

**Title 90 RCW**  
**WATER RIGHTS—ENVIRONMENT**

**Chapters**

- 90.03 Water code.
- 90.08 Stream patrollers.
- 90.14 Water rights—Registration—Waiver and relinquishment, etc.
- 90.16 Appropriation of water for public and industrial purposes.
- 90.22 Minimum water flows and levels.
- 90.24 Regulation of outflow of lakes.
- 90.28 Miscellaneous rights and duties.
- 90.36 Artesian wells.
- 90.38 Yakima river basin water rights.
- 90.40 Water rights of United States.
- 90.42 Water resource management.
- 90.44 Regulation of public groundwaters.
- 90.46 Reclaimed water use.
- 90.48 Water pollution control.
- 90.50A Water pollution control facilities—Federal capitalization grants.
- 90.52 Pollution disclosure act of 1971.
- 90.54 Water resources act of 1971.
- 90.56 Oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and response.
- 90.58 Shoreline management act of 1971.
- 90.64 Dairy nutrient management.
- 90.66 Family farm water act.
- 90.71 Puget Sound water quality protection.
- 90.72 Shellfish protection districts.
- 90.74 Aquatic resources mitigation.
- 90.80 Water conservancy boards.
- 90.82 Watershed planning.
- 90.84 Wetlands mitigation banking.
- 90.86 Joint legislative committee on water supply during drought.
- 90.88 Aquatic rehabilitation zones.
- 90.90 Columbia river basin water supply.
- 90.94 Streamflow restoration.

*Actionable nuisances defined—Closing of channel stream: RCW 7.48.010.*

*Annexation of water, sewer, and fire districts (to city or town): RCW 35.02.200, chapter 35.13A RCW.*

*Aquatic lands: Chapters 79.105 through 79.140 RCW.*

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

*Authority to construct viaducts, bridges, drawbridges (first-class cities): Chapter 35.85 RCW.*

*Board of natural resources—Powers and duties (commission on harbor lines): RCW 43.30.215.*

*Bridges across and obstructions in navigable waters: Chapter 88.28 RCW.*

*Canal commission: Chapter 47.72 RCW.*

*Cities and towns*

*auxiliary water systems for protection from fire: RCW 35.21.030.*

*dikes, levees, embankments, authority to construct: RCW 35.21.090.*

*first-class cities*

*specific powers enumerated: RCW 35.22.280.*

*utilities, collective bargaining with employees (waterworks system): RCW 35.22.350.*

*wharves, city may let wharves or privileges thereon: RCW 35.22.410.*

*jurisdiction over adjacent waters: RCW 35.21.160.*

*sewerage, drainage and water supply: RCW 35.21.210.*

*streets and alleys over first-class tidelands, control of: RCW 35.21.250.*

*streets over tidelands, control of: RCW 35.21.240.*

*swimming pools, power to acquire: RCW 35.21.020.*

*utility services, lien for (waterworks): RCW 35.21.290 through 35.21.300.*

*City in adjoining state may condemn watershed property: RCW 8.28.050.*

*Dams, height on tributaries of Columbia River: Chapter 77.55 RCW.*

*Department of natural resources, to locate line between tide and shore land in tidal rivers: RCW 79.125.010.*

*Diking, drainage and sewerage improvement districts: Chapters 85.08 through 85.16 RCW.*

*Diking and drainage districts: Chapters 85.05 through 85.24 RCW.*

*Director of fish and wildlife, may modify inadequate fishways and fish guards: RCW 77.57.040, 77.57.060.*

*Easements over public lands, waterway rights: Chapter 79.36 RCW.*

*Ferries*

*county-owned—Ferry districts: Chapter 36.54 RCW.*

*privately owned (licensed by county): Chapter 36.53 RCW.*

*Fisheries code: Title 77 RCW.*

*Flood control districts: Chapter 86.09 RCW.*

*Food fish, shellfish*

*compacts: Chapter 77.75 RCW.*

*construction projects in state waters: Chapter 77.55 RCW.*

*taxes: Chapter 82.27 RCW.*

*unlawful acts: Chapter 77.50 RCW.*

*Franchises on roads and bridges (by counties): Chapter 36.55 RCW.*

*Furnishing impure water, penalty: RCW 70.54.020.*

*Game and game fish, unlawful acts: Chapter 77.50 RCW.*

Geological survey (objects as to water supplies, etc.): RCW 43.92.020.

Harbor improvements: Chapter 53.20 RCW.

Harbor line commission: RCW 79.115.010.

Highway commission (bridges): Chapter 47.01 RCW.

Irrigation: Title 87 RCW.

Irrigation districts

limits of levy until water is received: RCW 87.04.090.

right to cross other property: RCW 87.03.455.

Joint canal construction (by counties): RCW 36.64.060.

Jurisdiction in special cases

additional right-of-way: RCW 37.08.250.

Lake Washington ship canal: RCW 37.08.240.

Lease or conveyance (by county) to United States for flood control,  
navigation and allied purposes: RCW 36.34.220 through 36.34.240.

Limitation on municipal indebtedness, exception for water supply:  
State Constitution Art. 8 § 6 (Amendment 27).

Local improvements (cities and towns)

filling and draining of lowlands—waterways: Chapter 35.56  
RCW.

filling lowlands: Chapter 35.55 RCW.

harbor area leaseholds—assessment: RCW 35.44.150.

leases on tidelands—assessment: RCW 35.44.160.

Marine employees—Public employment relations: Chapter 47.64 RCW.

Master plan of development (including flood control): RCW 43.21A.350.

Material removed for channel or harbor improvement or flood control—  
Use for public purpose: RCW 79.140.110.

Merger of minor irrigation district into major irrigation district—  
Existing water rights not impaired: RCW 87.03.857.

Municipal utilities

acquisition of out-of-state waterworks: RCW 35.92.014  
through 35.92.015.

acquisition of water rights: RCW 35.92.220.

authority to acquire and operate waterworks: RCW 35.92.010.

cannot condemn irrigation system: RCW 35.92.190.

city may extend water system outside limits: RCW 35.92.170.

may acquire property outside city: RCW 35.92.180.

Navigation and harbor improvements: Title 88 RCW.

Nuisance defined (as to water rights): RCW 7.48.120.

Nuisance (deposit of unwholesome substance into any lake, creek or river): RCW 9.66.050.

Operating agencies (power commission)—Policy declaration as to water resources: Chapter 43.52 RCW.

Parks, bathing beaches, public camps: Chapter 67.20 RCW.

Penalties imposed by parks and recreation commission: RCW 79A.05.165.

Planning commissions (cities and towns)—Restrictions on buildings—Use of land: RCW 35.63.080.

Pollution of drinking water supply—Penalty: RCW 70.54.010.

Pollution of watershed of city outside state—Penalty: RCW 70.54.030.

Port districts: Title 53 RCW.

Private ditches and drains: Chapter 85.28 RCW.

Private way of necessity defined—Maintaining drain, flume or ditch: RCW 8.24.010.

Prohibited parking places (upon any bridge): RCW 46.61.570.

Public lands: Title 79 RCW.

Public nuisance (tend to obstruct, or render dangerous for passage, a lake, navigable river, bay, stream, canal or basin): RCW 9.66.010.

Public nuisances enumerated: RCW 7.48.140.

Public utilities and transportation commission: Chapter 80.01 RCW.

Public utilities—Gas, electrical and water companies: Chapter 80.28 RCW.

Public utility districts—Powers: Chapter 54.16 RCW.

Public waterways: Chapter 91.08 RCW.

Public works: Chapters 39.04 through 39.28 RCW.

Puget Sound ferry and toll bridge system: Chapter 47.60 RCW.

#### Railroads

bridges over navigable streams: RCW 81.36.100.

lines across or along watercourses: RCW 81.36.040.

may construct and operate canals and ditches: RCW 81.36.130.

structures across state waterways: RCW 81.36.100.

Reclamation and irrigation in United States reclamation areas: Chapter 89.12 RCW.

Reclamation districts of one million acres

general improvement and divisional districts: Chapter 89.30  
RCW.

limitation on water appropriation: RCW 89.30.001, 89.30.007.

powers: Chapter 89.30 RCW.

purposes: RCW 89.30.007.

right to cross streams, highways, etc.: RCW 89.30.214.

tolls for electricity and water: RCW 89.30.787.

Regulation of watercourses (counties): RCW 36.32.280.

Relocation of inner harbor line: RCW 79.115.020.

Removal of obstructions (from watercourses, by counties): RCW  
36.32.290.

Restrictions on sale of certain water rights by state: State  
Constitution Art. 15 § 1 (Amendment 15).

Roads and bridges (county): Chapters 36.75 through 36.87 RCW.

Sales and leases of public lands and materials—Water right as  
improvement: RCW 79.13.170.

Second-class cities

acquisition of property for municipal purposes (waterfront  
leases, etc.): RCW 35.23.452.

specific powers enumerated: RCW 35.23.440.

utilities (supply city with water): RCW 35.23.515 through  
35.23.535.

waterworks: RCW 35.23.560 through 35.23.580.

Sewerage systems (cities and towns)—Waterworks: RCW 35.67.331 through  
35.67.340.

Shellfish: Chapter 77.60 RCW.

Small boat facilities for Puget Sound authorized: RCW 79A.05.185.

Soil conservation (conservation of water): Chapter 89.08 RCW.

Soil conservation—Water rights preserved: RCW 89.08.390.

Speed in traversing bridge, tunnels, etc.: RCW 46.61.450.

State board of health—Powers and duties (investigation of water  
supply): RCW 43.20.050.

Street grades—Sanitary fills (cities and towns): Chapter 35.73 RCW.

Streets—Drawbridges (cities and towns): Chapter 35.74 RCW.

Tidelands, shorelands, and harbor areas: Chapters 79.115, 79.125 RCW.

Towns, specific powers enumerated: RCW 35.27.370.

*Transfer of territory where city's harbor lies in two counties:  
Chapter 36.08 RCW.*

*Trees may be removed from riverbanks (by counties): RCW 36.32.300.*

*Unclassified cities, additional indebtedness for municipal utilities  
(water supply): RCW 35.30.060.*

*Use of waters for irrigation, mining, manufacturing, deemed public  
use: State Constitution Art. 21.*

*Washington utilities and transportation commission: Chapter 80.01 RCW.*

*Water*

*pollution—Protection from (cities and towns): Chapter 35.88  
RCW.*

*redemption bonds (cities and towns): Chapter 35.89 RCW.*

*Water-sewer districts*

*generally: Title 57 RCW.*

*powers: Chapter 57.08 RCW.*

*Watercraft adrift: Chapter 79A.60 RCW.*

*Wharves and landings: Chapter 88.24 RCW.*

**Chapter 90.03 RCW**  
**WATER CODE**

**Sections**

- 90.03.005 State water policy—Cooperation with other agencies—  
Reduction of wasteful practices.
- 90.03.010 Appropriation of water rights—Existing rights preserved.
- 90.03.015 Definitions.
- 90.03.020 Units of water measurement.
- 90.03.030 Right to convey water along lake or stream—Conveyance to  
intake structure in neighboring state.
- 90.03.040 Eminent domain—Use of water declared public use.
- 90.03.060 Water masters—Appointment, compensation.
- 90.03.070 Water masters—Duties—Office space and equipment—Clerical  
assistance.
- 90.03.090 Water master's power of arrest.
- 90.03.100 Prosecuting attorney, legal assistant.
- 90.03.105 Petition by planning units for general adjudication.
- 90.03.110 Determination of water rights—Petition—Statement and  
plan.
- 90.03.120 Determination of water rights—Order—Summons—Necessary  
parties—Use of innovative practices and technologies  
encouraged.
- 90.03.130 Determination of water rights—Service of summons.
- 90.03.140 Determination of water rights—Adjudication claim by  
defendant.
- 90.03.150 Determination of water rights—Guardian ad litem for  
defendant.
- 90.03.160 Determination of water rights—Response to motions under  
RCW 90.03.640(3)—Notice of intent to cross-examine—  
Appointment of a referee—Special rules.
- 90.03.180 Determination of water rights—Filing fee.
- 90.03.200 Determination of water rights—Final decree and notice of  
decree—Payment of fees—Appellate review of decree.
- 90.03.210 Determination of water rights—Interim regulation of water  
—Appeals.
- 90.03.220 Determination of water rights—Failure to appear—  
Estoppel.
- 90.03.230 Determination of water rights—Copy of decree to director.
- 90.03.240 Determination of water rights—Certificate of adjudicated  
water right—Notice—Fees.
- 90.03.243 Determination of water rights—State to bear its expenses,  
when—County must be provided extraordinary costs  
imposed due to adjudication.
- 90.03.245 Determination of water rights—Scope.
- 90.03.247 Minimum flows and levels—Departmental authority exclusive  
—Other recommendations considered.
- 90.03.250 Appropriation procedure—Application for permit—Temporary  
permit.
- 90.03.252 Use of reclaimed water by wastewater treatment facility—  
Permit requirements inapplicable.
- 90.03.255 Applications for water right, transfer, or change—  
Consideration of water impoundment or other resource  
management technique.

