

May 31, 2005

Mr. Walter Edelen
Water Resources Program Manager
Spokane County Conservation District
210 N. Havana
Spokane, WA 99202

Dear Mr. Edelen:

Thank you for your public comment letter received on December 17, 2004, regarding Washington State's Water Quality Assessment for 2002/2004. The department received over 45 comment letters during this last review process and is appreciative of the time you took to review and comment on this assessment. We realize that there is an extensive amount of information in the Water Quality Assessment. The scrutiny given by you and other public reviewers has resulted in many changes and corrections that improved the accurateness of the final submittal to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

The Water Quality Assessment is being submitted to EPA as an "integrated report" to meet the Clean Water Act requirements of sections 305(b) and 303(d). EPA will only take approval action on Category 5 of the assessment, which represents the state's 303(d) list. The Water Quality Assessment can be viewed at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/index.html>.

We understand your concerns regarding citations of specific staff people in your Conservation District and have revised the 29 listing records that were specific to those concerns. This data is not intended to be anonymous and our protocol for citing data has been to list the submitter and the date. A change to data citations for the entire listing process is not possible at this point. However, we will be embarking on the 2006 listing process soon after we complete this assessment and will add your concern to the list of issues for consideration in the next policy revision. We are considering having all data go through EIM in the 2006 Assessment, in which case it would become the citation in the listing basis. This might solve many of the concerns you are raising.

Thank you again for taking the time to provide comments to Ecology. If you have questions regarding the above responses, or would like further clarification, please feel free to call me at 360-407-6414.

Sincerely,



Susan Braley
Unit Supervisor
Watershed Management Section