



STATE OF WASHINGTON  
DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

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**CALL FOR DATA & SCOPING PROCESS FOR  
THE WATER QUALITY ASSESSMENT  
AND WATER QUALITY POLICY 1-11**

The Water Quality Program of the Department of Ecology (Ecology) is seeking public input on the next Water Quality Assessment for Washington waters in order to start the process of submitting the next “Integrated Report” to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) to meet federal Clean Water Act (CWA) requirements under Sections 303(d) and 305(b). This notice does two things:

1. Initiates a public “call for data” to seek new water quality data and information for fresh and marine waters in Washington. This new data and information will be used for updating Washington’s Water Quality Assessment.
2. Conducts a 60-day scoping process to solicit all stakeholder and tribal ideas about areas they think should be revised or clarified in [Water Quality Policy 1-11](#), *Assessment of Water Quality for the Clean Water Act Sections 303(d) and 305(b) Integrated Report*. Policy 1-11 guides how Ecology assesses data on waterbody segments and makes listings decisions on the water quality status.

The Integrated Report is developed by using readily available water quality data and information to determine the status of water quality for a given waterbody segment, and placing that segment in one of five categories. Category 5 represents Section 303(d) of the CWA, which is a list of all surface waters in the state for which beneficial uses of the water such as for drinking, recreation, aquatic habitat, and industrial use are impaired by pollutants. All of the categories collectively represent Section 305(b) of the CWA, which provides a status of current conditions of the state’s waters based on available data, from “meets tested standards” to “impaired.”

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The last Water Quality Assessment was prepared and submitted to EPA in September 2015. The start of this next assessment process will result in submittal of the updated Assessment and candidate 303(d) list to the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).

Ecology's updated Assessment will be based on the most recent state water quality standards approved by EPA (chapter 201A WAC, Water Quality Standards for Surface Waters of the State of Washington, and Chapter 173-204 WAC, Sediment Management Standards) and the state's Water Quality guidance policies:

- Program Policy 1-11, Chapter 1, *Assessment of Water Quality for the Clean Water Act Sections 303(d) and 305(b) Integrated Report* and
- Program Policy 1-11, Chapter 2, *Ensuring Credible Data for Water Quality Management*

These guidance policies are available on Ecology's website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/policy1-11.html>

The two requests for information to begin the next Water Quality Assessment are further described below.

1. **Initiate a Call for Data**

Ecology is seeking new data that has been collected up through December 2015 during this public "call for data". **If any data were previously submitted to Ecology for use in the Water Quality Assessment it does not need to be submitted again.** Ecology will only use high quality data for the Water Quality Assessment. All data submitted must have been collected in accordance with a quality assurance project plan or approved sediment sampling and analysis plan. The person submitting the data must document that such a plan was followed, and must provide Ecology with a copy of the plan upon request. Data must be representative of the ambient water quality conditions to be useable for assessing the waterbody segment.

Numeric water quality data must be submitted into Ecology's Environmental Information Management (EIM) database to be used for the Assessment. Narrative information that provides conclusive evidence that a beneficial water use is being impaired must be submitted directly to the Water Quality Program at the address provided below. Ecology notes that numeric data can be submitted directly into EIM on a continual basis, and encourages entities to do so.

Ecology will consider all readily available data that has been provided when data is pulled from EIM to begin the Assessment. This is anticipated to occur late summer 2016. A second reminder notice with a deadline for receiving data will be given by Ecology as a follow-up to this notice, prior to the data pull.

Information on submitting water quality data to EIM is available on Ecology's website at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/eim>, or questions can be directed to Jake Kleinknecht, EIM Coordinator, at [jake.kleinknecht@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:jake.kleinknecht@ecy.wa.gov) or by phone at (360) 407-6562. Sediment specific data submittal requirements can be found at: [http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/data\\_submittal/Data\\_Requirements.htm](http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/tcp/data_submittal/Data_Requirements.htm).

More details about this next Water Quality Assessment process can be found at:  
<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/303d/currentassessmt.html>.

## 2. **Conduct a Scoping Process for Water Quality Policy 1-11**

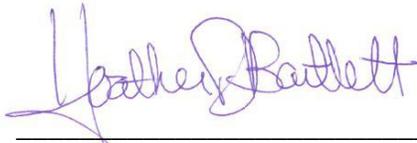
As a part of the next Assessment process, Ecology will also review and update the listing policy, (Water Quality Policy 1-11, Chapter 1). This listing policy guides how Ecology assesses data for waterbody segments and makes listings decisions on the water quality status. It was last updated in 2012.

Ecology is conducting a **60-day scoping process** to solicit all stakeholder and tribal ideas about areas of the policy they think should be revised or clarified. Following the scoping process, Ecology will use the public input to prioritize areas of Policy 1-11 to be reviewed, and will then invite public dialogue on the issues related to the areas under review. Ecology's goal is to have a transparent and open process for public participation on review and updates to Policy 1-11. Following this public dialogue and feedback, Ecology will make appropriate updates to Policy 1-11, and conduct a formal public review of the updated Policy 1-11, anticipated for fall 2016.

**The deadline for getting public feedback on the scoping process for Policy 1-11 is 5:00 p.m. on Friday, April 1, 2016. Correspondence may be submitted by mail or email using the contact information listed below.**

Questions about the water quality assessment process, or requests for assistance in submitting data and information should be directed to:

Patrick Lizon, Department of Ecology  
PO Box 47600, Olympia, WA 98504-7600  
Phone: (360) 407-6782; E-mail: [303d@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:303d@ecy.wa.gov)



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