90.03.260 Appropriation procedure—Application—Contents.  
 90.03.265 Appropriation procedure—Cost-reimbursement agreement for expedited review of application—Adoption of rules.  
 90.03.270 Appropriation procedure—Record of application.  
 90.03.280 Appropriation procedure—Notice.  
 90.03.290 Appropriation procedure—Department to investigate—Preliminary permit—Findings and action on application.  
 90.03.300 Appropriation procedure—Diversion of water for out-of-state use—Reciprocity.  
 90.03.310 Appropriation procedure—Assignability of permit or application.  
 90.03.320 Appropriation procedure—Construction work.  
 90.03.330 Appropriation procedure—Water right certificate.  
 90.03.340 Appropriation procedure—Effective date of water right.  
 90.03.345 Establishment of reservations of water for certain purposes and minimum flows or levels as constituting appropriations with priority dates.  
 90.03.350 Construction or modification of storage dam—Plans and specifications—Additional dam safety inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations.  
 90.03.360 Controlling works and measuring devices—Metering of diversions—Impact on fish stock.  
 90.03.370 Reservoir permits—Secondary permits—Expedited processing—Underground artificial storage and recovery project standards and rules—Exemptions—Report to the legislature.  
 90.03.380 Right to water attaches to land—Transfer or change in point of diversion—Transfer of rights from one district to another—Priority of water rights applications—Exemption for small irrigation impoundments—Electronic notice of an application for an interbasin water rights transfer.  
 90.03.383 Interties—Findings—Definitions—Review and approval.  
 90.03.386 Coordination of approval procedures for compliance and consistency with approved water system plan.  
 90.03.390 Temporary changes—Emergency interties—Rotation in use.  
 90.03.395 Change of point of diversion to downstream intake structure—Intent.  
 90.03.397 Department may approve change of the point of diversion prescribed in a permit to appropriate surface water—Requirements.  
 90.03.400 Crimes against water code—Unauthorized use of water.  
 90.03.410 Crimes against water code—Interference with works—Wrongful use of water—Property destruction—Penalty.  
 90.03.420 Crimes against water code—Obstruction of right-of-way.  
 90.03.430 Partnership ditches—Action for reimbursement for work done.  
 90.03.440 Partnership ditches—Procedure for division of water between joint owners.  
 90.03.450 Partnership ditches—Lien for labor performed.  
 90.03.460 Inchoate rights not affected.  
 90.03.470 Schedule of fees.  
 90.03.471 Disposition of fees.



- 90.03.500 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Legislative findings.
- 90.03.510 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Credit for other improvements.
- 90.03.520 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Definitions.
- 90.03.525 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges with respect to state highway rights-of-way—Annual plan for expenditure of charges.
- 90.03.540 Highway construction improvement projects—Joint stormwater treatment facilities.
- 90.03.550 Municipal water supply purposes—Beneficial uses.
- 90.03.560 Municipal water supply purposes—Identification.
- 90.03.570 Change or transfer of an unperfected surface water right for municipal water supply purposes.
- 90.03.580 Failing public water system—Conditions.
- 90.03.590 Municipal water suppliers—Watershed agreement—Pilot project.
- 90.03.591 New watershed agreements prohibited after July 1, 2008.
- 90.03.600 Civil penalties.
- 90.03.605 Compliance—Sequence of enforcement measures—Location of compliance personnel.
- 90.03.615 Calculating annual consumptive quantity.
- 90.03.620 Water rights adjudication—Disqualification of judge.
- 90.03.625 Water rights adjudication—Motion for default.
- 90.03.630 Water rights adjudication—Use for which a statement of claim is required.
- 90.03.635 Water rights adjudication—Filing of evidence.
- 90.03.640 Water rights adjudication—Preliminary investigation—Department's report of findings.
- 90.03.645 Water rights adjudication—Early settlement encouraged—Approval of settlement.
- 90.03.650 Water rights processing account.
- 90.03.655 Expedited processing of applications—On department's own volition—Notice—Fees.
- 90.03.660 Expedited processing of applications—Notice to tribal governments.
- 90.03.665 Certified water right examiners—Fees—Rules.
- 90.03.670 Processing of water right applications—Scope of chapter 285, Laws of 2010.
- 90.03.675 Stormwater retention ponds—Mosquito abatement.

**Prior acts on this subject:** Code 1881 c 141; 1889 pp 706-728 §§ 1-67, 1889 p 728 § 1; 1889 p 729 §§ 1-2; 1891 c 142; 1899 c 131; 1901 cc 30, 33, 36; 1903 c 53; 1907 c 144; and 1909 c 209.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**Chapter 90.03 RCW**  
**WATER CODE**

**Sections**

- 90.03.005 State water policy—Cooperation with other agencies—  
Reduction of wasteful practices.
- 90.03.010 Appropriation of water rights—Existing rights preserved.
- 90.03.015 Definitions.
- 90.03.020 Units of water measurement.
- 90.03.030 Right to convey water along lake or stream—Conveyance to  
intake structure in neighboring state.
- 90.03.040 Eminent domain—Use of water declared public use.
- 90.03.060 Water masters—Appointment, compensation.
- 90.03.070 Water masters—Duties—Office space and equipment—Clerical  
assistance.
- 90.03.090 Water master's power of arrest.
- 90.03.100 Prosecuting attorney, legal assistant.
- 90.03.105 Petition by planning units for general adjudication.
- 90.03.110 Determination of water rights—Petition—Statement and  
plan.
- 90.03.120 Determination of water rights—Order—Summons—Necessary  
parties—Use of innovative practices and technologies  
encouraged.
- 90.03.130 Determination of water rights—Service of summons.
- 90.03.140 Determination of water rights—Adjudication claim by  
defendant.
- 90.03.150 Determination of water rights—Guardian ad litem for  
defendant.
- 90.03.160 Determination of water rights—Response to motions under  
RCW 90.03.640(3)—Notice of intent to cross-examine—  
Appointment of a referee—Special rules.
- 90.03.180 Determination of water rights—Filing fee.
- 90.03.200 Determination of water rights—Final decree and notice of  
decree—Payment of fees—Appellate review of decree.
- 90.03.210 Determination of water rights—Interim regulation of water  
—Appeals.
- 90.03.220 Determination of water rights—Failure to appear—  
Estoppel.
- 90.03.230 Determination of water rights—Copy of decree to director.
- 90.03.240 Determination of water rights—Certificate of adjudicated  
water right—Notice—Fees.
- 90.03.243 Determination of water rights—State to bear its expenses,  
when—County must be provided extraordinary costs  
imposed due to adjudication.
- 90.03.245 Determination of water rights—Scope.
- 90.03.247 Minimum flows and levels—Departmental authority exclusive  
—Other recommendations considered.
- 90.03.250 Appropriation procedure—Application for permit—Temporary  
permit.
- 90.03.252 Use of reclaimed water by wastewater treatment facility—  
Permit requirements inapplicable.
- 90.03.255 Applications for water right, transfer, or change—  
Consideration of water impoundment or other resource  
management technique.

90.03.260 Appropriation procedure—Application—Contents.  
 90.03.265 Appropriation procedure—Cost-reimbursement agreement for expedited review of application—Adoption of rules.  
 90.03.270 Appropriation procedure—Record of application.  
 90.03.280 Appropriation procedure—Notice.  
 90.03.290 Appropriation procedure—Department to investigate—Preliminary permit—Findings and action on application.  
 90.03.300 Appropriation procedure—Diversion of water for out-of-state use—Reciprocity.  
 90.03.310 Appropriation procedure—Assignability of permit or application.  
 90.03.320 Appropriation procedure—Construction work.  
 90.03.330 Appropriation procedure—Water right certificate.  
 90.03.340 Appropriation procedure—Effective date of water right.  
 90.03.345 Establishment of reservations of water for certain purposes and minimum flows or levels as constituting appropriations with priority dates.  
 90.03.350 Construction or modification of storage dam—Plans and specifications—Additional dam safety inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations.  
 90.03.360 Controlling works and measuring devices—Metering of diversions—Impact on fish stock.  
 90.03.370 Reservoir permits—Secondary permits—Expedited processing—Underground artificial storage and recovery project standards and rules—Exemptions—Report to the legislature.  
 90.03.380 Right to water attaches to land—Transfer or change in point of diversion—Transfer of rights from one district to another—Priority of water rights applications—Exemption for small irrigation impoundments—Electronic notice of an application for an interbasin water rights transfer.  
 90.03.383 Interties—Findings—Definitions—Review and approval.  
 90.03.386 Coordination of approval procedures for compliance and consistency with approved water system plan.  
 90.03.390 Temporary changes—Emergency interties—Rotation in use.  
 90.03.395 Change of point of diversion to downstream intake structure—Intent.  
 90.03.397 Department may approve change of the point of diversion prescribed in a permit to appropriate surface water—Requirements.  
 90.03.400 Crimes against water code—Unauthorized use of water.  
 90.03.410 Crimes against water code—Interference with works—Wrongful use of water—Property destruction—Penalty.  
 90.03.420 Crimes against water code—Obstruction of right-of-way.  
 90.03.430 Partnership ditches—Action for reimbursement for work done.  
 90.03.440 Partnership ditches—Procedure for division of water between joint owners.  
 90.03.450 Partnership ditches—Lien for labor performed.  
 90.03.460 Inchoate rights not affected.  
 90.03.470 Schedule of fees.  
 90.03.471 Disposition of fees.

- 90.03.500 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Legislative findings.
- 90.03.510 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Credit for other improvements.
- 90.03.520 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Definitions.
- 90.03.525 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges with respect to state highway rights-of-way—Annual plan for expenditure of charges.
- 90.03.540 Highway construction improvement projects—Joint stormwater treatment facilities.
- 90.03.550 Municipal water supply purposes—Beneficial uses.
- 90.03.560 Municipal water supply purposes—Identification.
- 90.03.570 Change or transfer of an unperfected surface water right for municipal water supply purposes.
- 90.03.580 Failing public water system—Conditions.
- 90.03.590 Municipal water suppliers—Watershed agreement—Pilot project.
- 90.03.591 New watershed agreements prohibited after July 1, 2008.
- 90.03.600 Civil penalties.
- 90.03.605 Compliance—Sequence of enforcement measures—Location of compliance personnel.
- 90.03.615 Calculating annual consumptive quantity.
- 90.03.620 Water rights adjudication—Disqualification of judge.
- 90.03.625 Water rights adjudication—Motion for default.
- 90.03.630 Water rights adjudication—Use for which a statement of claim is required.
- 90.03.635 Water rights adjudication—Filing of evidence.
- 90.03.640 Water rights adjudication—Preliminary investigation—Department's report of findings.
- 90.03.645 Water rights adjudication—Early settlement encouraged—Approval of settlement.
- 90.03.650 Water rights processing account.
- 90.03.655 Expedited processing of applications—On department's own volition—Notice—Fees.
- 90.03.660 Expedited processing of applications—Notice to tribal governments.
- 90.03.665 Certified water right examiners—Fees—Rules.
- 90.03.670 Processing of water right applications—Scope of chapter 285, Laws of 2010.
- 90.03.675 Stormwater retention ponds—Mosquito abatement.

**Prior acts on this subject:** Code 1881 c 141; 1889 pp 706-728 §§ 1-67, 1889 p 728 § 1; 1889 p 729 §§ 1-2; 1891 c 142; 1899 c 131; 1901 cc 30, 33, 36; 1903 c 53; 1907 c 144; and 1909 c 209.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**RCW 90.03.005 State water policy—Cooperation with other agencies—Reduction of wasteful practices.** It is the policy of the state to promote the use of the public waters in a fashion which provides for obtaining maximum net benefits arising from both diversionary uses of the state's public waters and the retention of

waters within streams and lakes in sufficient quantity and quality to protect instream and natural values and rights. Consistent with this policy, the state supports economically feasible and environmentally sound development of physical facilities through the concerted efforts of the state with the United States, public corporations, Indian tribes, or other public or private entities. Further, based on the tenet of water law which precludes wasteful practices in the exercise of rights to the use of waters, the department of ecology shall reduce these practices to the maximum extent practicable, taking into account sound principles of water management, the benefits and costs of improved water use efficiency, and the most effective use of public and private funds, and, when appropriate, to work to that end in concert with the agencies of the United States and other public and private entities. [1989 c 348 § 2; 1979 ex.s. c 216 § 8.]

**Severability—1989 c 348:** See note following RCW 90.54.020.

**Rights not impaired—1989 c 348:** See RCW 90.54.920.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

**RCW 90.03.010 Appropriation of water rights—Existing rights preserved.** The power of the state to regulate and control the waters within the state shall be exercised as hereinafter in this chapter provided. Subject to existing rights all waters within the state belong to the public, and any right thereto, or to the use thereof, shall be hereafter acquired only by appropriation for a beneficial use and in the manner provided and not otherwise; and, as between appropriations, the first in time shall be the first in right. Nothing contained in this chapter shall be construed to lessen, enlarge, or modify the existing rights of any riparian owner, or any existing right acquired by appropriation, or otherwise. They shall, however, be subject to condemnation as provided in RCW 90.03.040, and the amount and priority thereof may be determined by the procedure set out in RCW 90.03.110 through 90.03.240. [1917 c 117 § 1; RRS § 7351. Prior: 1891 p 127 § 1. Formerly RCW 90.04.020.]

**RCW 90.03.015 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

- (1) "Department" means the department of ecology.
- (2) "Director" means the director of ecology.
- (3) "Municipal water supplier" means an entity that supplies water for municipal water supply purposes.
- (4) "Municipal water supply purposes" means a beneficial use of water: (a) For residential purposes through fifteen or more residential service connections or for providing residential use of water for a nonresidential population that is, on average, at least twenty-five people for at least sixty days a year; (b) for governmental or governmental proprietary purposes by a city, town, public utility district, county, sewer district, or water district; or (c) indirectly for the purposes in (a) or (b) of this subsection through the delivery of treated or raw water to a public water system

for such use. If water is beneficially used under a water right for the purposes listed in (a), (b), or (c) of this subsection, any other beneficial use of water under the right generally associated with the use of water within a municipality is also for "municipal water supply purposes," including, but not limited to, beneficial use for commercial, industrial, irrigation of parks and open spaces, institutional, landscaping, fire flow, water system maintenance and repair, or related purposes. If a governmental entity holds a water right that is for the purposes listed in (a), (b), or (c) of this subsection, its use of water or its delivery of water for any other beneficial use generally associated with the use of water within a municipality is also for "municipal water supply purposes," including, but not limited to, beneficial use for commercial, industrial, irrigation of parks and open spaces, institutional, landscaping, fire flow, water system maintenance and repair, or related purposes.

