
(509) 329-3400
wrERO@ecy.wa.gov

Southwest Region - Lacey

Counties: Clallam, Clark, Cowlitz, Grays Harbor, Jefferson, Mason, Lewis, Pacific, Pierce, Skamania, Thurston, and Wahkiakum

PO Box 47775
Olympia, WA 98504-7775
(360) 407-6300
wrSWRO@ecy.wa.gov

Find building locations and addresses on online: ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Contact-us

ADA accommodations

The Department of Ecology is committed to providing people with disabilities access to information and services by meeting or exceeding the requirements of the Americans with Disabilities Act (ADA), Section 504 and 508 of the Rehabilitation Act, and Washington State Policy #188.

To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6872, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341.