

303(d) List Update: Water Quality Assessment for Freshwater data

The Department of Ecology's proposed Washington State Water Quality Assessment (Assessment) for fresh water data is available for a 60-day public review and comment period starting on March 17, 2015.

The Assessment fulfills Washington State's obligation under the federal Clean Water Act, sections 303(d) and 305(b), to identify polluted waters (known as the 303(d) list), as well as report on the status of water quality statewide where data is available.

As part of the public review, Ecology is holding public workshops to provide an overview of the Assessment. The focus of the workshops is to provide information on using the internet map and search tools to review the Assessment results, and explain the transition to a new system for describing stream segments.

Development of the draft Assessment

The Assessment is based on the most recent **state** water quality standards approved by EPA (Chapter 175-201A WAC, 2012 version, and Chapter 173-204 WAC), and the state's assessment policies:

- **Program Policy 1-11, Chapter 1, Assessment of Water Quality for the Clean Water Act Sections 303(d) and 305(b) Integrated Report.**
- **Program Policy 1-11, Chapter 2, Ensuring Credible Data for Water Quality Management.**

Policy 1-11 was revised in July 2012. Information about these revisions are available at:
www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/policy1-11rev.html.

Ecology gathered and analyzed surface water quality data collected through December 2010 for freshwaters (from streams, rivers, and lakes) located throughout the state.

WHY IT MATTERS

The Water Quality Assessment categorizes rivers, lakes, and streams as clean or polluted, based on data we have. Ecology is required to update the Assessment as part of the federal Clean Water Act. The update is based on data we collected and received through December 2010.

As a result of the Assessment, A Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) (water cleanup study) might be necessary. Industries and local governments can face new requirements when water quality National Pollutant Discharge System (NPDES) permits are updated.

We get a measurement of where we are finding success in cleaning up our waters.

Website:

www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/freshwtrassessment/index.html

Contact information

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Special accommodations

To request ADA accommodation including materials in a format for the visually impaired, call the Water Quality Program at 360-407-6600. Persons with impaired hearing may call Washington Relay Service at 711. Persons with speech disability may call 877-833-6341.

Ecology is now using an improved hydrologic mapping system to define segments of freshwater bodies. The previous Assessment defined stream and river segments using township, range, and section lines. The new mapping system defines segments based on stream/river size and the inflows of tributary streams. The mapping change is more scientific and helps Washington be consistent with other states.

The draft Assessment is presented as an internet-based search tool and a mapping application that allows the user to investigate surface water quality in an area of interest through a customized search based on features such as county, waterbody name, and pollutant. Each potential pollutant for a water-body segment is assigned to one of five major water quality categories in accordance with: the amount of available data, whether the pollutant is a problem, and the status of clean-up efforts. The map tool also enables a user to compare the extent of water-body segments in the previous Water Quality Assessment to the extent of segments in this draft Assessment.

Public meeting schedule

Public Workshops will be held at the following locations:

Date/Time	Location	Address
April 7 1:30pm-4:00pm	Edmonds	<u>Edmonds Conference Center</u> Chrysanthemum Hall 201 Fourth Ave. N., Edmonds 98020
April 9 1:30pm-4:00pm	Lacey	<u>Ecology Headquarters Building</u> 300 Desmond Drive Lacey 98503
April 15 1:30pm-4:00pm	Yakima	<u>Yakima Area Arboretum</u> 1401 Arboretum Drive, Yakima 98901
April 16 1:30pm-4:00pm	Spokane Valley	<u>Spokane CenterPlace</u> 2426 N. Discovery Pl., Spokane Valley 99216