

III. Water Quality Listings by Category

A. Overview of Category 1 – Water Meets Tested Standards

Where the available data shows attainment of the water quality standard for the parameter for which a waterbody segment has been tested or studied, the segment will be placed in the *Meets Tested Standards* category. To qualify for this category, some data must be available for a waterbody segment which show attainment of the applicable water quality standard; it is not sufficient merely to have a lack of evidence of impairment.

This category represents the waters in Washington that best meet the applicable characteristic uses, as far as is known according to the available data. However, placement in this category does not necessarily mean that all standards have been tested for or studied in the waterbody segment, and does not ensure that all characteristic uses are protected. Also, a water may be placed in this category for certain parameters while also being listed on the 303(d) list due to impairment from a different pollutant. The assessment report will note which water quality standards have been met by which segments.

In addition, in the assessment report, Ecology will highlight those waterbody segments that show the highest levels of water quality, with high levels of data and certainty, as defined by the following (in addition to qualifying for the *Meets Tested Standards* category):

- Data showing that standards are met for all conventional pollutants, temperature, and dissolved oxygen
- No evidence of any impairment for any other reason
- Extensive and regular monitoring for water quality, and
- Strong evidence of healthy aquatic biota and habitat

All interested parties are encouraged to conduct future monitoring of all the waters in this category to determine if tested water quality standards continue to be attained or if untested water quality standards are attained.