

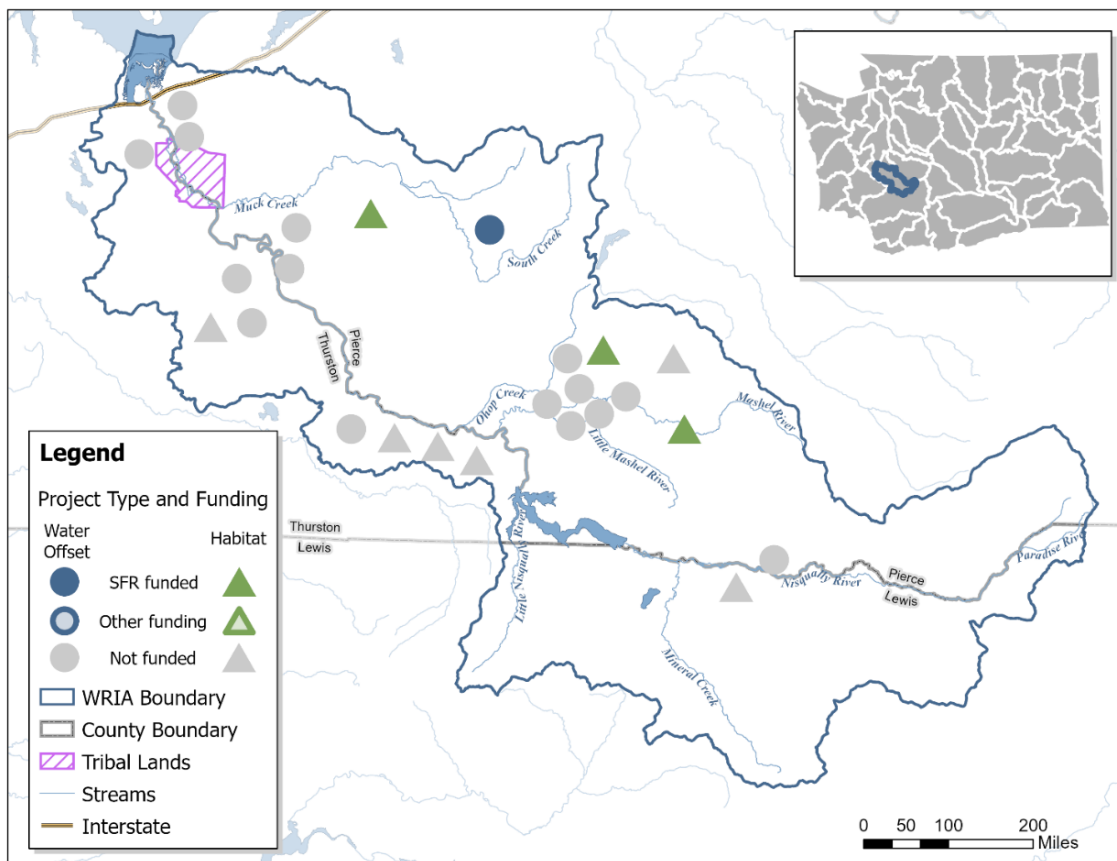
Watershed Plan Implementation Assessment for the Nisqually Watershed

The Washington Department of Ecology adopted the Addendum to the Nisqually Watershed Management Plan on February 1, 2019, as a part of the Streamflow Restoration law (RCW 90.94.020). The Nisqually Watershed is also known as Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 11. Plan implementation is ongoing as local entities secure funding and develop their projects intended to offset the impacts on streamflows from new domestic permit-exempt (PE) wells and achieve a net ecological benefit (NEB).

Ecology assesses plan implementation periodically and conducts outreach to WRIA 11 partners and project sponsors to present information to the best of our ability. This assessment provides an update on:

- Local water offset and habitat projects (as defined in the watershed plan).
- Current and projected new domestic PE wells.
- Current estimated and projected consumptive water use impacts from these new wells.

