



King County

Water and Land Resources Division

Department of Natural Resources and Parks

King Street Center
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TTY Relay: 711

May 12, 2015

Patrick Lizon, Water Quality Planner
Water Quality Program
Washington State Department of Ecology
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Dear Mr. Lizon:

King County's Water and Land Resources (WLR) Division has reviewed Ecology's March 2015 draft list of impaired waterbodies under section 303d of the Clean Water Act. We appreciate the efforts required to develop this list and understand that it is a complicated process which requires a variety of challenging judgment calls be made at the statewide level. A significant portion of the data used to identify waterbody listing categories within King County were collected by the WLR Division, and we share your goal of making the list as accurate as possible.

We have a number of specific comments which are detailed in Attachments A and B in addition to some general comments presented below. Our principle concerns are:

- 1) The use of bioassessment data to legally mandate a total maximum daily load (TMDL) where no causative pollutant has been identified.
- 2) The evaluation of pH data from lakes without regard to the natural processes which can lead to transient changes in pH throughout the day.
- 3) The continued use of data collected more than 10 years ago in some cases, which perpetuates potentially outdated impaired listings.

Overall, as we have expressed throughout the recent process to develop human health water quality criteria, our comments illustrate the need to revise and update Ecology Water Quality Program Policy 1-11 (where the decision procedures for waterbody categories are identified) to reflect the best available science. Many of our concerns with Policy 1-11 are best addressed via facilitated multi-stakeholder collaboration. We recommend that Ecology expand the scope of the existing Interagency Project Team to improve TMDLs and address these issues through that group and process.

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If you have any questions, please feel free to contact Richard Jack, Water Quality Planner in the Science and Technical Support Section (STS), at 206-477-4715, or Debra Lester, Supervisor, Toxicology and Contaminant Assessment Group, STS, at 206-477-4752.

Thank you for your thoughtful consideration of comments. King County looks forward to continuing to work together with Ecology to maintain and restore our water quality.

Sincerely,



Mark Isaacson
Division Director

cc: Pam Elardo, Division Director, Wastewater Treatment Division (WTD), Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Sandy Kilroy, Assistant Division Director, WTD, DNRP
Betsy Cooper, Wastewater Planner, WTD, DNRP
Doug Navetski, Stormwater Manager, Stormwater Services Section, Water and Land Resources (WLR) Division, DNRP
Richard Jack, Water Quality Planner, Science and Technical Support Section, WLR Division, DNRP