(5) "Person" means any firm, association, water users' association, corporation, irrigation district, or municipal corporation, as well as an individual. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 1; 1987 c 109 § 65.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 19.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.020 Units of water measurement.** The legally recognized units of water measurement shall be as follows: For flowing water—one cubic foot of water per second of time, and to be designated "secondfoot." For absolute volume or quantity of water—forty-three thousand five hundred sixty cubic feet of water, and to be designated "acrefoot." [1917 c 117 § 2; RRS § 7352. Prior: 1890 p 729 § 1. Formerly RCW 90.04.010, part.]

**RCW 90.03.030 Right to convey water along lake or stream—Conveyance to intake structure in neighboring state.** Any person may convey any water which he or she may have a right to use along any of the natural streams or lakes of this state, but not so as to raise the water thereof above ordinary highwater mark, without making just compensation to persons injured thereby; but due allowance shall be made for evaporation and seepage, the amount of such seepage to be determined by the department, upon the application of any person interested. Water conveyed under this section may be conveyed to an approved intake structure located in a neighboring state in order to accomplish an approved modification of the point of diversion in a permit to appropriate water for a beneficial use, if approval of the neighboring state is documented to the satisfaction of the department. [1999 c 232 § 3; 1987 c 109 § 68; 1917 c 117 § 3; RRS § 7353. Formerly RCW 90.28.050.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.040 Eminent domain—Use of water declared public use.**

The beneficial use of water is hereby declared to be a public use, and any person may exercise the right of eminent domain to acquire any property or rights now or hereafter existing when found necessary for the storage of water for, or the application of water to, any beneficial use, including the right to enlarge existing structures employed for the public purposes mentioned in this chapter and use the same in common with the former owner, and including the right and power to condemn an inferior use of water for a superior use. In condemnation proceedings the court shall determine what use will be for the greatest public benefit, and that use shall be deemed a superior one: PROVIDED, That no property right in water or the use of water shall be acquired hereunder by condemnation for irrigation purposes, which shall deprive any person of such quantity of water as may be reasonably necessary for the irrigation of his or her land then under irrigation to the full extent of the soil, by the most economical method of artificial irrigation applicable to such land according to the usual methods of artificial irrigation employed in the vicinity where such land is situated. In any case, the court shall determine what is the most economical method of irrigation. Such property or rights shall be acquired in the manner provided by law for the taking of private property for public use by private corporations. [2013 c 23 § 592; 1917 c 117 § 4; RRS § 7354. Formerly RCW 90.04.030.]

*Eminent domain by corporations: Chapter 8.20 RCW.*

**RCW 90.03.060 Water masters—Appointment, compensation. (1)**

Water masters shall be appointed by the department whenever it shall find the interests of the state or of the water users to require them. The districts for or in which the water masters serve shall be designated water master districts, which shall be fixed from time to time by the department, as required, and they shall be subject to revision as to boundaries or to complete abandonment as local conditions may indicate to be expedient, the spirit of this provision being that no district shall be created or continued where the need for the same does not exist. Water masters shall be supervised by the department, shall be compensated for services from funds of the department, and shall be technically qualified to the extent of understanding the elementary principals of hydraulics and irrigation, and of being able to make water measurements in streams and in open and closed conduits of all characters, by the usual methods employed for that purpose. Counties and municipal and public corporations of the state are authorized to contribute moneys to the department to be used as compensation to water masters in carrying out their duties. All such moneys received by the department shall be used exclusively for said purpose.

(2) A water master may be appointed by the department for a watershed management area for which a plan adopted by a planning unit and by the counties with territory in the watershed management area under RCW 90.82.130 contains a requirement or request that a water master be appointed, subject to availability of state or nonstate funding. [1999 c 237 § 1; 1987 c 109 § 69; 1967 c 80 § 1; 1947 c 123 § 2; 1917 c 117 § 9; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7359. Formerly RCW 90.08.010.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Stream patrollers (approval, supervision of, by water masters):*  
*Chapter 90.08 RCW.*

**RCW 90.03.070 Water masters—Duties—Office space and equipment—Clerical assistance.** It shall be the duty of the water master, acting under the direction of the department, to divide in whole or in part, the water supply of his or her district among the several water conduits and reservoirs using said supply, according to the right and priority of each, respectively. He or she shall divide, regulate, and control the use of water within his or her district by such regulation of headgates, conduits, and reservoirs as shall be necessary to prevent the use of water in excess of the amount to which the owner of the right is lawfully entitled. Whenever, in the pursuance of his or her duties, the water master regulates a headgate of a water conduit or the controlling works of a reservoir, he or she shall attach to such headgate or controlling works a written notice, properly dated and signed, stating that such headgate or controlling works has been properly regulated and is wholly under his or her control and such notice shall be a legal notice to all parties. In addition to dividing the available waters and supervising the stream patroller in his or her district, he or she shall enforce such rules and regulations as the department shall from time to time prescribe.

The county or counties in which water master districts are created shall deputize the water masters appointed hereunder, and may without charge provide to each water master suitable office space, supplies, equipment, and clerical assistance as are necessary to the water master in the performance of his or her duties. [2013 c 23 § 593; 1987 c 109 § 70; 1967 c 80 § 2; 1917 c 117 § 10; RRS § 7360. Formerly RCW 90.08.020.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Water master's power of arrest: RCW 90.03.090.*

**RCW 90.03.090 Water master's power of arrest.** The water master shall have the power, within his or her district, to arrest any person in the act of violating any of the provisions of this chapter and to deliver such person promptly into the custody of the sheriff or other competent officer within the county and immediately upon such delivery the water master making the arrest shall, in writing and upon oath, make complaint before the proper district judge against the person so arrested. [1987 c 202 § 250; 1917 c 117 § 12; RRS § 7362. Formerly RCW 90.08.030.]

**Intent—1987 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.04.190.

**RCW 90.03.100 Prosecuting attorney, legal assistant.** It shall be the duty of the prosecuting attorney of any county to appear for or on behalf of the department or any water master, upon request of any



such officer in any case which may arise in the performance of the official duties of any such officer within the jurisdiction of said prosecuting attorney. [1987 c 109 § 71; 1917 c 117 § 13; RRS § 7363.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Attorney general to represent state, agencies, etc.:* RCW 43.10.040.

*Prosecuting attorney, duties:* RCW 36.27.020(3), (4).

**RCW 90.03.105 Petition by planning units for general adjudication.** The legislature finds that the lack of certainty regarding water rights within a water resource basin may impede management and planning for water resources. The legislature further finds that planning units conducting water resource planning under chapter 90.82 RCW may find that the certainty provided by a general adjudication of water rights under this chapter is required for water planning or water management in a water resource inventory area or in a portion of the area. Therefore, such planning units may petition the department to conduct such a general adjudication and the department shall give high priority to such a request in initiating any such general adjudications under this chapter. [1997 c 442 § 301.]

**RCW 90.03.110 Determination of water rights—Petition—Statement and plan.** (1) Upon the filing of a petition with the department by a planning unit or by one or more persons claiming the right to any waters within the state or when, after investigation, in the judgment of the department, the public interest will be served by a determination of the rights thereto, the department shall prepare a statement of the facts, together with a plan or map of the locality under investigation, and file such statement and plan or map in the superior court of the county in which said water is situated, or, in case such water flows or is situated in more than one county, in the county which the department shall determine to be the most convenient to the parties interested therein. Such a statement shall:

(a) Either (i) identify each person or entity owning real property situated within the area to be adjudicated but outside the boundaries of a city, town, or special purpose district that provides water to property within its service area; (ii) identify all known persons claiming a right to the water sought to be determined; or (iii) identify both; and

(b) Include a brief statement of the facts in relation to such water, and the necessity for a determination of the rights thereto.

(2) Prior to filing an adjudication under this chapter, the department shall:

(a) Consult with the administrative office of the courts to determine whether sufficient judicial resources are available to commence and to prosecute the adjudication in a timely manner; and

(b) Report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the estimated budget needs for the court and the department to conduct the adjudication. [2009 c 332 § 1; 1987 c 109 § 72; 1917 c 117 § 14; RRS § 7364. Formerly RCW 90.12.010.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** "Except for section 14 of this act, this act applies only to adjudications initiated after July 26, 2009."  
[2009 c 332 § 21.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Additional powers and duties enumerated—Payment for from reclamation account:* RCW 89.16.055.

*Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings:* RCW 90.14.200.

*Schedule of fees:* RCW 90.03.470.

**RCW 90.03.120 Determination of water rights—Order—Summons—Necessary parties—Use of innovative practices and technologies encouraged.** (1) Upon the filing of the statement and map as provided in RCW 90.03.110 the judge of such superior court shall make an order directing summons to be issued, and fixing the return day thereof, which shall be not less than 100 nor more than 130 days, after the making of such order: PROVIDED, That for good cause, the court, at the request of the department, may modify said time period: PROVIDED FURTHER, That for an adjudication filed in water resource inventory area 1 after June 1, 2023, the return day for the latest time to file claims pursuant to such a summons shall be not less than one year after the making of such an order, unless special rules of procedure established by the court pursuant to RCW 90.03.160(3) provide for a later date.

(2) A summons issued under this section shall be issued out of said superior court, signed and attested by the clerk thereof, in the name of the state of Washington, as plaintiff, against all known persons identified by the department under RCW 90.03.110. The summons shall contain a brief statement of the objects and purpose of the proceedings and shall require the defendants to appear on the return day thereof, and make and file an adjudication claim to, or interest in, the water involved and a statement that unless they appear at the time and place fixed and assert such right, judgment will be entered determining their rights according to the evidence: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That any persons claiming the right to water by virtue of a contract with a claimant to the right to divert the same, shall not be necessary parties to the proceeding: PROVIDED FURTHER, That for an adjudication filed in water resource inventory area 1 after June 1, 2023, the latest day for a party to appear by filing a claim in response to such a summons shall be set by the court and listed within the summons as a date not less than one year after the service of said summons, unless special rules of procedure established by the court pursuant to RCW 90.03.160(3) provide for a later date.

(3) To the extent consistent with court rules and subject to the availability of funds provided either by direct appropriation or funded through the administrative office of the courts for this specific adjudicative proceeding, the court is encouraged to conduct the water rights adjudication employing innovative practices and technologies appropriate to large scale and complex cases, such as: (a) Electronic filing of documents, including notice and claims; (b) appearance via teleconferencing; (c) prefiling of testimony; and (d)

other practices and technologies consistent with court rules and emerging technologies. [2023 c 160 § 1; 2009 c 332 § 2; 1987 c 109 § 73; 1977 ex.s. c 357 § 1; 1917 c 117 § 15; RRS § 7365. Formerly RCW 90.12.020.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.130 Determination of water rights—Service of summons.**

(1) Service of said summons shall be made in the same manner and with the same force and effect as service of summons in civil actions commenced in the superior courts of the state: PROVIDED, That as an alternative to personal service, service may be made by certified mail, with return receipt signed and dated by defendant, a spouse of a defendant, or another person authorized to accept service. If the defendants, or either of them, cannot be found within the state of Washington, of which the return of the sheriff of the county in which the proceeding is pending or the failure to sign a receipt for certified mail shall be prima facie evidence, upon the filing of an affidavit by the department, or its attorney, in conformity with the statute relative to the service of summons by publication in civil actions, such service may be made by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county in which such proceeding is pending, and also publication of said summons in a newspaper of general circulation in each county in which any portion of the water is situated, once a week for six consecutive weeks (six publications). Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, the summons by publication shall state that adjudication claims must be filed within sixty days after the last publication or before the return date, whichever is later. In cases where personal service or service by certified mail is had, summons must be served at least 60 days before the return day thereof. For summons by certified mail, completion of service occurs upon the date of receipt by the defendant.

(2) Personal service of summons may be made by department of ecology employees for actions pertaining to water rights.