Projects in WRIA 11 (Nisqually Watershed)

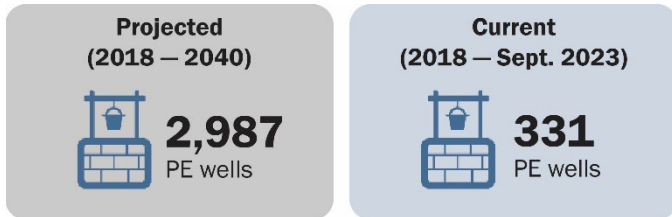


Approximate locations of projects in WRIA 11 from the adopted plan. Projects contribute to the anticipated net ecological benefit and offset the impacts from new PE wells. Projects are funded through either Ecology’s Streamflow Restoration (SFR) grant or other funding sources. Multiple projects may be displayed as a single point. Basin-wide projects are not shown on the map.

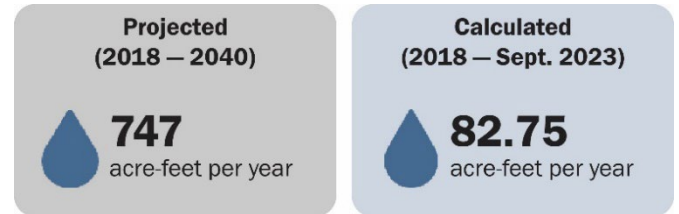
Watershed plan implementation

Ecology is using the following parameters to track progress on plan implementation.

Number of new PE wells installed

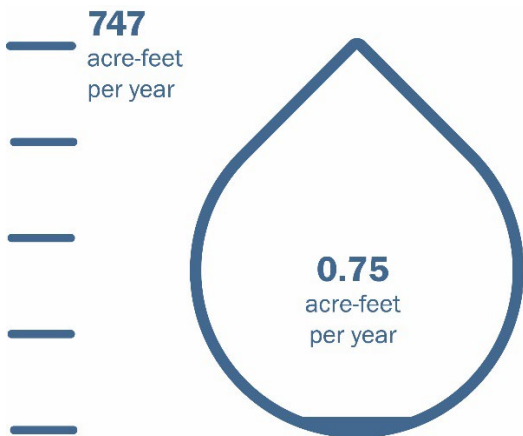


Consumptive water use from PE wells



Water offset from completed projects

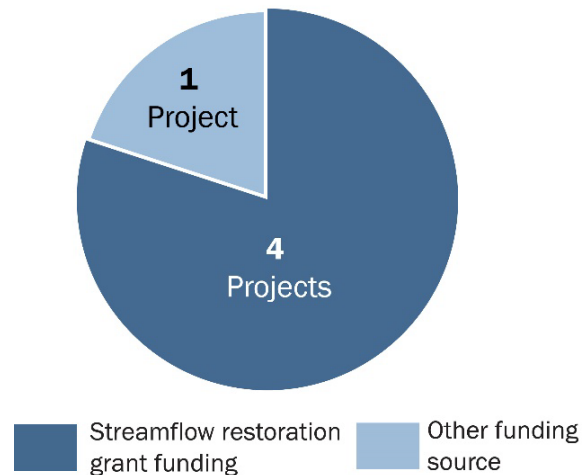
We estimate the current offset benefit of completed projects is 0.75 acre-feet per year.



Water Offset projects completed: 2

Secured funding for projects

Projects have received funding from Ecology’s Streamflow Restoration grants or other sources.



Implementation snapshot

- Installation of new permit exempt wells in WRIA 11 (Nisqually Watershed) is proceeding at a slower rate (56% below the projected rate) than the local watershed plan projected. Using the plan’s assumption of consumptive water use per new PE well, Ecology estimates the consumptive water use impacts from these new wells is also 56% below the projected rate.
- In the 2019, 2020, and 2022 grant rounds, Ecology received a total of 12 applications seeking competitive Streamflow Restoration grant funding for projects in the Nisqually watershed plan. Eight of these projects earned sufficient scores to receive a funding offer; however, two applications that received funding offers were later withdrawn at the applicant’s request.
- The Nisqually Land Trust has received five Streamflow Restoration grants, contributing to a NEB in the WRIA. To date, through three grants as part of the Ohop Phase IV Floodplain Restoration and Protection project, they have successfully acquired 1,465 acres of land for permanent protection and restoration. Additionally, they have decommissioned 3 PE wells, resulting in a water offset of 0.75 acre-feet per year.
- The Nisqually Land Trust received funding from others sources to acquire another 15.6 acres of land in the Middle Ohop Creek Restoration area.

