

The 2008 Water Quality Assessment Now Final

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency approved on Jan. 29, 2009, the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) 2008 Water Quality Assessment, also known as the Assessment of Water Quality for the Clean Water Act Sections 303(d) and 305(b) Integrated Report (Assessment).

The assessment reflects statewide water quality data Ecology compiled and assessed as of December 2006. The assessment is the latest picture of the state's water quality. It helps state and local partners prioritize which polluted waters to clean up. It also fulfills the reporting requirements of the Clean Water Act, including the list of known polluted waters in the state referred to as the Section 303(d) list and a status of water quality in the state required by Section 305(b).

People can view the results of the assessment through a package of Internet tools that include interactive maps and detailed lists. These tools allow the user to customize and sort an area of interest by geographic location, including Puget Sound, and by pollutant parameter, degree of concern, and other factors.

What happens now

Ecology and other entities will use the Water Quality Assessment results to both plan for and initiate watershed activities that promote and enhance clean water. Communities that have water bodies that fall on the Category 5 list will need to develop water quality improvement reports in coordination with Ecology. These reports are also known as a total maximum daily loads or TMDLs. A TMDL identifies how much pollution needs to be reduced or eliminated to achieve clean water.

How do I learn more?

Visit Ecology's website at www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/2008/index.html.

Use the Simple Query Tool to find water quality data at:

<http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/wats08/>

Use the map tool to locate waters you are interested in reviewing:

<http://apps.ecy.wa.gov/wqawa/viewer.htm>

For further questions contact

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Special accommodations:

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