

## Appendix 7-A

# Examples of Cross-Jurisdictional Planning for Aquatic Resources

Managing natural resources across jurisdictions at larger geographic scales has become recognized internationally as an important approach to protecting aquatic resources, including wetlands (United Nations 1997). While planning at this scale may be difficult for some local jurisdictions, it is possible for them to join existing programs that are developing plans and actions at larger, geographic scales. Examples of planning efforts at a larger scale that are being conducted by state and federal agencies in relation to aquatic resources are provided below.

## Watershed Planning

In 1998, the Washington State Legislature passed the Watershed Planning Act (RCW 90.82) providing a framework for developing local solutions to water supply issues on a watershed-wide basis. The planning is based on Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs) which are framed around watersheds or subwatersheds. This voluntary planning process is designed to encourage local citizens, governments, and tribes to form planning units for the development of watershed management plans. Through the Act, state agencies manage grants, provide technical assistance and, if requested, serve on the planning units. Planning units may choose to develop strategies for improving water quality, protecting or enhancing fish habitat and, in collaboration with Ecology, setting minimum instream flows. At present, 45 of Washington's 62 WRIAs are represented by 36 planning units engaged in watershed planning.

See the Ecology watershed homepage for the status and listings of watershed planning efforts by WRIA throughout the state: [www.ecy.wa.gov/watershed/](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/watershed/). Many WRIA plans were due by December 2004, with completion being required for all by December 2006 and 2007.

## Total Maximum Daily Load or Water Cleanup Plan

The Water Cleanup Plan, also known as Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL), is a process for planning to facilitate the improvement of the quality of surface water. It was established by Section 303(d) of the Clean Water Act. This federal law requires states to identify sources of pollution in waters that fail to meet state water quality standards and to develop Water Cleanup Plans to address those pollutants. The Water Cleanup Plan establishes limits on pollutants that can be discharged to a waterbody and still allow state standards to be met. Setting such standards requires planning and monitoring at large geographic scales, and this is currently being done by Ecology's Water Quality Program.

The protection, management and restoration of wetlands are an important part of planning for water cleanup. Wetlands play an important role in reducing the amount of pollutants in a watershed because they function to remove nutrients, sediments, and toxic compounds (see Chapter 2 in Volume 1).

TMDL Water Cleanup Plans, however, do not presently consider wetland protection, restoration, and enhancement as elements in meeting the cleanup standards. Ecology has not yet adopted water quality standards for wetlands.

## **Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project**

The Interior Columbia Basin Ecosystem Management Project (ICBEMP) was charged by several federal agencies with developing a management strategy for the region that is scientifically and ecologically based. It may potentially alter the direction of management on over 60 million acres of lands administered by the Forest Service and Bureau of Land Management (BLM).

This effort combines science and management. Scientists developed a framework for ecosystem management and an assessment of the ecological, bio-physical, social, and economic conditions of the Columbia Basin including lands outside of federal control. Land managers are using the scientific information to develop management strategies and provide context for Forest Service and BLM plans for land management.

A large focus of this effort is on protecting and managing the aquatic resources that are related to salmon, including wetlands. Local governments in the region can use the information and analyses done by the ICBEMP to manage resources at larger geographic scales.

## **Columbia River Initiative**

The Columbia River Initiative was developed as a way to manage the increasing conflict related to the river's water resources. The public has been divided on the issue of whether additional water can be diverted from the river to off-stream uses without negatively affecting endangered salmon runs. The purpose of the Columbia River Initiative, therefore, is to develop an integrated state program for managing the water resources of the Columbia River to allow new water withdrawals while providing support for salmon recovery.

To address this issue, scientific studies are being performed to serve as the cornerstone of a new management program that defines the conditions under which Ecology may issue water rights from the river. Since wetlands play an important role in the hydrologic cycle on which salmon depend, there is both an opportunity and a need to integrate the protection and management of wetlands into this process.