

Clarifying the Permitting Process

Working in the Water Workshops

Introduction

Have you ever heard that it is easier to ask forgiveness than ask for permission? Agency staff who manage projects or permits for work in or near streams and lakes may hear this adage from some members of the public. Even with all the resources state and federal agencies produce to help the public through the permit process, there are people who are unaware of required permits to work in and near surface water. Employees of the agencies want to help people through the process. So, Karin Baldwin of the Department of Ecology's (Ecology) Water Quality Program wanted to try to bridge the gap between the permitting agencies and members of the public who want to complete a project in or near streams and lakes.

Problem

When a landowner does not understand which permits are required for an activity and does not obtain the correct permits, the project can be delayed for a very long time. Such delays can result in problems with grant funding timelines and seasonal work windows. If the work proceeds without the permit, the environment could be harmed and the landowner could receive a fine. When activities are not properly permitted, both the landowner and agency staff can find themselves scrambling to complete additional requirements in a short amount of time. People on both sides can experience increased frustration and stress.

Event goals

Karin Baldwin had an idea to develop permitting workshops for eastern Washington. She sought the support and help of fellow employees in the Eastern Regional Office and the Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance to host "Working in the Water Workshops." The workshop partners wanted to reach county and city governments that are responsible for issuing permits within their jurisdiction. By educating these local permitting authorities, they could in turn help educate landowners about other state and federal permits that may be required. Ecology staff also wanted to target organizations that fund work in and near surface water, such as conservation districts. Including these groups is important so that they allow enough time to obtain permits and complete the work within seasonal work windows and grant timelines.

In order to reach more people, the workshops were held in two central locations. The workshop partners decided to hold three-hour workshops in the city of Chewelah on March 8, 2007, and in the city of Colfax on March 22, 2007.

Michele Vazquez, with the Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance, enlisted the help of other state and federal agencies who issue permits for work near or in surface water. For the first time, representatives from all the state and federal permitting agencies would be together in one room to discuss which permits they require for what activities and the process people need to take to get a permit.

Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance WASHINGTON STATE		Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA)	
Information Packet			
This Information Packet contains the following resources to help you complete and submit your Joint Aquatic Resource Permit Application (JARPA) form:			
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Introduction and Process Overview			
Introduction			
To streamline the environmental permitting process, multiple regulatory agencies joined forces to create one application that people can use to apply for more than one permit at a time. It is titled, "Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA)". You can use the JARPA form to apply for any or all of the permits below:			
<i>Federal</i>			
• Section 10 and Section 404 permits from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps).			
• General Bridge permits and Private Aids to Navigation permits (PATON) from the U.S. Coast Guard.			
<i>State</i>			
• 401 Water Quality Certifications from the Department Ecology.			
• Hydraulic Project Approvals from the Department of Fish and Wildlife.			
• Use Authorizations for State-Owned Aquatic Lands from the Department of Natural Resources.			
<i>Local (City or County)</i>			
• Shoreline Conditional Use Permit			
• Shoreline Substantial Development Permit			
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Milestones and outcomes

Approximately 60 people learned about permits required by the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Washington Department of Natural Resources, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife;



Ecology's role in shoreline and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers permits; and the help provided by the Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance. Attendance was greater than expected at both workshops with a wide variety of organizations attending. Feedback from the workshop attendees was very positive and helpful.

Project highlights

The Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance advertised the workshops on an email listserv of city and county planners. The listserv included all planners in Washington State. As a result, people from across the state made numerous requests to hold workshops at other locations. When city planners from Chelan County learned there were no other workshops scheduled, their staff traveled to Colfax to attend. Staff from the Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance in Yakima and Seattle also attended the workshops.

Partners

When the other permitting agencies were asked if they would be willing to participate in the workshops, they all agreed without hesitation. The agencies and individuals who participated and helped make the workshops so successful include:

- Washington Department of Natural Resources - Cindy Preston and Dave Harsh
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife - Jeff Lawlor
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers - Tim Erkel
- Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance - Michele Vazquez
- Ecology's Eastern Regional Office:
 - Shorelands - Mike Maher
 - Administration - Brook Beeler (education/outreach) and Terri Costello (SEPA)
 - Water Resources - Kevin Brown and Bill Neve (Walla Walla Field Office)

Funding

Costs associated with the workshops were minimal. The Governor's Office of Regulatory Assistance advertised the workshops through an email listserv and Ecology sent out fewer than 20 letters to area conservation districts. The workshop locations were held in city or county meeting rooms and did not have a rental fee. Additional costs, such as providing handouts and travel costs for speakers, were funded by each participating agency. Ecology provided light refreshments for both workshops.

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