(3) For an adjudication filed in water resource inventory area 1 after June 1, 2023, any summons shall state that adjudication claims must be within the time frame set pursuant to RCW 90.03.120, unless special rules of procedure established by the court pursuant to RCW 90.03.160(3) provide for a later date. [2023 c 160 § 2; 2009 c 332 § 6; 1987 c 109 § 74; 1979 ex.s. c 216 § 2; 1977 ex.s. c 357 § 2; 1929 c 122 § 1; 1917 c 117 § 16; RRS § 7366. Formerly RCW 90.12.030.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

*Commencement of actions (service of summons): Chapter 4.28 RCW.*

*Manner of publication and form of summons: RCW 4.28.110.*

*Service of summons by publication—When authorized: RCW 4.28.100.*

**RCW 90.03.140 Determination of water rights—Adjudication claim by defendant.** (1) On or before the date specified in the summons, each defendant shall file with the clerk of the superior court an adjudication claim on a form and in a manner provided by the department, and mail or electronically mail a copy to the department. The department shall provide information that will assist claimants of small uses of water in completing their adjudication claims. The adjudication claim must contain substantially the following, except that when the legal basis for the claimed right is a federally reserved right, the information must be filed only as applicable:

- (a) The name, mailing address, and telephone contact number of each defendant on the claim, and email address, if available;
- (b) The purpose or purposes of use of the water and the annual and instantaneous quantities of water put to beneficial use;
- (c) For each use, the date the first steps were taken under the law to put the water to beneficial use;
- (d) The date of beginning and completion of the construction of wells, ditches, or other works to put the water to use;
- (e) The maximum amount of land ever under irrigation and the maximum annual and instantaneous quantities of water ever used thereon prior to the date of the statement and if for power, or other purposes, the maximum annual and instantaneous quantities of water ever used prior to the date of the adjudication claim;
- (f) The dates between which water is used annually;
- (g) If located outside the boundaries of a city, town, or special purpose district that provides water to property within its service area, the legal description and county tax parcel number of the land upon which the water as presently claimed has been, or may be, put to beneficial use;
- (h) The legal description and county tax parcel number of the subdivision of land on which the point of diversion or withdrawal is located as well as land survey and geographic positioning coordinates of the same if available;
- (i) Whether a right to surface or groundwater, or both, is claimed and the source of the surface water and the location and depth of all wells;
- (j) The legal basis for the claimed right;
- (k) Whether a statement of claim relating to the water right was filed under chapter 90.14 RCW or whether a declaration relating to the water right was filed under chapter 90.44 RCW and, if so, the claim or declaration number, and whether the right is documented by a permit or certificate and, if so, the permit number or certificate number. When the source is a well, the well log number must be provided, when available;
- (l) The amount of land and the annual and instantaneous quantities of water used thereon, or used for power or other purposes, that the defendant claims as a present right.

(2) The adjudication claim shall be verified on oath by the defendant. The department shall furnish the form for the adjudication claim. A claimant may file an adjudication claim electronically if authorized under state and local court rules. The department may

assist claimants in their effort by making the department's pertinent records and information accessible electronically or by other means and through conferring with claimants.

(3) For an adjudication filed in water resource inventory area 1 after June 1, 2023, the department shall broadly distribute a draft version of the adjudication claim form to enable review and input by prospective claimants. The draft version must, at a minimum, be provided to Indian tribes, local governments, and special purpose districts and allow for at least 60 days of public comment on the draft adjudication claim form prior to the department finalizing the form. [2023 c 160 § 3; 2009 c 332 § 7; 1987 c 109 § 75; 1929 c 122 § 2; 1917 c 117 § 17; RRS § 7367. Formerly RCW 90.12.040.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.150 Determination of water rights—Guardian ad litem for defendant.** Whenever any defendant in any proceeding instituted under this chapter is an infant, or an alleged incompetent or disabled person for whom the court has not yet appointed either a guardian or a limited guardian, the court shall appoint a guardian ad litem for such minor or alleged incompetent or disabled defendant. [1977 ex.s. c 80 § 75; 1917 c 117 § 18; RRS § 7368. Formerly RCW 90.12.050.]

**Purpose—Intent—Severability—1977 ex.s. c 80:** See notes following RCW 4.16.190.

*Guardian ad litem*

*for infant: RCW 4.08.050.*

*for incapacitated person: RCW 4.08.060.*

**RCW 90.03.160 Determination of water rights—Response to motions under RCW 90.03.640(3)—Notice of intent to cross-examine—Appointment of a referee—Special rules.** (1) Upon filing of the department's motion or motions under RCW 90.03.640(3), any party with a claim filed under RCW 90.03.140 for the appropriation of water or waters of the subject adjudication may file and serve a response to the department's motion or motions within the time set by the court for such a response. Objections must include specific information in regard to the particular disposition against which the objection is being made. Objections must also state the underlying basis of the objection being made, including general information about the forms of evidence that support the objection. Any party may file testimony with the court and serve it on other parties. If a party intends to cross-examine a claimant or witness based on another party's prefiled testimony, the party intending to cross-examine shall file a notice of intent to cross-examine no later than fifteen days in advance of the hearing. If no notice of intent to cross-examine based on the prefiled testimony is given, then the claimant or witness is not required to appear at the hearing. Any party may present evidence in support of or in response to an objection.

(2) The superior court may appoint a referee or other judicial officer to assist the court.

(3) The superior court may adopt special rules of procedure for an adjudication of water rights under this chapter, including simplified procedures for claimants of small uses of water. The rules of procedure for a superior court apply to an adjudication of water rights under this chapter unless superseded by special rules of the court under this subsection. The superior court is encouraged to consider entering, after notice and hearing and as the court determines appropriate, pretrial orders from an adjudication commenced on October 12, 1977. [2009 c 332 § 10; 1989 c 80 § 1; 1987 c 109 § 76; 1917 c 117 § 19; RRS § 7369. Formerly RCW 90.12.060.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.180 Determination of water rights—Filing fee.** At the time of filing the adjudication claim as provided in RCW 90.03.140, each defendant, except the United States or an Indian tribe under 43 U.S.C. Sec. 666, shall pay to the clerk of the superior court a fee as set under RCW 36.18.016. [2009 c 332 § 12; 1995 c 292 § 21; 1982 c 15 § 2; 1979 ex.s. c 216 § 3; 1929 c 122 § 3; 1919 c 71 § 2; 1917 c 117 § 21; RRS § 7371. Formerly RCW 90.12.080, part.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

**RCW 90.03.200 Determination of water rights—Final decree and notice of decree—Payment of fees—Appellate review of decree.** Upon the court's determination of all issues, the court shall issue a final decree and provide notice of the decree to all parties. The final decree must order each party whose rights have been confirmed, except the United States or an Indian tribe under 43 U.S.C. Sec. 666, to pay the department the fees required by RCW 90.03.470(10) and any other applicable fee schedule within ninety days after the department sends notice to the party under RCW 90.03.240. Appellate review of the decree shall be in the same manner as in other cases in equity, except that review must be sought within sixty days from the entry thereof. [2009 c 332 § 13; 1988 c 202 § 91; 1987 c 109 § 79; 1971 c 81 § 176; 1917 c 117 § 23; RRS § 7373. Formerly RCW 90.12.100.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Severability—1988 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.24.050.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.210 Determination of water rights—Interim regulation of water—Appeals.** (1) During the pendency of such adjudication proceedings prior to judgment or upon review by an appellate court, the stream or other water involved shall be regulated or partially regulated according to the schedule of rights specified in the department's report upon an order of the court authorizing such regulation: PROVIDED, Any interested party may file a bond and obtain an order staying the regulation of said stream as to him or her, in which case the court shall make such order regarding the regulation of the stream or other water as he or she may deem just. The bond shall be filed within five days following the service of notice of appeal in an amount to be fixed by the court and with sureties satisfactory to the court, conditioned to perform the judgment of the court.

(2) Any appeal of a decision of the department on an application to change or transfer a water right subject to an adjudication that is being litigated actively shall be conducted as follows:

(a) The appeal shall be filed with the court conducting the adjudication and served under RCW 34.05.542(3). The content of the notice of appeal shall conform to RCW 34.05.546. Standing to appeal shall be based on the requirements of RCW 34.05.530 and is not limited to parties to the adjudication.

(b) If the appeal includes a challenge to the portion of the department's decision that pertains to tentative determinations of the validity and extent of the water right, review of those tentative determinations shall be conducted by the court consistent with the provisions of RCW 34.05.510 through 34.05.598, except that the review shall be de novo.

(c) If the appeal includes a challenge to any portion of the department's decision other than the tentative determinations of the validity and extent of the right, the court must certify to the pollution control hearings board for review and decision those portions of the department's decision. Review by the pollution control hearings board shall be conducted consistent with chapter 43.21B RCW and the board's implementing regulations, except that the requirements for filing, service, and content of the notice of appeal shall be governed by (a) of this subsection. Any party to an appeal may move the court to certify portions of the appeal to the pollution control hearings board, but the appellant must file a motion for certification no later than ninety days after the appeal is filed under this section.

(d) Appeals shall be scheduled to afford all parties full opportunity to participate before the superior court and the pollution control hearings board.

(e) Any person wishing to appeal the decision of the board made under (c) of this subsection shall seek review of the decision in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW, except that the petition for review must be filed with the superior court conducting the adjudication.

(3) Nothing in this section shall be construed to affect or modify any treaty or other federal rights of an Indian tribe, or the rights of any federal agency or other person or entity arising under federal law. Nothing in this section is intended or shall be construed as affecting or modifying any existing right of a federally recognized Indian tribe to protect from impairment its federally reserved water rights in federal court. [2013 c 23 § 594; 2009 c 332 § 14; 2001 c 220 § 5; 1988 c 202 § 92; 1987 c 109 § 80; 1921 c 103 § 1; RRS § 7374. Formerly RCW 90.12.110.]

~~Intent—Construction—Effective date—2001 c 220~~: See notes following RCW 43.21B.110.

~~Severability—1988 c 202~~: See note following RCW 2.24.050.

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109~~: See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.220 Determination of water rights—Failure to appear—Estoppel.** Whenever proceedings shall be instituted for the determination of the rights to the use of water, any defendant who shall fail to appear in such proceedings, after legal service, and submit proof of his or her claim, shall be estopped from subsequently asserting any right to the use of such water embraced in such proceeding, except as determined by such decree. [2013 c 23 § 595; 1917 c 117 § 24; RRS § 7375. Formerly RCW 90.12.120.]

**RCW 90.03.230 Determination of water rights—Copy of decree to director.** The clerk of the superior court, immediately upon the entry of any decree by the superior court, shall transmit a certified copy thereof to the director, who shall immediately enter the same upon the records of the department. [1987 c 109 § 81; 1917 c 117 § 25; RRS § 7376. Formerly RCW 90.12.130.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109~~: See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.240 Determination of water rights—Certificate of adjudicated water right—Notice—Fees.** Upon the court's final determination of the rights to water, the department shall issue to each person entitled to a water right by such a determination, a certificate of adjudicated water right, setting forth the name and mailing address of record with the court of such person; the priority and purpose of the right; the period during which said right may be exercised, the point of diversion or withdrawal, and the place of use; the land to which said water right is appurtenant; the maximum annual and instantaneous quantities of water allowed; and specific provisions or limitations or both under which the water right has been confirmed.

The department shall provide notice to the water right holder that the certificate has been prepared for issuance and that fees for the issuance of the certificate are due in accordance with RCW 90.03.470 and any other applicable fee schedule. If the water right holder fails to submit the required fees within one year from the date the notice was issued by the department, the department may move the court for sanctions for violation of the court's order in the final decree requiring payment. [2009 c 332 § 15; 1987 c 109 § 82; 1917 c 117 § 26; RRS § 7377. Formerly RCW 90.12.140.]

~~Application—2009 c 332~~: See note following RCW 90.03.110.

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109~~: See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.



**RCW 90.03.243 Determination of water rights—State to bear its expenses, when—County must be provided extraordinary costs imposed due to adjudication.** The expenses incurred by the state in a proceeding to determine rights to water initiated under RCW 90.03.110 or 90.44.220 or upon appeal of such a determination shall be borne by the state. Subject to the availability of state funding provided either by direct appropriation or funded through the administrative office of the courts for this specific purpose, the county in which an adjudication or a suit to administer an adjudication is being held must be provided the extraordinary costs imposed on the superior court of that county due to the adjudication. [2009 c 332 § 16; 1982 c 15 § 1.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.245 Determination of water rights—Scope.** Rights subject to determination proceedings conducted under RCW 90.03.110 through 90.03.240 and 90.44.220 include all rights to the use of water, including all diversionary and instream water rights, and include rights to the use of water claimed by the United States.

Nothing in this section may be construed as establishing or creating any new rights to the use of water. This section relates exclusively to the confirmation of water rights established or created under other provisions of state law or under federal laws. [1979 ex.s. c 216 § 1.]

**Effective date—1979 ex.s. c 216:** "Section 2 of this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, and safety, the support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [June 4, 1979]." [1979 ex.s. c 216 § 12.]

**Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1979 ex.s. c 216 § 13.]

**RCW 90.03.247 Minimum flows and levels—Departmental authority exclusive—Other recommendations considered.** (1) Whenever an application for a permit to make beneficial use of public waters is approved relating to a stream or other water body for which minimum flows or levels have been adopted and are in effect at the time of approval, the permit shall be conditioned to: (a) Protect the levels or flows; or (b) require water resource mitigation of impacts to instream flows and closed surface water bodies for water resource mitigation pilot projects authorized under RCW 90.94.090.

(2) No agency may establish minimum flows and levels or similar water flow or level restrictions for any stream or lake of the state other than the department of ecology whose authority to establish is exclusive, as provided in chapter 90.03 RCW and RCW 90.22.010 and 90.54.040. The provisions of other statutes, including but not limited to chapter 43.21C RCW, may not be interpreted in a manner that is inconsistent with this section. In establishing such minimum flows, levels, or similar restrictions, the department shall, during all

stages of development by the department of ecology of minimum flow proposals, consult with, and carefully consider the recommendations of, the department of fish and wildlife, the department of commerce, the department of agriculture, and representatives of the affected Indian tribes. Nothing herein shall preclude the department of fish and wildlife, the department of commerce, or the department of agriculture from presenting its views on minimum flow needs at any public hearing or to any person or agency, and the department of fish and wildlife, the department of commerce, and the department of agriculture are each empowered to participate in proceedings of the federal energy regulatory commission and other agencies to present its views on minimum flow needs. [2018 c 1 § 302; 2003 c 39 § 48; 1996 c 186 § 523; 1994 c 264 § 82. Prior: 1987 c 506 § 95; 1987 c 505 § 81; 1980 c 87 § 46; 1979 ex.s. c 166 § 1.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**Effective date—2018 c 1:** See RCW 90.94.900.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 186:** See notes following RCW 43.330.904.