Watershed plan summary

The Nisqually watershed planning committee met from June 2018 to January 2019 to develop a Watershed Plan Addendum that:

- Projected 2,987 new PE wells from years 2018 to 2040.
- Estimated the impact of these wells on rivers and streams at 746.8 acre-feet per year.
- Identified 36 projects to provide a water offset¹ and achieve a [net ecological benefit](#) to streamflows.

Projected PE well growth and consumptive water use (years 2018 - 2040)



2,987
PE wells



747
acre-feet per year

Projected streamflow benefits from planned projects



1,530
acre-feet per year

A volume of 747 acre-feet is equal to about 374 Olympic-sized swimming pools.

Benefits of WRIA 11 plan implementation



Initiates locally led solutions.



Improves rivers and streams for salmon.



Offsets consumptive water use from rural homes.

Streamflow Restoration Law (RCW 90.94)

In January 2018, the Washington State Legislature passed the Streamflow Restoration law (RCW 90.94) to help restore streamflows to levels necessary to support robust, healthy, and sustainable salmon populations while providing water for new homes in rural Washington.

Ecology has been actively implementing this law since its passage. Ecology, in coordination with state and local agencies, Tribal governments, and non-profit organizations has funded, led, and supported a range of 15 diverse local watershed plans across the state. Ecology, with generous support from the Legislature has also implemented a competitive grant offering to help state and local agencies, tribal governments, and non-profit organizations implement projects in their local watershed plans required by this law.

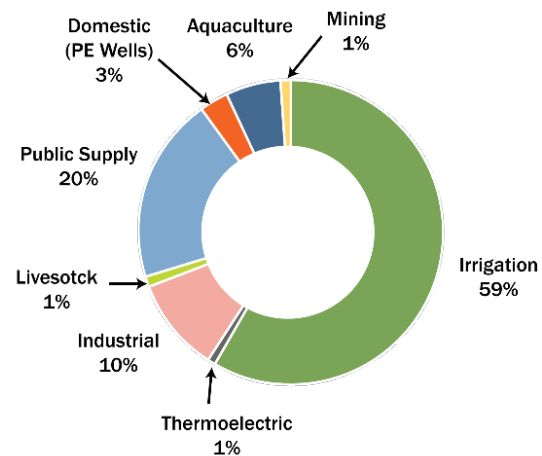
¹ The WRIA 11 addendum was evaluated under the interim NEB Guidance (Publication number 18-11-009): Water offset projects include water right acquisition projects and other projects that provide flow benefits.

Consumptive water use in Washington State

Significant resources and collaboration went into statewide and local planning and ongoing local plan implementation to offset water use from domestic permit-exempt wells in Washington State.

Consumptive water use from these wells accounts for about 3% of water use in Washington, a small portion compared with other consumptive water uses.

Consumptive Water Use in Washington State (2015)



Data adapted from U.S. Geological Survey’s report on Water Use in Washington (2015).

Webpages

- [Streamflow Restoration](http://ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowRestoration): ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowRestoration
- [Streamflow Restoration Grants](http://ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowGrants): ecology.wa.gov/StreamflowGrants

Publications

- [Streamflow Restoration Competitive Grants Status](#): Publication number 22-11-026
- [Streamflow Restoration Planning Update](#): Publication number 21-11-015
- [Interim Guidance for Determining Net Ecological Benefit](#): Publication number 18-11-009

Other sources

- [Addendum to the Nisqually Watershed Management Plan²](#)(PDF)

Watershed partners and project sponsors can update Ecology on the status of watershed plan implementation by emailing WRProjects@ecy.wa.gov.



Streamflow restoration program
WRProjects@ecy.wa.gov
 360-688-8928



To request an ADA accommodation, contact Ecology by phone at 360-407-6831 or email at WRPubs@ecy.wa.gov, or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. For Relay Service or TTY call 711 or 877-833-6341

² <https://apps.wa.gov/ecology/docs/WaterRights/wrwebpdf/wria11/WRIA11-AddendumNisquallyWatershedManagementPlan-01162019.pdf>