WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

Focus

Next Wave of Water Bodies Proposed for Cleanup Plans

Public Comments Invited on Water Cleanup List

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) wants your comments on a list of priority water bodies we have tentatively chosen for water cleanup planning this year. The criteria for making these selections included the severity of the pollution, potential harm to human and aquatic health, impaired beneficial uses, such as agriculture, drinking water and fish habitat, and the potential for local support for water cleanup activities. To help us select these waters, we met with groups in communities in four parts of the state last fall.

Priority Water Bodies to begin Cleanup Plans in FY2001 (Jul 1,2000 – Jun 30, 2001)

WRIA	Primary Location	Water Body	Pollution Problems (see page 3 for definitions)
49	Okanogan Co.	Okanogan River	PCB and DDT
37	Yakima Co	Granger Drain	Fecal Coliform
49	Okanogan Co	Similkameen River	Arsenic
41, 43	Grant Co	Moses Lake, Rocky Ford Creek, Upper Crab Creek	Phosphorus
3	Skagit Co	Carpenter Cr, Fisher Cr, Fisher Slough, Skagit Basin	Fecal Coliform and Temperature;
10	Pierce Co	South Prairie Creek	Fecal Coliform
10	Pierce Co	Meeker Ditch and Clark's Creek	Fecal Coliform, pH, Dissolved Oxygen, and Temperature
18	Clallam Co	Dungeness River/Bay Expansion	Fecal Coliform

WRIAs (Water Resource Inventory Areas) are large watersheds.

Ecology reviews and responds to your comments during May and June. The water cleanup list will be finalized by July 14. Work begins on selected waters in fall 2000.

Please address your comments on the above priority list by May 19, 2000, to Ron McBride, Ecology, PO Box 47600, Olympia, Washington 98504-7600; rmcb461@ecy.wa.gov; phone (360) 407-6469; or FAX (360) 407-6426.

What is a Water Cleanup Plan?

Water Cleanup Plans, also called Total Maximum Daily Loads or TMDLs are plans used to restore water bodies (streams, rivers, lakes and estuaries) to good water quality.

Water Cleanup Plans include the following:

- Description of the type, amount, and sources of water pollution in a particular water body or segment;
- Analysis of how much the pollution needs to be reduced or eliminated to attain water quality;
- Strategy to control pollution; and
- Monitoring plan to assess effectiveness.

Community involvement is very important to the process of developing these plans and to putting the plans into action. The local community, with Ecology's support and assistance, needs to be involved to help determine how pollution will be reduced to improve water quality.

Strategies in the plans may include limits in wastewater discharge permits for municipalities and industries and recommending best management practices such as fencing, planting trees, and ensuring buffers next to streams.

Why Develop Water Cleanup Plans?

Nearly 700 water bodies in Washington State still fail to meet the standards defining good water quality. End of pipe discharges from cities and industries (point sources) and diffuse runoff and habitat destruction (nonpoint sources) contribute to declines in good water quality. Typically, nonpoint pollution comes from everyday activities like household and garden chemicals, runoff from urban streets, agriculture, logging, and failing septic systems.

The purpose of a water cleanup plan is to determine the amount of pollution a water body can receive and still remain healthy for its intended uses. Uses include industrial process water, agricultural irrigation and stock watering, drinking water, recreation, and fish habitat.

Water Cleanup Plans Improve and Protect Water Quality

Ecology has committed to having Water Cleanup Plans, (TMDLs), on all waters on the 1996 Section 303 (d) list, (i.e. list water bodies with some pollution problems) by 2013. The federal Clean Water Act requires that every two years states prepare a list of water bodies that fail to meet water quality standards, i.e. have some pollution problems. Ecology uses data collected by agency scientists, Tribes, state and local governments, industries, and others to develop the list, which then citizens review.

All water bodies identified on the 303(d) list must attain water quality standards within a reasonable time frame. Ecology and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency identified 643 water bodies in Washington State with some pollution problems in 1998.

For more information

For further information about Water Cleanup Plans, please contact Dave Peeler at (360) 407-6461.

If you have special accommodation needs or require this publication in alternative format, please contact Ann Butler at (360) 407-6480 or (360) 407-6066 (TDD).

Definitions of Pollution Problems:

Although not necessarily agents of disease, **fecal coliform** bacteria indicate the presence of disease-carrying organisms, which live in the same environment as the fecal coliform bacteria.

A certain minimum amount of **dissolved oxygen** must be present in water for aquatic life to survive.

Temperature is important because it governs the kinds of aquatic life that can live in a stream. For instance, streams must be cooler than 61 degrees Fahrenheit for salmon to successfully spawn.

pH is a term used to indicate the alkalinity or acidity of a substance as ranked on a scale from 1.0 to 14.0. Neutral pH is 7.0. Acidity increases as the pH gets lower.

PCB – Highly persistent organic chemicals used primarily in electrical equipment (e.g. transformers). Banned from production in mid-1970s. Accumulates in fish tissue.

DDT – Highly persistent organic insecticide used widely until banned in 1972. Accumulates in fish tissue.

Arsenic is a naturally occurring element. Human activities can increase concentrations to toxic levels in the environment.

Phosphorus serves as a nutrient or "fertilizer" for algae and aquatic plants. Too much algae cause aesthetic problems and reduce oxygen levels in lakes and streams.

The entire list of water bodies we chose from can be viewed on our website: http://www.wa.gov/ecology/wq/303d/