**Legislative findings and intent—1987 c 506:** See note following RCW 77.04.020.

**RCW 90.03.250 Appropriation procedure—Application for permit—Temporary permit.** Any person, municipal corporation, firm, irrigation district, association, corporation or water users' association hereafter desiring to appropriate water for a beneficial use shall make an application to the department for a permit to make such appropriation, and shall not use or divert such waters until he or she has received a permit from the department as in this chapter provided. The construction of any ditch, canal or works, or performing any work in connection with said construction or appropriation, or the use of any waters, shall not be an appropriation of such water nor an act for the purpose of appropriating water unless a permit to make said appropriation has first been granted by the department: PROVIDED, That a temporary permit may be granted upon a proper showing made to the department to be valid only during the pendency of such application for a permit unless sooner revoked by the department: PROVIDED, FURTHER, That nothing in this chapter contained shall be deemed to affect RCW 90.40.010 through 90.40.080 except that the notice and certificate therein provided for in RCW 90.40.030 shall be addressed to the department, and the department shall exercise the powers and perform the duties prescribed by RCW 90.40.030. [2013 c 23 § 596; 1987 c 109 § 83; 1917 c 117 § 27; RRS § 7378. Formerly RCW 90.20.010.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Schedule of fees: RCW 90.03.470.*

**RCW 90.03.252 Use of reclaimed water by wastewater treatment facility—Permit requirements inapplicable.** The permit requirements

of RCW 90.03.250 do not apply to the use of reclaimed water by the owner of a wastewater treatment facility under the provisions of RCW 90.46.120 and do not apply to the use of agricultural industrial process water as provided under RCW 90.46.150. [2001 c 69 § 6; 1997 c 444 § 2.]

**Severability—1997 c 444:** See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**RCW 90.03.255 Applications for water right, transfer, or change—Consideration of water impoundment or other resource management technique.** The department shall, when evaluating an application for a water right, transfer, or change filed pursuant to RCW 90.03.250 or 90.03.380 that includes provision for any water impoundment or other resource management technique, take into consideration the benefits and costs, including environmental effects, of any water impoundment or other resource management technique that is included as a component of the application. The department's consideration shall extend to any increased water supply that results from the impoundment or other resource management technique, including but not limited to any recharge of groundwater that may occur, as a means of making water available or otherwise offsetting the impact of the diversion of surface water proposed in the application for the water right, transfer, or change. Provision for an impoundment or other resource management technique in an application shall be made solely at the discretion of the applicant and shall not otherwise be made by the department as a condition for approving an application that does not include such provision.

This section does not lessen, enlarge, or modify the rights of any riparian owner, or any existing water right acquired by appropriation or otherwise. [1997 c 360 § 2; 1996 c 306 § 1.]

**Findings—Purpose—1997 c 360:** "The legislature finds that in many basins in the state there is water available on a seasonal basis that is in excess of the needs of either existing water right holders or instream resources. The legislature finds that excess waters often result in significant flooding and damage to public and private resources. Further, it is in the public interest to encourage the impoundment of excess water and other measures that can be used to offset the impact of withdrawals and diversions on existing rights and instream resources. Further, in some areas of the state additional supplies of water are needed to meet the needs of a growing economy and population. The legislature finds there is a range of alternatives that offset the impacts that should be encouraged including the creation, restoration, enhancement, or enlargement of ponds, wetlands, and reservoirs and the artificial recharge of aquifers.

The purpose of this act is to foster the improvement in the water supplies available to meet the needs of the state. It is the goal of this act to strengthen the state's economy while maintaining and improving the overall quality of the state's environment." [1997 c 360 § 1.]

**RCW 90.03.260 Appropriation procedure—Application—Contents.**

(1) Each application for permit to appropriate water shall set forth the name and post office address of the applicant, the source of water

supply, the nature and amount of the proposed use, the time during which water will be required each year, the location and description of the proposed ditch, canal, or other work, the time within which the completion of the construction and the time for the complete application of the water to the proposed use.

(2) If for agricultural purposes, the application shall give the legal subdivision of the land and the acreage to be irrigated, as near as may be, and the amount of water expressed in acre feet to be supplied per season. If for power purposes, it shall give the nature of the works by means of which the power is to be developed, the head and amount of water to be utilized, and the uses to which the power is to be applied.

(3) If for construction of a reservoir, the application shall give the height of the dam, the capacity of the reservoir, and the uses to be made of the impounded waters.

(4) If for community or multiple domestic water supply, the application shall give the projected number of service connections sought to be served. However, for a municipal water supplier that has an approved water system plan under chapter 43.20 RCW or an approval from the department of health to serve a specified number of service connections, the service connection figure in the application or any subsequent water right document is not an attribute limiting exercise of the water right as long as the number of service connections to be served under the right is consistent with the approved water system plan or specified number.

(5) If for municipal water supply, the application shall give the present population to be served, and, as near as may be estimated, the future requirement of the municipality. However, for a municipal water supplier that has an approved water system plan under chapter 43.20 RCW or an approval from the department of health to serve a specified number of service connections, the population figures in the application or any subsequent water right document are not an attribute limiting exercise of the water right as long as the population to be provided water under the right is consistent with the approved water system plan or specified number.

(6) If for mining purposes, the application shall give the nature of the mines to be served and the method of supplying and utilizing the water; also their location by legal subdivisions.

(7) All applications shall be accompanied by such maps and drawings, in duplicate, and such other data, as may be required by the department, and such accompanying data shall be considered as a part of the application. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 4; 1987 c 109 § 84; 1917 c 117 § 28; RRS § 7379. Formerly RCW 90.20.020.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Height of dams on tributaries of Columbia river: RCW 77.55.191.*

**RCW 90.03.265 Appropriation procedure—Cost-reimbursement agreement for expedited review of application—Adoption of rules.**

(1)(a) Any applicant for a new withdrawal or a change, transfer, or

amendment of a water right pending before the department may initiate a cost-reimbursement agreement with the department to provide expedited review of the application. A cost-reimbursement agreement may be initiated under this section if the applicant agrees to pay for, or as part of a cooperative effort agrees to pay for, the cost of processing his or her application and all other applications from the same source of supply which must be acted upon before the applicant's request because they were filed prior to the date of when the applicant filed.

(b) The requirement to pay for the cost of other applications under (a) of this subsection does not apply to an application for a new appropriation that would not diminish the water available to earlier pending applicants for new appropriations from the same source of supply.

(c) The requirement to pay for the cost of processing other applications under (a) of this subsection does not apply to an application for a change, transfer, or other amendment that would not diminish the water available to earlier pending applicants for changes or transfers from the same source of supply.

(d) In determining whether an application would not diminish the water available to earlier pending applicants, the department shall consider any water impoundment or other water resource management mitigation technique proposed by the applicant under RCW 90.03.255 or 90.44.055.

(e) The department may enter into cost-reimbursement agreements provided resources are available and shall use the process established under RCW 43.21A.690 for entering into cost-reimbursement agreements. The department's share of work related to a cost-reimbursement application, such as final certificate approval, must be prioritized within the framework of other water right processing needs and as determined by agency rule.

(f) Each individual applicant is responsible for his or her own appeal costs that may result from a water right decision made by the department under this section. In the event that the department's approval of an application under this section is appealed under chapter 43.21B RCW by a third party, the applicant for the water right in question must reimburse the department for the cost of defending the decision before the pollution control hearings board unless otherwise agreed to by the applicant and the department. If an applicant appeals either an approval or a denial made by the department under this section, the applicant is responsible only for its own appeal costs.

(2) In pursuing a cost-reimbursement project, the department must determine the source of water proposed to be diverted or withdrawn from, including the boundaries of the area that delimits the source. The department must determine if any other water right permit applications are pending from the same source. A water source may include surface water only, groundwater only, or surface and groundwater together if the department finds they are hydraulically connected. The department shall consider technical information submitted by the applicant in making its determinations under this subsection. The department may recover from a cost-reimbursement applicant its own costs in making the same source determination under this subsection.

(3) Upon request of the applicant seeking cost-reimbursement processing, the department may elect to initiate a coordinated cost-reimbursement process. To initiate this process, the department must

notify in writing all persons who have pending applications on file for a new appropriation, change, transfer, or amendment of a water right from that water source. A water source may include surface water only, groundwater only, or surface and groundwater together if the department determines that they are hydraulically connected. The notice must be posted on the department's website and published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where affected properties are located. The notice must also be made individually by way of mail to:

(a) Inform those applicants that cost-reimbursement processing of applications within the described water source is being initiated;

(b) Provide to individual applicants the criteria under which the applications will be examined and determined;

(c) Provide to individual applicants the estimated cost for having an application processed on a cost-reimbursement basis;

(d) Provide an estimate of how long the cost-reimbursement process will take before an application is approved or denied; and

(e) Provide at least sixty days for the applicants to respond in writing regarding the applicant's decision to participate in the cost-reimbursement process.

(4) The applicant initiating the cost-reimbursement request must pay for the cost of the determination under subsections (2) and (3) of this section and other costs necessary for the initial phase of cost-reimbursement processing. The cost for each applicant for conducting processing under a coordinated cost-reimbursement agreement must be based primarily on the proportionate quantity of water requested by each applicant. The cost may be adjusted if it appears that an application will require a disproportionately greater amount of time and effort to process due to its complexity.

(5) (a) Only the department may approve or deny a water right application processed under this section, and such a final decision remains solely the responsibility and function of the department. The department retains full authority to amend, refuse, or approve any work product provided by any consultant under this section. The department may recover its costs related to: (i) The review of a consultant to ensure that no conflict of interest exists; (ii) the management of consultant contracts and cost-reimbursement agreements; and (iii) the review of work products provided by participating consultants.

(b) For any cost-reimbursement process initiated under subsection (1) of this section, the applicant may, after consulting with the department, select a prequalified consultant listed by the department under subsection (7) of this section or may be assigned such a prequalified consultant by the department.

(c) For any coordinated cost-reimbursement process initiated under subsection (3) of this section, the applicant may, after consulting with the department, select a prequalified consultant listed by the department under subsection (7) of this section or may be assigned a prequalified consultant by the department.

(d) In lieu of having one or more of the work products performed by a prequalified consultant listed under subsection (7) of this section, the department may, at its discretion, recognize specific work completed by an applicant or an applicant's consultant prior to the initiation of cost-reimbursement processing. The department may also, at its discretion, authorize the use of such a consultant to perform a specific scope of the work that would otherwise be assigned

to prequalified consultants listed under subsection (7) of this section.

(e) At any point during the cost-reimbursement process, the department may request or accept technical information, data, and analysis from the applicant or the applicant's consultant to support the cost-reimbursement process or the department's decision on the application.

(6) The department is authorized to adopt rules or guidance providing minimum qualifications and standards for any consultant's submission of work products under this section, including standards for submission of technical information, scientific analysis, work product documentation, review for conflict of interest, and report presentation that such a consultant must meet.

(7) The department must provide notice to potential consultants of the opportunity to be considered for inclusion on the list of cost-reimbursement consultants to whom work assignments will be made. The department must competitively select an appropriate number of consultants who are qualified by training and experience to investigate and make recommendations on the disposition of water right applications. The prequalified consultant list must be renewed at least every six years, though the department may add qualified cost-reimbursement consultants to the list at any time. The department must enter a master contract with each consultant selected and thereafter make work assignments based on availability and qualifications.

(8) The department may remove any consultant from the consultant list for poor performance, malfeasance, or excessive complaints from cost-reimbursement participants. The department may interview any cost-reimbursement consultant to determine whether the person is qualified for this work, and must spot-check the work of consultants to ensure that the public is being competently served.

(9) When a prequalified cost-reimbursement consultant from the department's list described in subsection (7) of this section is assigned or selected to investigate an application or set of applications, the consultant must document its findings and recommended disposition in the form of written draft technical reports and preliminary draft reports of examination. Within two weeks of the department receiving draft technical reports and preliminary draft reports of examination, the department shall provide the applicant such documents for review and comment prior to their completion by the consultant. The department shall consider such comments by the applicant prior to the department's issuance of a draft report of examination. The department may modify the preliminary draft reports of examination submitted by the consultant. The department's decision on a permit application is final unless it is appealed to the pollution control hearings board under chapter 43.21B RCW.

(10) If an applicant elects not to participate in a cost-reimbursement process, the application remains on file with the department, retains its priority date, and may be processed under regular processing, priority processing, expedited processing, coordinated cost-reimbursement processing, cost-reimbursement processing, or through conservancy board processing as authorized under chapter 90.80 RCW. [2010 c 285 § 3; 2003 c 70 § 6; 2000 c 251 § 7.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** "Water is an essential element for economic prosperity and it generates new, family-wage jobs and state revenues.

It is the intent of the legislature to provide both water right applicants and the department of ecology with the necessary tools to expedite the processing of water right applications depending on the needs of the project and agency workload." [2010 c 285 § 1.]

