

# Washington's 2020 Clean Waters Plan

## Improving the Water Quality Assessment and Total Maximum Daily Load Programs in Washington State

The Interagency Team views Clean Water Act Programs, if effectively implemented, as opportunities to realize significant benefits towards the protection and restoration of water bodies.



**W**e have completed the report "Recommendations for Improving Water Quality Assessment and TMDL Programs in Washington State" in July, 2014. State regulatory staff were interviewed from California, Washington, Ohio, Florida and South Carolina to provide a "compare and contrast" approach identifying nine key recommendations. The report is available on the Interagency Team webpage: [www.wastormwatercenter.org/interagency](http://www.wastormwatercenter.org/interagency)

Concurrently, the US Government Accountability Office (GAO) released a comprehensive review of the nation's TMDL program identifying shortcomings of the Water Quality Assessment and TMDL Programs.

### Key Recommendations from the Report:

- Implement existing state regulatory authority related to nonpoint and unpermitted sources
- Refine water quality standards and assessment methodologies
- Employ consistent processes for collecting, assessing and using credible data
- Refine water quality assessment categories
- Update bioassessment assessment methodologies
- Define TMDL prioritization, timelines and process for public involvement and permitted community predictability
- Develop TMDLs to be consistent, flexible and equitable

### Moving Forward

Several productive meetings have been held between Ecology and the Interagency Team, as well as some EPA involvement. A rich exchange of ideas resulted in:

- A commitment to work on high priority issues identified by the Interagency Team, with concurrence from Ecology and EPA
- Designation of an Interagency Team lead for the following issues:
  - Implement existing regulatory authority related to nonpoint and unpermitted sources – Todd Hunsdorfer, King County
  - Develop a clear process for application to delist water bodies - Mindy Fohn, Kitsap County and Steve Britsch, Snohomish County
  - Employ consistent processes for collecting, assessing and using credible data - Sarah Burdick and Jana Ratcliff, Washington State Dept. of Transportation
  - Update bioassessment listing methodology - Steve Britsch, Snohomish County

A key focus of the Team through summer 2016 will be participation in the revisions to Water Quality Policy 1-11. The Policy is a cornerstone of three of the four high priority issues. Additionally, regulating non-point and unpermitted sources is moving forward with upcoming meetings with Ecology and EPA.

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