

Focus on: Freshwater Fish Contaminant Monitoring — Fall 2026 – 2030

What are we doing?

We are collecting fish to analyze for polychlorinated biphenyls (PCBs), polybrominated diphenyl ethers (PBDEs), per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS), dioxins/furans, and other toxins in rivers across Washington. The waterbodies we will be sampling from 2026 – 2030 are the:

- Mid- Columbia
- Upper-Columbia
- Lake Roosevelt (Columbia River)
- Wenatchee
- Walla Walla

We will collect largescale sucker, northern pikeminnow, and largemouth bass using boat-mounted electrofishing, nets, and angling through October and November; most sites will only take one or two days. We have all required state and federal scientific collection permits.

Why do we do this?

We study the amount of different contaminants in freshwater fish tissue to understand if contamination levels are a problem for human health and aquatic life and if they are changing over time. Each year, we visit several locations throughout the state. Then we return to each location every eight – 12 years to see how contaminant levels change over time. It is important to monitor for contaminants because many persist in the environment, accumulate in the tissue of fish and humans, and are toxic in large amounts.

Results are coming soon

Our results will be available as a written report on our webpage, and laboratory data are available on our online EIM database. All of these resources are linked on our Freshwater fish contaminant monitoring page at ecology.wa.gov/FFCMP.

The Washington State Department of Health uses this project's data to offer guidance on how much fish can be safely eaten under specific circumstances. See their doh.wa.gov/fish page for information on fish in your area.

Our project



Contact information

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ADA accessibility

To request an ADA accommodation, email eappubs@ECY.WA.GOV, call (564)-669-3028, or dial 711 to call through the Washington Telecommunications Relay for services like text telephone (TTY). Visit ecology.wa.gov/ADA for more accessibility information.