**Intent—Captions not law—Effective date—2000 c 251:** See notes following RCW 43.21A.690.

**RCW 90.03.270 Appropriation procedure—Record of application.**

Upon receipt of an application it shall be the duty of the department to make an endorsement thereon of the date of its receipt, and to keep a record of same. If upon examination, the application is found to be defective, it shall be returned to the applicant for correction or completion, and the date and the reasons for the return thereof shall be endorsed thereon and made a record in his or her office. No application shall lose its priority of filing on account of such defects, provided acceptable maps, drawings, and such data as is required by the department shall be filed with the department within such reasonable time as it shall require. [2013 c 23 § 597; 1987 c 109 § 85; 1917 c 117 § 29; RRS § 7380. Formerly RCW 90.20.030.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.280 Appropriation procedure—Notice.** Upon receipt of a proper application, the department shall instruct the applicant to publish notice thereof in a form and within a time prescribed by the department in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county or counties in which the storage, diversion, and use is to be made, and in such other newspapers as the department may direct, once a week for two consecutive weeks. Upon receipt by the department of an application it shall send notice thereof containing pertinent information to the director of fish and wildlife. [1994 c 264 § 83; 1988 c 36 § 65; 1987 c 109 § 66; 1953 c 275 § 1; 1939 c 127 § 1; 1925 ex.s. c 161 § 1; 1917 c 117 § 30; RRS § 7381. Formerly RCW 90.20.040.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.290 Appropriation procedure—Department to investigate—Preliminary permit—Findings and action on application.** (1) When an application complying with the provisions of this chapter and with the rules of the department has been filed, the same shall be placed on record with the department, and it shall be its duty to investigate the application, and determine what water, if any, is available for appropriation, and find and determine to what beneficial use or uses it can be applied. If it is proposed to appropriate water for irrigation purposes, the department shall investigate, determine and find what lands are capable of irrigation by means of water found available for appropriation. If it is proposed to appropriate water for the purpose of power development, the department shall investigate, determine and find whether the proposed development is



likely to prove detrimental to the public interest, having in mind the highest feasible use of the waters belonging to the public.

(2) (a) If the application does not contain, and the applicant does not promptly furnish sufficient information on which to base such findings, the department may issue a preliminary permit, for a period of not to exceed three years, requiring the applicant to make such surveys, investigations, studies, and progress reports, as in the opinion of the department may be necessary. If the applicant fails to comply with the conditions of the preliminary permit, it and the application or applications on which it is based shall be automatically canceled and the applicant so notified. If the holder of a preliminary permit shall, before its expiration, file with the department a verified report of expenditures made and work done under the preliminary permit, which, in the opinion of the department, establishes the good faith, intent, and ability of the applicant to carry on the proposed development, the preliminary permit may, with the approval of the governor, be extended, but not to exceed a maximum period of five years from the date of the issuance of the preliminary permit.

(b) For any application for which a preliminary permit was issued and for which the availability of water was directly affected by a moratorium on further diversions from the Columbia river during the years from 1990 to 1998, the preliminary permit is extended through June 30, 2002. If such an application and preliminary permit were canceled during the moratorium, the application and preliminary permit shall be reinstated until June 30, 2002, if the application and permit: (i) Are for providing regional water supplies in more than one urban growth area designated under chapter 36.70A RCW and in one or more areas near such urban growth areas, or the application and permit are modified for providing such supplies, and (ii) provide or are modified to provide such regional supplies through the use of existing intake or diversion structures. The authority to modify such a canceled application and permit to accomplish the objectives of (b) (i) and (ii) of this subsection is hereby granted.

(3) The department shall make and file as part of the record in the matter, written findings of fact concerning all things investigated, and if it shall find that there is water available for appropriation for a beneficial use, and the appropriation thereof as proposed in the application will not impair existing rights or be detrimental to the public welfare, it shall issue a permit stating the amount of water to which the applicant shall be entitled and the beneficial use or uses to which it may be applied: PROVIDED, That where the water applied for is to be used for irrigation purposes, it shall become appurtenant only to such land as may be reclaimed thereby to the full extent of the soil for agricultural purposes. But where there is no unappropriated water in the proposed source of supply, or where the proposed use conflicts with existing rights, or threatens to prove detrimental to the public interest, having due regard to the highest feasible development of the use of the waters belonging to the public, it shall be duty of the department to reject such application and to refuse to issue the permit asked for.

(4) If the permit is refused because of conflict with existing rights and such applicant shall acquire same by purchase or condemnation under RCW 90.03.040, the department may thereupon grant such permit. Any application may be approved for a less amount of water than that applied for, if there exists substantial reason therefor, and in any event shall not be approved for more water than

can be applied to beneficial use for the purposes named in the application. In determining whether or not a permit shall issue upon any application, it shall be the duty of the department to investigate all facts relevant and material to the application. After the department approves said application in whole or in part and before any permit shall be issued thereon to the applicant, such applicant shall pay the fee provided in RCW 90.03.470: PROVIDED FURTHER, That in the event a permit is issued by the department upon any application, it shall be its duty to notify the director of fish and wildlife of such issuance.

(5) The requirements of subsections (1) and (3) of this section do not apply to water resource mitigation pilot projects for which permits are issued in reliance upon water resource mitigation of impacts to instream flows and closed surface water bodies under RCW 90.94.090. [2018 c 1 § 303; 2001 c 239 § 1; 1994 c 264 § 84; 1988 c 36 § 66; 1987 c 109 § 86; 1947 c 133 § 1; 1939 c 127 § 2; 1929 c 122 § 4; 1917 c 117 § 31; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7382. Formerly RCW 90.20.050 and 90.20.060.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**Effective date—2018 c 1:** See RCW 90.94.900.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Inapplicability of section to RCW 90.03.290: RCW 90.14.200.*

**RCW 90.03.300 Appropriation procedure—Diversion of water for out-of-state use—Reciprocity.** No permit for the appropriation of water shall be denied because of the fact that the point of diversion described in the application for such permit, or any portion of the works in such application described and to be constructed for the purpose of storing, conserving, diverting or distributing such water, or because the place of intended use or the lands to be irrigated by means of such water, or any part thereof, may be situated in some other state or nation, but in all such cases where either the point of diversion or any of such works or the place of intended use, or the lands, or part of the lands, to be irrigated by means of such water, are situated within the state of Washington, the permit shall issue as in other cases: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the department may in its discretion, decline to issue a permit where the point of diversion described in the application is within the state of Washington but the place of beneficial use in some other state or nation, unless under the laws of such state or nation water may be lawfully diverted within such state or nation for beneficial use in the state of Washington. [1987 c 109 § 87; 1921 c 103 § 3; RRS § 7383. Formerly RCW 90.20.070.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.310 Appropriation procedure—Assignability of permit or application.** Any permit to appropriate water may be assigned subject to the conditions of the permit, but no such assignment shall

be binding or valid unless filed for record with the department. Any application for permits to appropriate water prior to permit issuing, may be assigned by the applicant, but no such assignment shall be valid or binding unless the written consent of the department is first obtained thereto, and unless such assignment is filed for record with the department. [1987 c 109 § 88; 1917 c 117 § 32; RRS § 7384. Prior: 1891 c 142 § 6. Formerly RCW 90.20.080.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.320 Appropriation procedure—Construction work.**

Actual construction work shall be commenced on any project for which permit has been granted within such reasonable time as shall be prescribed by the department, and shall thereafter be prosecuted with diligence and completed within the time prescribed by the department. The department, in fixing the time for the commencement of the work, or for the completion thereof and the application of the water to the beneficial use prescribed in the permit, shall take into consideration the cost and magnitude of the project and the engineering and physical features to be encountered, and shall allow such time as shall be reasonable and just under the conditions then existing, having due regard for the public welfare and public interests affected. For good cause shown, the department shall extend the time or times fixed as aforesaid, and shall grant such further period or periods as may be reasonably necessary, having due regard to the good faith of the applicant and the public interests affected. Good cause includes prevention or restriction of water use by operation of federal laws for the time or times fixed for commencing work, completing work, and applying water to beneficial use otherwise authorized under a water right permit issued for a federal reclamation project. In fixing construction schedules and the time, or extension of time, for application of water to beneficial use for municipal water supply purposes, the department shall also take into consideration the term and amount of financing required to complete the project, delays that may result from planned and existing conservation and water use efficiency measures implemented by the public water system, and the supply needs of the public water system's service area, consistent with an approved comprehensive plan under chapter 36.70A RCW, or in the absence of such a plan, a county-approved comprehensive plan under chapter 36.70 RCW or a plan approved under chapter 35.63 RCW, and related water demand projections prepared by public water systems in accordance with state law. An existing comprehensive plan under chapter 36.70A or 36.70 RCW, plan under chapter 35.63 RCW, or demand projection may be used. If the terms of the permit or extension thereof, are not complied with the department shall give notice by registered mail that such permit will be canceled unless the holders thereof shall show cause within sixty days why the same should not be so canceled. If cause is not shown, the permit shall be canceled. [1999 c 400 § 1; 1997 c 445 § 3; 1987 c 109 § 67; 1917 c 117 § 33; RRS § 7385. Formerly RCW 90.20.090.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.330 Appropriation procedure—Water right certificate.**

(1) Upon a showing satisfactory to the department that any appropriation has been perfected in accordance with the provisions of this chapter, it shall be the duty of the department to issue to the applicant a certificate stating such facts in a form to be prescribed by the director, and such certificate shall thereupon be recorded with the department. Any original water right certificate issued, as provided by this chapter, shall be recorded with the department and thereafter, at the expense of the party receiving the same, be transmitted by the department to the county auditor of the county or counties where the distributing system or any part thereof is located, and be recorded in the office of such county auditor, and thereafter be transmitted to the owner thereof.

(2) Except as provided for the issuance of certificates under RCW 90.03.240 and for the issuance of certificates following the approval of a change, transfer, or amendment under RCW 90.03.380 or 90.44.100, the department shall not revoke or diminish a certificate for a surface or ground water right for municipal water supply purposes as defined in RCW 90.03.015 unless the certificate was issued with ministerial errors or was obtained through misrepresentation. The department may adjust such a certificate under this subsection if ministerial errors are discovered, but only to the extent necessary to correct the ministerial errors. The department may diminish the right represented by such a certificate if the certificate was obtained through a misrepresentation on the part of the applicant or permit holder, but only to the extent of the misrepresentation. The authority provided by this subsection does not include revoking, diminishing, or adjusting a certificate based on any change in policy regarding the issuance of such certificates that has occurred since the certificate was issued. This subsection may not be construed as providing any authority to the department to revoke, diminish, or adjust any other water right.

(3) This subsection applies to the water right represented by a water right certificate issued prior to September 9, 2003, for municipal water supply purposes as defined in RCW 90.03.015 where the certificate was issued based on an administrative policy for issuing such certificates once works for diverting or withdrawing and distributing water for municipal supply purposes were constructed rather than after the water had been placed to actual beneficial use. Such a water right is a right in good standing.

(4) After September 9, 2003, the department must issue a new certificate under subsection (1) of this section for a water right represented by a water right permit only for the perfected portion of a water right as demonstrated through actual beneficial use of water. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 6; 1987 c 109 § 89; 1929 c 122 § 5; 1917 c 117 § 34; RRS § 7386. Formerly RCW 90.20.100.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.340 Appropriation procedure—Effective date of water right.** The right acquired by appropriation shall relate back to the

date of filing of the original application with the department. [1987 c 109 § 90; 1917 c 117 § 35; RRS § 7387. Formerly RCW 90.20.110.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.345 Establishment of reservations of water for certain purposes and minimum flows or levels as constituting appropriations with priority dates.** The establishment of reservations of water for agriculture, hydroelectric energy, municipal, industrial, and other beneficial uses under RCW 90.54.050(1) or minimum flows or levels under RCW 90.22.010 or 90.54.040 shall constitute appropriations within the meaning of this chapter with priority dates as of the effective dates of their establishment. Whenever an application for a permit to make beneficial use of public waters embodied in a reservation, established after September 1, 1979, is filed with the department of ecology after the effective date of such reservation, the priority date for a permit issued pursuant to an approval by the department of ecology of the application shall be the effective date of the reservation. [1979 ex.s. c 216 § 7.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

**RCW 90.03.350 Construction or modification of storage dam—Plans and specifications—Additional dam safety inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations.** Except as provided in RCW 43.21A.068, any person, corporation or association intending to construct or modify any dam or controlling works for the storage of ten acre feet or more of water, shall before beginning said construction or modification, submit plans and specifications of the same to the department for examination and approval as to its safety. Such plans and specifications shall be submitted in duplicate, one copy of which shall be retained as a public record, by the department, and the other returned with its approval or rejection endorsed thereon. No such dam or controlling works shall be constructed or modified until the same or any modification thereof shall have been approved as to its safety by the department. Any such dam or controlling works constructed or modified in any manner other than in accordance with plans and specifications approved by the department or which shall not be maintained in accordance with the order of the department shall be presumed to be a public nuisance and may be abated in the manner provided by law, and it shall be the duty of the attorney general or prosecuting attorney of the county wherein such dam or controlling works, or the major portion thereof, is situated to institute abatement proceedings against the owner or owners of such dam or controlling works, whenever he or she is requested to do so by the department.

A metals mining and milling operation regulated under chapter 232, Laws of 1994 is subject to additional dam safety inspection requirements due to the special hazards associated with failure of a tailings pond impoundment. The department shall inspect these impoundments at least quarterly during the project's operation and at least annually thereafter for the postclosure monitoring period in

order to ensure the safety of the dam or controlling works. The department shall conduct additional inspections as needed during the construction phase of the mining operation in order to ensure the safe construction of the tailings impoundment. [1995 c 8 § 6; 1994 c 232 § 20; 1987 c 109 § 91; 1955 c 362 § 1; 1939 c 107 § 1; 1917 c 117 § 36; RRS § 7388. Formerly RCW 90.28.060.] [1954 SLC-RO-18.]

**Findings—1995 c 8:** See note following RCW 43.21A.064.

**Effective date—1994 c 232 §§ 6-8 and 18-22:** See RCW 78.56.902.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Height of dams on tributaries of Columbia river:* RCW 77.55.191.

