Focus

Priority Water Cleanup Plans for Fiscal Year 1999

Issue

As a result of a considerable year-long effort, the Washington State Department of Ecology (Ecology) has established the final statewide list of priority Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or Water Cleanup Plans selected for fiscal year 1999 (July 1998 - June 1999).

The federal Clean Water Act requires states to prepare a list of water bodies that do not meet water quality standards for ensuring the water is healthy for such activities as swimming, boating, industries, and fish and habitat every two years. Ecology uses data collected by agency scientists, Indian tribes, state and local governments, industries, and others to develop the list, which then goes through an intensive public process. A Water Cleanup Plan must be developed for each of the polluted water bodies. Ecology identified 666 water bodies with some pollution problems in 1996.

Where will we begin working this year?

Priority Water Bodies Proposed for Cleanup Plans in FY99

Primary Location	Water Body	Pollution Problems
Clallam Co.	Matriotti Creek and Dungeness River and Bay	Fecal coliform
Cowlitz Co.	Longview Ditches	Fecal coliform, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, lead
Clark Co.	Gibbons Creek	Fecal coliform
Clark Co.	Salmon Creek	Fecal coliform, temperature, turbidity
Clark/Skamania Co.	Wind River	Temperature
Stevens Co.	Colville Watershed	Fecal coliform, dissolved oxygen
Snohomish/Skagit Co.	Stillaguamish River and Portage Creek	Fecal coliform, dissolved oxygen, turbidity, pH, ammonia, temperature, copper, lead, arsenic, nickel
Klickitat Co	Little Klickitat River*	Temperature

* Proposed if funding becomes available

The only change to the proposed cleanup plans for fiscal year 1999 is that we now have funding to address the Stillaguamish River and Portage Creek. This fall we will begin gathering technical data and information in these areas. We will also begin activities to work more closely with people in the communities.

The purpose of a Water Cleanup Plan is to determine the amount of pollution a water body can receive and still remain healthy for its intended uses, such as industrial, agricultural, drinking, recreation, and fish habitat. Each plan must receive final approval from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Printed on Recycled Paper

The activities and deliberations that led to the final Fiscal Year 1999 List included:

- Holding workshops in the fall of 1998 to identify priority water bodies for establishing Water Cleanup Plans,
- Considering identified areas by an Ecology joint management team, and,
- Conducting a formal public comment period in the spring of 1999.

What were the comments on the proposed water bodies?

Twenty-one individuals and organizations provided comments. Respondents asked a number of questions concerning the water bodies selected and other waters Ecology did not propose for cleanup. Ecology prepared a responsiveness summary and provided it to those who commented.

Several respondents questioned establishing a water cleanup plan on the Longview Ditches. Ecology considered the questions and looked into the status of the "ditches." The agency assembled individuals having technical, historical, managerial, and general perspectives. They recommended continuing the establishment of a water cleanup plan on this water body. However, inherent to that decision was the recognition that this may be a longer than normal process requiring considerable collaboration and assistance from the local community. The Longview Ditches will be a difficult and complex effort, and because of that it needs to begin soon.

Each water body that we will begin work on has also been screened for its potential for meeting water quality standards through the implementation of other pollution controls.

For more information, please contact:

Ron McBride, (TMDL Coordinator)
P.O. Box 47600
Water Quality Program
Department of Ecology
Olympia, Washington 98504-7600
Phone: (360) 407-6469; FAX: (360) 407-6426
E-mail: rmcb461@ecy.wa.gov \\