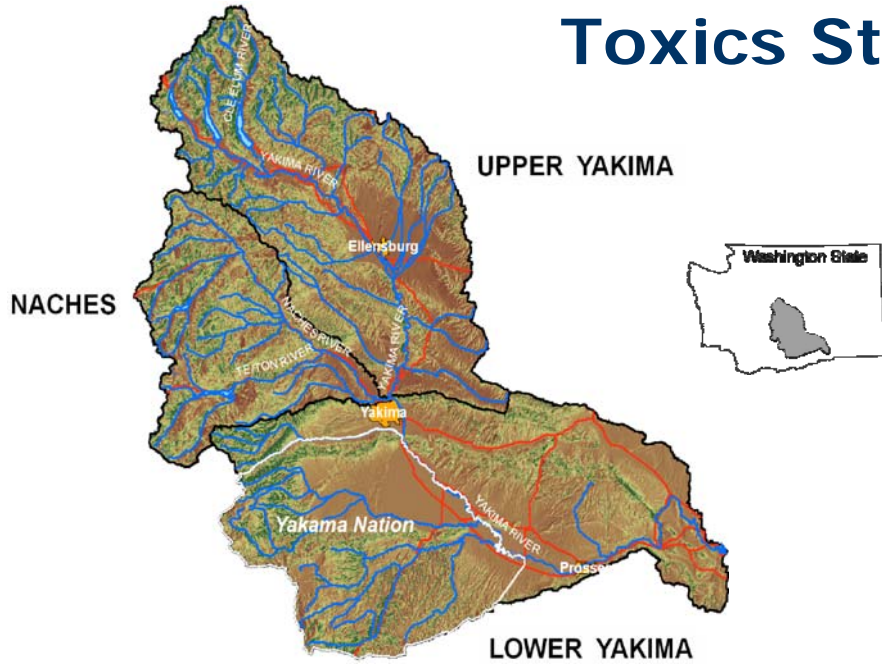


Yakima River Watershed Toxics Study



Water Quality Impairments

Yakima River

DDT, DDD, DDE, Dieldrin, Endosulfan

Granger Drain

DDT, DDE, DDD, Dieldrin, Endosulfan

Snipes and Spring Creeks

DDT, DDD, DDE

Moxee Drain

DDT, DDD, DDE, Chlorpyrifos, Dieldrin, Endosulfan

Wide Hollow Creek

DDT, DDD, DDE, Dieldrin, Endosulfan

Fish Tissue Impairments

Yakima River

Total PCBs, DDT, DDD, DDE, Chlordane, Dieldrin

Cowiche Creek

DDE

Keechelus Lake

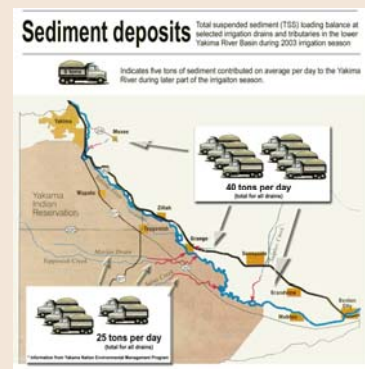
PCBs

Water Quality Issues in the Yakima Watershed

The Department of Ecology is expanding several existing water quality improvement projects in the Yakima River watershed to build on the successes of these projects. This new project will address streams that currently do not meet water quality standards for various toxic chemicals.

Most of these toxic chemicals are banned pesticides or PCBs (polychlorinated biphenyls) that are no longer used. Past studies show that some of these chemicals get into the water when contaminated soil erodes and enters the water. Improving water quality ensures that we can continue to use the water for farming, fishing, recreation, and other activities.

Water quality testing found these chemicals in the water of the Yakima River and some of its tributaries. Some of these chemicals were also found in fish living in the Yakima River and some of its tributaries. In 1994, the state of Washington issued a fish consumption advisory for some fish in the Yakima River based on finding high levels of DDT in fish tissue.



From 1995 to 2003: Irrigation improvements reduced top soil losses from 280 tons to 65 tons.



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ECOLOGY

What is being done to address these problems?

The good news is that there is a lot of work already being done in the Yakima River watershed.



Drip Irrigation in use in a hop yard to reduce irrigation runoff.

- Farmers and other land users in the watershed are implementing existing TMDLs that may help some of the water quality problems addressed by this project.
- The Roza Sunnyside Board of Joint Control and Kittitas County Water Purveyors adopted water quality policies that limit the amount of polluted runoff allowed into tributaries of the Yakima River.
- Many agricultural operations adopted practices that prevent or reduce their impact to streams.
- Much more is being done by other organizations and individuals!

Because the streams still need to improve to meet federal water quality standards, Ecology is required to develop a water quality improvement plan (also known as a total maximum daily load or TMDL).

Developing a water quality improvement plan is a public process for cleaning up polluted water. For more information please see Water Cleanup Plans (Total Maximum Daily Loads) on our Web site: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/index.html>.

To address pollution from toxic chemicals, this water quality improvement project in the Yakima River watershed will be conducted in two phases:

- During the first phase, Ecology will sample fish tissue for the historical pesticides and PCBs. This work will begin in late summer 2006.
- The second phase, to address water quality issues related to fish tissue contamination, will begin in 2007.

How do I learn more?

For more information about the process or the work happening to address pollution in the watershed, please visit the Web site below or contact a TMDL Specialist. You can also ask to be included on the mailing list.

Contact Information:

Web site http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/tmdl/yakima_wq/wq_assessments.html

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If you need this information in an alternate format, please contact us at 360-407-6404. Persons with hearing loss can call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability can call 877-833-6341