**RCW 90.03.360 Controlling works and measuring devices—Metering of diversions—Impact on fish stock.** (1) The owner or owners of any water diversion shall maintain, to the satisfaction of the department of ecology, substantial controlling works and a measuring device constructed and maintained to permit accurate measurement and practical regulation of the flow of water diverted. Every owner or manager of a reservoir for the storage of water shall construct and maintain, when required by the department, any measuring device necessary to ascertain the natural flow into and out of said reservoir.

Metering of diversions or measurement by other approved methods shall be required as a condition for all new surface water right permits, and except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, may be required as a condition for all previously existing surface water rights. The department may also require, as a condition for all water rights, metering of diversions, and reports regarding such metered diversions as to the amount of water being diverted. Such reports shall be in a form prescribed by the department.

(2) Where water diversions are from waters in which the salmonid stock status is depressed or critical, as determined by the department of fish and wildlife, or where the volume of water being diverted exceeds one cubic foot per second, the department shall require metering or measurement by other approved methods as a condition for all new and previously existing water rights or claims. The department shall attempt to integrate the requirements of this subsection into its existing compliance workload priorities, but shall prioritize the requirements of this subsection ahead of the existing compliance workload where a delay may cause the decline of wild salmonids. The department shall notify the department of fish and wildlife of the status of fish screens associated with these diversions.

This subsection (2) shall not apply to diversions for public or private hatcheries or fish rearing facilities if the diverted water is returned directly to the waters from which it was diverted. [1994 c 264 § 85; 1993 sp.s. c 4 § 12; 1989 c 348 § 6; 1987 c 109 § 92; 1917 c 117 § 37; RRS § 7389. Formerly RCW 90.28.070.]

**Findings—Grazing lands—1993 sp.s. c 4:** See RCW 79.13.600.

**Severability—1989 c 348:** See note following RCW 90.54.020.

**Rights not impaired—1989 c 348:** See RCW 90.54.920.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Instream flows: RCW 90.22.060.*

**RCW 90.03.370 Reservoir permits—Secondary permits—Expedited processing—Underground artificial storage and recovery project standards and rules—Exemptions—Report to the legislature.** (1)(a) All applications for reservoir permits are subject to the provisions of RCW 90.03.250 through 90.03.320. But the party or parties proposing to apply to a beneficial use the water stored in any such reservoir shall also file an application for a permit, to be known as the secondary permit, which shall be in compliance with the provisions of RCW 90.03.250 through 90.03.320. Such secondary application shall refer to such reservoir as its source of water supply and shall show documentary evidence that an agreement has been entered into with the owners of the reservoir for a permanent and sufficient interest in said reservoir to impound enough water for the purposes set forth in said application. When the beneficial use has been completed and perfected under the secondary permit, the department shall take the proof of the water users under such permit and the final certificate of appropriation shall refer to both the ditch and works described in the secondary permit and the reservoir described in the primary permit. The department may accept for processing a single application form covering both a proposed reservoir and a proposed secondary permit or permits for use of water from that reservoir.

(b) The department shall expedite processing applications for the following types of storage proposals:

(i) Development of storage facilities that will not require a new water right for diversion or withdrawal of the water to be stored;

(ii) Adding or changing one or more purposes of use of stored water;

(iii) Adding to the storage capacity of an existing storage facility; and

(iv) Applications for secondary permits to secure use from existing storage facilities.

(c) A secondary permit for the beneficial use of water shall not be required for use of water stored in a reservoir where the water right for the source of the stored water authorizes the beneficial use.

(2)(a) For the purposes of this section, "reservoir" includes, in addition to any surface reservoir, any naturally occurring underground geological formation where water is collected and stored for subsequent use as part of an underground artificial storage and recovery project. To qualify for issuance of a reservoir permit an underground geological formation must meet standards for review and mitigation of adverse impacts identified, for the following issues:

(i) Aquifer vulnerability and hydraulic continuity;

(ii) Potential impairment of existing water rights;

(iii) Geotechnical impacts and aquifer boundaries and characteristics;

(iv) Chemical compatibility of surface waters and groundwater;

(v) Recharge and recovery treatment requirements;

(vi) System operation;  
(vii) Water rights and ownership of water stored for recovery;  
and

(viii) Environmental impacts.

(b) Standards for review and standards for mitigation of adverse impacts for an underground artificial storage and recovery project shall be established by the department by rule. Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 90.03.250 through 90.03.320, analysis of each underground artificial storage and recovery project and each underground geological formation for which an applicant seeks the status of a reservoir shall be through applicant-initiated studies reviewed by the department.

(3) For the purposes of this section, "underground artificial storage and recovery project" means any project in which it is intended to artificially store water in the ground through injection, surface spreading and infiltration, or other department-approved method, and to make subsequent use of the stored water. However, (a) this subsection does not apply to irrigation return flow, or to operational and seepage losses that occur during the irrigation of land, or to water that is artificially stored due to the construction, operation, or maintenance of an irrigation district project, or to projects involving water reclaimed in accordance with chapter 90.46 RCW; and (b) RCW 90.44.130 applies to those instances of claimed artificial recharge occurring due to the construction, operation, or maintenance of an irrigation district project or operational and seepage losses that occur during the irrigation of land, as well as other forms of claimed artificial recharge already existing at the time a groundwater subarea is established.

(4) Nothing in chapter 98, Laws of 2000 changes the requirements of existing law governing issuance of permits to appropriate or withdraw the waters of the state.

(5) The department shall report to the legislature by December 31, 2001, on the standards for review and standards for mitigation developed under subsection (3) of this section and on the status of any applications that have been filed with the department for underground artificial storage and recovery projects by that date.

(6) Where needed to ensure that existing storage capacity is effectively and efficiently used to meet multiple purposes, the department may authorize reservoirs to be filled more than once per year or more than once per season of use.

(7) This section does not apply to facilities to recapture and reuse return flow from irrigation operations serving a single farm under an existing water right as long as the acreage irrigated is not increased beyond the acreage allowed to be irrigated under the water right.

(8) In addition to the facilities exempted under subsection (7) of this section, this section does not apply to small irrigation impoundments. For purposes of this section, "small irrigation impoundments" means lined surface storage ponds less than ten acre feet in volume used to impound irrigation water under an existing water right where use of the impoundment: (a) (i) Facilitates efficient use of water; or (ii) promotes compliance with an approved recovery plan for endangered or threatened species; and (b) does not expand the number of acres irrigated or the annual consumptive quantity of water used. Such ponds must be lined unless a licensed engineer determines that a liner is not needed to retain water in the pond and to prevent groundwater contamination. Although it may also be composed of other



materials, a properly maintained liner may be composed of bentonite. Water remaining in a small irrigation impoundment at the end of an irrigation season may be carried over for use in the next season. However, the limitations of this subsection (8) apply. Development and use of a small irrigation impoundment does not constitute a change or amendment for purposes of RCW 90.03.380 or 90.44.055. [2003 c 329 § 1; 2002 c 329 § 10; 2000 c 98 § 3; 1987 c 109 § 93; 1917 c 117 § 38; RRS § 7390. Formerly RCW 90.28.080.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.380 Right to water attaches to land—Transfer or change in point of diversion—Transfer of rights from one district to another—Priority of water rights applications—Exemption for small irrigation impoundments—Electronic notice of an application for an interbasin water rights transfer.** (1) The right to the use of water which has been applied to a beneficial use in the state shall be and remain appurtenant to the land or place upon which the same is used: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the right may be transferred to another or to others and become appurtenant to any other land or place of use without loss of priority of right theretofore established if such change can be made without detriment or injury to existing rights. The point of diversion of water for beneficial use or the purpose of use may be changed, if such change can be made without detriment or injury to existing rights. A change in the place of use, point of diversion, and/or purpose of use of a water right to enable irrigation of additional acreage or the addition of new uses may be permitted if such change results in no increase in the annual consumptive quantity of water used under the water right. For purposes of this section, "annual consumptive quantity" means the estimated or actual annual amount of water diverted pursuant to the water right, reduced by the estimated annual amount of return flows, averaged over the two years of greatest use within the most recent five-year period of continuous beneficial use of the water right. Before any transfer of such right to use water or change of the point of diversion of water or change of purpose of use can be made, any person having an interest in the transfer or change, shall file a written application therefor with the department, and the application shall not be granted until notice of the application is published as provided in RCW 90.03.280. If it shall appear that such transfer or such change may be made without injury or detriment to existing rights, the department shall issue to the applicant a certificate in duplicate granting the right for such transfer or for such change of point of diversion or of use. The certificate so issued shall be filed and be made a record with the department and the duplicate certificate issued to the applicant may be filed with the county auditor in like manner and with the same effect as provided in the original certificate or permit to divert water.

(2) If an application for change proposes to transfer water rights from one irrigation district to another, the department shall, before publication of notice, receive concurrence from each of the irrigation districts that such transfer or change will not adversely affect the ability to deliver water to other landowners or impair the financial integrity of either of the districts.

(3) A change in place of use by an individual water user or users of water provided by an irrigation district need only receive approval for the change from the board of directors of the district if the use of water continues within the irrigation district, and when water is provided by an irrigation entity that is a member of a board of joint control created under chapter 87.80 RCW, approval need only be received from the board of joint control if the use of water continues within the area of jurisdiction of the joint board and the change can be made without detriment or injury to existing rights.

(4) This section shall not apply to trust water rights acquired by the state through the funding of water conservation projects under chapter 90.38 RCW or RCW 90.42.010 through 90.42.070.

(5) (a) Pending applications for new water rights are not entitled to protection from impairment, injury, or detriment when an application relating to an existing surface or ground water right is considered.

(b) Applications relating to existing surface or ground water rights may be processed and decisions on them rendered independently of processing and rendering decisions on pending applications for new water rights within the same source of supply without regard to the date of filing of the pending applications for new water rights.

(c) Notwithstanding any other existing authority to process applications, including but not limited to the authority to process applications under WAC 173-152-050 as it existed on January 1, 2001, an application relating to an existing surface or ground water right may be processed ahead of a previously filed application relating to an existing right when sufficient information for a decision on the previously filed application is not available and the applicant for the previously filed application is sent written notice that explains what information is not available and informs the applicant that processing of the next application will begin. The previously filed application does not lose its priority date and if the information is provided by the applicant within sixty days, the previously filed application shall be processed at that time. This subsection (5)(c) does not affect any other existing authority to process applications.

(d) Nothing in this subsection (5) is intended to stop the processing of applications for new water rights.

(6) No applicant for a change, transfer, or amendment of a water right may be required to give up any part of the applicant's valid water right or claim to a state agency, the trust water rights program, or to other persons as a condition of processing the application.

(7) In revising the provisions of this section and adding provisions to this section by chapter 237, Laws of 2001, the legislature does not intend to imply legislative approval or disapproval of any existing administrative policy regarding, or any existing administrative or judicial interpretation of, the provisions of this section not expressly added or revised.

(8) The development and use of a small irrigation impoundment, as defined in RCW 90.03.370(8), does not constitute a change or amendment for the purposes of this section. The exemption expressly provided by this subsection shall not be construed as requiring a change or transfer of any existing water right to enable the holder of the right to store water governed by the right.

(9) (a) The department may only approve an application submitted after June 30, 2019, for an interbasin water rights transfer after

providing notice electronically to the board of county commissioners in the county of origin upon receipt of an application.

(b) For the purposes of this subsection:

(i) "Interbasin water rights transfer" means a transfer of a water right for which the proposed point of diversion is in a different basin than the proposed place of beneficial use.

(ii) "County of origin" means the county from which a water right is transferred or proposed to be transferred.

(c) This subsection applies to counties located east of the crest of the Cascade mountains. [2011 c 112 § 3; (2011 c 112 § 2 expired June 30, 2019); (2009 c 183 § 15 expired June 30, 2021); 2003 c 329 § 2; 2001 c 237 § 5; 1997 c 442 § 801; 1996 c 320 § 19; 1991 c 347 § 15; 1987 c 109 § 94; 1929 c 122 § 6; 1917 c 117 § 39; RRS § 7391. Formerly RCW 90.28.090.]

**Effective date—2011 c 112 § 3:** "Section 3 of this act takes effect June 30, 2019." [2011 c 112 § 5.]

**Expiration date—2011 c 112 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act expires June 30, 2019." [2011 c 112 § 4.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 c 112:** "The legislature finds that because it is increasingly difficult for water users to acquire new water rights, transfers are a valuable and necessary water management tool. The legislature further finds that interbasin water right transfers may impact the economic and social welfare of rural communities. Therefore, the legislature intends for the department of ecology to provide notice electronically of a proposed interbasin water rights transfer to the board of commissioners in the county of origin before issuing a change authorization." [2011 c 112 § 1.]

**Expiration date—2019 c 78; 2009 c 183:** "This act expires June 30, 2021." [2019 c 78 § 4; 2009 c 183 § 20.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.03.383 Interties—Findings—Definitions—Review and approval.** (1) The legislature recognizes the value of interties for improving the reliability of public water systems, enhancing their management, and more efficiently utilizing the increasingly limited resource. Given the continued growth in the most populous areas of the state, the increased complexity of public water supply management, and the trend toward regional planning and regional solutions to resource issues, interconnections of public water systems through interties provide a valuable tool to ensure reliable public water supplies for

the citizens of the state. Public water systems have been encouraged in the past to utilize interties to achieve public health and resource management objectives. The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to recognize interties existing and in use as of January 1, 1991, and to have associated water rights modified by the department of ecology to reflect current use of water through those interties, pursuant to subsection (3) of this section. The legislature further finds it in the public interest to develop a coordinated process to review proposals for interties commencing use after January 1, 1991.

