



Water Cleanup Plans

Priority Water Cleanup Plans for Fiscal Year 2002

Water Cleanup List

As a result of an extensive year-long effort, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has established the final statewide list of priority Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or Water Cleanup Plans selected for fiscal year 2002 (July 2001 through June 2002).

The federal Clean Water Act requires states to prepare a list of water bodies that do not meet water quality standards for ensuring the water is healthy for such activities as swimming, boating, industries, and fish and aquatic habitat every two years. Ecology uses data collected by agency scientists, Indian tribes, state and local governments, industries, and others to develop the list, which then goes through an intensive public process. A Water Cleanup Plan must be developed for each of the polluted water bodies. Ecology has identified nearly 700 water bodies with some pollution problems.

Each year Ecology identifies the water bodies where the agency will start to develop cleanup plans. Ecology selected which waterways to clean up this year based on the severity of the pollution, the potential for the contamination to harm the health of people and aquatic life, and how the pollution problem interferes with swimming, boating, fish habitat, and other water uses.

Where will we begin working this year?

Ecology began the process to develop Water Cleanup Plans this past fall by gathering technical data and information in several areas of the state. Our goal is to involve local entities and the public in each identified community in all aspects of water cleanup. Involvement opportunities include reviewing reports on water quality of the stream, lake or bay, identifying pollution sources, developing cleanup strategies or ways to prevent, stop and clean up the polluted water, and evaluating the successes of cleanup efforts.

Primary Location	Water Body	Pollution Problems
	Columbia River	High levels of nitrogen gas that harm fish (Cooperative effort with Oregon, Idaho, and EPA)
Chelan County	Lake Chelan/Roses Lake	DDT (1972 federal regulations banned the use of this insecticide), PCBs (federal law banned these toxic chemicals in transformers and other industrial purposes in 1979) and pesticides
Chelan County	Mission Creek	Pesticides
Chelan County	Wenatchee River Basin	Low levels of dissolved oxygen, elevated temperatures, bacteria, pH
King County	Green River	Chromium, bacteria, low levels of oxygen, and high temperature (King County and Ecology staff plan to address this cleanup)

Primary Location	Water Body	Pollution Problems
Kitsap County	Sinclair and Dyes Inlets	Toxic substances, bacteria, zinc, PCBs (Ecology and U.S. Navy staff plan to address this cleanup)
Pacific County	Willapa River	Elevated temperature
Thurston County	Henderson Inlet and Woodland, Woodard, Dobbs, and Libby Creeks	Bacteria, pH, low levels of oxygen, elevated temperature
Thurston County	Nisqually River, McAllister/Ohop Creeks, Nisqually Reach	Bacteria, low levels of oxygen
Thurston-Lewis counties	Upper Chehalis River	Bacteria
Walla Walla County	Walla Walla River, Touchet River and Mill Creek	Elevated temperature, pesticides, bacteria, pH, PCBs
Whatcom County	Lake Whatcom Watershed	Low levels of oxygen, Fecal coliform bacteria, phosphorus, pentachlorophenol, mercury, PCB
Whatcom County	Whatcom Creek	Fecal coliform bacteria, elevated temperature, zinc, benzo(a)pyrene (Ecology and city of Bellingham plan to address this cleanup)

This year, Ecology plans to take additional samples to determine the level of pollutants in the following water bodies and determine whether cleanup plans are needed.

Primary Location	Water Body	Pollution Problems
Clark County	Columbia River	Arsenic
Cowlitz County	Cowlitz River	Arsenic
King Co	Green River	Chromium
King Co	Springbrook (Mill) Creek	Cadmium, Chromium, Copper, Mercury, Zinc
Pierce County	Chambers Creek	PCBs
King County	Kelsey Creek	Pesticides
King County	May Creek	Copper, lead, zinc
Kitsap County	Dyes/Sinclair Inlets and Port Washington Narrows	Metals, organic materials (waste from plants or animals), arsenic
Kitsap County	Eagle Harbor	Arsenic
Kitsap County	Port Orchard, Agate, and Rich Passages	Arsenic
Klickitat County	Columbia River	Arsenic
Pierce Co	White (Stuck) River	Copper, Mercury
Pierce County	Puyallup River	Arsenic
Snohomish County	Skykomish River	Copper, lead, silver
Snohomish County	Snohomish River	Copper, mercury
Spokane County	Spokane River	Chromium, Arsenic
Stevens County	Roosevelt Lake	Arsenic
Wahkiakum Co	Lower Columbia River	Bis(2-ethylhexyl) Phthalate (compounds in plastic materials), Arsenic
Whatcom County	Georgia Straight	Metals, Organics, Bioassay
Whatcom County	Bellingham Bay	PH
Whitman County	Palouse River	Chromium
Yakima/Benton Co	Lower Yakima River	Mercury, Silver, Arsenic
Yakima County	Naches River	Silver

The activities and deliberations that led to the final Fiscal Year 2001 List included:

- Holding workshops in the fall of 2000 to identify priority water bodies for establishing Water Cleanup Plans,
- Considering identified areas by Ecology and,
- Conducting a formal public comment period in the spring of 2001.

The entire list of water bodies we chose from can be viewed on our website at:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/

What were the public comments on the proposed water bodies?

This spring, the public reviewed the waterways that Ecology proposed to clean up. Nearly 50 people commented. Respondents asked a number of questions and made comments concerning the water bodies selected and other waters Ecology did not propose for cleanup at this time. Ecology prepared a responsiveness summary and provided it to those who commented.

Several comments came from people concerned about mercury and other pollutants in Whatcom Lake. In response, Ecology plans to measure the levels of mercury in the lake. PCBs were questioned in the Spokane River, concerns about arsenic in the Cowlitz River; and people expressed concern about metals in Springbrook (Mill) Creek, too. Several individuals showed an interest in being involved in the cleanup plans. We will add their names to our regional office mailing lists to ensure they receive information about the cleanup and how to be involved.

Ecology considered these comments and reviewed the environmental benefits of continuing these projects. Staff considered technical, historical, managerial, and local perspectives along with local involvement and local commitments for each case. They recommended continuing the establishment of water cleanup plans on these water bodies.

Community involvement is very important to in developing water cleanup plans and putting the plans into action. If you want to participate in cleanup planning and/or cleanup activities in your watershed, contact Ann Butler at (360) 407-6480, email anbu461@ecy.wa.gov, or write to the address listed below.

For more information, please contact:

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Definitions of Pollution Problems:

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

Dissolved oxygen (DO) – A certain minimum amount of DO must be present in water for aquatic life to survive.

Temperature – 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 – This 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.

Polychlorinated biphenyl (PCB) – PCBs are highly persistent organic chemicals used primarily in electrical equipment (e.g. transformers). The federal government banned the use of PCBs in production in the mid-1970s. PCBs can harm aquatic organisms and accumulate in fish tissue.

DDT, DDE, Pesticides (Chlordane, Dieldrin, Heptachlor, Heptachlor Epoxide, Hexachlorobenzene) – Highly persistent organic chemicals that can harm aquatic organisms. They accumulate in fish tissue.

Toxics & Metals – Can persist in sediments and be present in water and have been shown to harm aquatic organisms.

Sediments – Can smother fish eggs, change the aquatic organisms and habitat, and interfere with fish migration, feeding and spawning.

Arsenic – A naturally occurring element. Activities people do such as mining can increase concentrations of arsenic to toxic levels.

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 and harm the environment for fish and other aquatic organisms.



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