(2) For the purposes of this section, the following definitions shall apply:

(a) "Interties" are interconnections between public water systems permitting exchange or delivery of water between those systems for other than emergency supply purposes, where such exchange or delivery is within established instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the systems' existing water right permits or certificates, or contained in claims filed pursuant to chapter 90.14 RCW, and which results in better management of public water supply consistent with existing rights and obligations. Interties include interconnections between public water systems permitting exchange or delivery of water to serve as primary or secondary sources of supply, but do not include development of new sources of supply to meet future demand.

(b) "Service area" is the area designated in a water system plan or a coordinated water system plan pursuant to chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW respectively. When a public water system does not have a designated service area subject to the approval process of those chapters, the service area shall be the designated place of use contained in the water right permit or certificate, or contained in the claim filed pursuant to chapter 90.14 RCW.

(3) Public water systems with interties existing and in use as of January 1, 1991, or that have received written approval from the department of health prior to that date, shall file written notice of those interties with the department of health and the department of ecology. The notice may be incorporated into the public water system's five-year update of its water system plan, but shall be filed no later than June 30, 1996. The notice shall identify the location of the intertie; the dates of its first use; the purpose, capacity, and current use; the intertie agreement of the parties and the service areas assigned; and other information reasonably necessary to modify the water right permit. Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100, for public water systems with interties existing and in use as of January 1, 1991, the department of ecology, upon receipt of notice meeting the requirements of this subsection, shall, as soon as practicable, modify the place of use descriptions in the water right permits, certificates, or claims to reflect the actual use through such interties, provided that the place of use is within service area designations established in a water system plan approved pursuant to chapter 43.20 RCW, or a coordinated water system plan approved pursuant to chapter 70A.100 RCW, and further provided that the water used is within the instantaneous and annual withdrawal rates specified in the water right permit and that no outstanding complaints of impairment to existing water rights have been filed with the department of ecology prior to September 1, 1991. Where such complaints of impairment have been received, the department of ecology shall make all reasonable efforts to resolve them in a timely manner

through agreement of the parties or through available administrative remedies.

(4) Notwithstanding the provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100, exchange or delivery of water through interties commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall be permitted when the intertie improves overall system reliability, enhances the manageability of the systems, provides opportunities for conjunctive use, or delays or avoids the need to develop new water sources, and otherwise meets the requirements of this section, provided that each public water system's water use shall not exceed the instantaneous or annual withdrawal rate specified in its water right authorization, shall not adversely affect existing water rights, and shall not be inconsistent with state-approved plans such as water system plans or other plans which include specific proposals for construction of interties. Interties commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall not be inconsistent with regional water resource plans developed pursuant to chapter 90.54 RCW.

(5) For public water systems subject to the approval process of chapter 43.20 RCW or chapter 70A.100 RCW, proposals for interties commencing use after January 1, 1991, shall be incorporated into water system plans pursuant to chapter 43.20 RCW or coordinated water system plans pursuant to chapter 70A.100 RCW and submitted to the department of health and the department of ecology for review and approval as provided for in subsections (5) through (9) of this section. The plan shall state how the proposed intertie will improve overall system reliability, enhance the manageability of the systems, provide opportunities for conjunctive use, or delay or avoid the need to develop new water sources.

(6) The department of health shall be responsible for review and approval of proposals for new interties. In its review the department of health shall determine whether the intertie satisfies the criteria of subsection (4) of this section, with the exception of water rights considerations, which are the responsibility of the department of ecology, and shall determine whether the intertie is necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns associated with public water supply.

(7) If the intertie is determined by the department of health to be necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns associated with public water supply, the public water system shall amend its water system plan as required and shall file an application with the department of ecology to change its existing water right to reflect the proposed use of the water as described in the approved water system plan. The department of ecology shall process the application for change pursuant to RCW 90.03.380 or 90.44.100 as appropriate, except that, notwithstanding the requirements of those sections regarding notice and protest periods, applicants shall be required to publish notice one time, and the comment period shall be fifteen days from the date of publication of the notice. Within sixty days of receiving the application, the department of ecology shall issue findings and advise the department of health if existing water rights are determined to be adversely affected. If no determination is provided by the department of ecology within the sixty-day period, the department of health shall proceed as if existing rights are not adversely affected by the proposed intertie. The department of ecology may obtain an extension of the sixty-day period by submitting written notice to the department of health and to the applicant indicating a definite date by which its determination will be made. No additional

extensions shall be granted, and in no event shall the total review period for the department of ecology exceed one hundred eighty days.

(8) If the department of health determines the proposed intertie appears to meet the requirements of subsection (4) of this section but is not necessary to address emergent public health or safety concerns associated with public water supply, the department of health shall instruct the applicant to submit to the department of ecology an application for change to the underlying water right or claim as necessary to reflect the new place of use. The department of ecology shall consider the applications pursuant to the provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100 as appropriate. If in its review of proposed interties and associated water rights the department of ecology determines that additional information is required to act on the application, the department may request applicants to provide information necessary for its decision, consistent with agency rules and written guidelines. Parties disagreeing with the decision of the department of ecology on the application for change in place of use may appeal the decision to the pollution control hearings board.

(9) The department of health may approve plans containing intertie proposals prior to the department of ecology's decision on the water right application for change in place of use. However, notwithstanding such approval, construction work on the intertie shall not begin until the department of ecology issues the appropriate water right document to the applicant consistent with the approved plan. [2020 c 20 § 1491; 1991 c 350 § 1.]

**RCW 90.03.386 Coordination of approval procedures for compliance and consistency with approved water system plan.**

(1) Within service areas established pursuant to chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW, the department of ecology and the department of health shall coordinate approval procedures to ensure compliance and consistency with the approved water system plan or small water system management program.

(2) The effect of the department of health's approval of a planning or engineering document that describes a municipal water supplier's service area under chapter 43.20 RCW, or the local legislative authority's approval of service area boundaries in accordance with procedures adopted pursuant to chapter 70A.100 RCW, is that the place of use of a surface water right or groundwater right used by the supplier includes any portion of the approved service area that was not previously within the place of use for the water right if the supplier is in compliance with the terms of the water system plan or small water system management program, including those regarding water conservation, and the alteration of the place of use is not inconsistent, regarding an area added to the place of use, with: Any comprehensive plans or development regulations adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW; any other applicable comprehensive plan, land use plan, or development regulation adopted by a city, town, or county; or any watershed plan approved under chapter 90.82 RCW, or a comprehensive watershed plan adopted under RCW 90.54.040(1) after September 9, 2003, if such a watershed plan has been approved for the area.

(3) A municipal water supplier must implement cost-effective water conservation in accordance with the requirements of RCW 70A.125.170 as part of its approved water system plan or small water system management program. In preparing its regular water system plan update, a municipal water supplier with one thousand or more service connections must describe: (a) The projects, technologies, and other

cost-effective measures that comprise its water conservation program; (b) improvements in the efficiency of water system use resulting from implementation of its conservation program over the previous six years; and (c) projected effects of delaying the use of existing inchoate rights over the next six years through the addition of further cost-effective water conservation measures before it may divert or withdraw further amounts of its inchoate right for beneficial use. When establishing or extending a surface or ground water right construction schedule under RCW 90.03.320, the department must take into consideration the public water system's use of conserved water. [2020 c 20 § 1492; 2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 5; 1991 c 350 § 2.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.390 Temporary changes—Emergency interties—Rotation in use.** RCW 90.03.380 shall not be construed to prevent water users from making a seasonal or temporary change of point of diversion or place of use of water when such change can be made without detriment to existing rights, but in no case shall such change be made without the permission of the water master of the district in which such proposed change is located, or of the department. Nor shall RCW 90.03.380 be construed to prevent construction of emergency interties between public water systems to permit exchange of water during short-term emergency situations, or rotation in the use of water for bringing about a more economical use of the available supply, provided however, that the department of health in consultation with the department of ecology shall adopt rules or develop written guidelines setting forth standards for determining when a short-term emergency exists and the circumstances in which emergency interties are permitted. The rules or guidelines shall be consistent with the procedures established in RCW 43.83B.400 through 43.83B.420. Water users owning lands to which water rights are attached may rotate in the use of water to which they are collectively entitled, or an individual water user having lands to which are attached water rights of a different priority, may in like manner rotate in use when such rotation can be made without detriment to other existing water rights, and has the approval of the water master or department. [1991 c 350 § 3; 1987 c 109 § 95; 1929 c 122 § 7; RRS § 7391a. Formerly RCW 90.28.100.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.395 Change of point of diversion to downstream intake structure—Intent.** The legislature intends to allow modification of the point of diversion in a water right permit when such a modification will provide both environmental benefits and water supply benefits and nothing in RCW 90.03.397 is to be construed as allowing any other change or transfer of a right to the use of surface water which has not been applied to a beneficial use. [1999 c 232 § 1.]

**RCW 90.03.397 Department may approve change of the point of diversion prescribed in a permit to appropriate surface water—Requirements.** (1) The department may approve a change of the point of diversion prescribed in a permit to appropriate surface water for a beneficial use if the ownership, purpose of use, season of use, and place of use of the permit remain the same to an approved intake structure with capacity to transport the additional diversion to either: (a) A point of diversion that is located downstream; or (b) a point of diversion located between Columbia river miles 215.6 and 292, if the existing point of diversion is contained therein.

(2) This section may not be construed as limiting in any manner whatsoever other authorities of the department under RCW 90.03.380 or other changes that may be approved under RCW 90.03.380 under authorities existing before July 25, 1999. [2011 c 117 § 1; 1999 c 232 § 2.]

**RCW 90.03.400 Crimes against water code—Unauthorized use of water.** (1)(a) The unauthorized use of water to which another person is entitled or the willful or negligent waste of water to the detriment of another, is a misdemeanor.

(b) For instances of the waste of water under this subsection, the department may alternatively follow the sequence of enforcement actions as provided in RCW 90.03.605.

(2) The possession or use of water without legal right shall be prima facie evidence of the guilt of the person using it.

(3) It is also a misdemeanor to use, store, or divert any water until after the issuance of permit to appropriate such water. [2003 1st sp.s. c 15 § 2; 2003 c 53 § 418; 1917 c 117 § 40; RRS § 7392. Formerly RCW 90.32.010.]

**Reviser's note:** The effective date of 2003 c 53 § 418 is July 1, 2004. However, 2003 c 53 § 418 was amended by 2003 1st sp.s. c 15 § 2 which has an effective date of September 9, 2003. Consequently, the effective date of this section is September 9, 2003.

**Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53:** See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

*Punishment of misdemeanor when not fixed by statute: RCW 9.92.030.*

**RCW 90.03.410 Crimes against water code—Interference with works—Wrongful use of water—Property destruction—Penalty.** (1) Any person or persons who shall willfully interfere with, or injure or destroy any dam, dike, headgate, weir, canal or reservoir, flume, or other structure or appliance for the diversion, carriage, storage, apportionment, or measurement of water for irrigation, reclamation, power, or other beneficial uses, or who shall willfully use or conduct water into or through his or her ditch, which has been lawfully denied him or her by the water master or other competent authority, or shall willfully injure or destroy any telegraph, telephone, or electric transmission line, or any other property owned, occupied, or controlled by any person, association, or corporation, or by the United States and used in connection with said beneficial use of water, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor or, if there is actual physical injury to or destruction of any real or personal property, of



property destruction and shall incur the penalties set forth in \*RCW 9.61.070.

(2) Any person or persons who shall willfully or unlawfully take or use water, or conduct the same into his or her ditch or to his or her land, or land occupied by him or her, and for such purpose shall cut, dig, break down, or open any headgate, bank, embankment, canal or reservoir, flume, or conduit, or interfere with, injure, or destroy any weir, measuring box, or other appliance for the apportionment and measurement of water, or unlawfully take or cause to run or pour out of such structure or appliance any water, shall be guilty of a misdemeanor or, if there is actual physical injury to or destruction of any real or personal property, of property destruction and shall incur the penalties set forth in \*RCW 9.61.070.

(3) The use of water through such structure or structures, appliance or appliances hereinbefore named after its or their having been interfered with, injured or destroyed, shall be prima facie evidence of the guilt of the person using it. [2013 c 23 § 598; 1971 ex.s. c 152 § 8; 1921 c 103 § 2; 1917 c 117 § 41; RRS § 7393. Formerly RCW 90.32.020.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 9.61.070 was repealed by 1975 1st ex.s. c 260 § 9A.92.010, effective July 1, 1976.

**RCW 90.03.420 Crimes against water code—Obstruction of right-of-way.** Whenever any appropriator of water has the lawful right-of-way for the storage, diversion, or carriage of water, it shall be unlawful to place or maintain any obstruction that shall interfere with the use of the works, or prevent convenient access thereto or trespass thereon. [1917 c 117 § 42; RRS § 7394. Formerly RCW 90.32.030.]

**RCW 90.03.430 Partnership ditches—Action for reimbursement for work done.** In all cases where irrigating ditches are owned by two or more persons and one or more of such persons shall fail or neglect to do his, her or their proportionate share of the work necessary for the proper maintenance and operation of such ditch or ditches or to construct suitable headgates or measuring devices at the points where water is diverted from the main ditch, such owner or owners desiring the performance of such work as is reasonably necessary to maintain the ditch, may, after having given ten days' written notice to such owner or owners who have failed to perform his, her or their proportionate share of such work, necessary for the operation and maintenance of said ditch or ditches, perform his, her or their share of such work, and recover therefor from such person or persons so failing to perform his, her or their share of such work in any court having jurisdiction of the matter the expense or value of such work or labor so performed: PROVIDED, That no improvement involving an expenditure in excess of one hundred dollars shall be made without the written approval of the department having first been obtained. [1987 c 109 § 96; 1919 c 71 § 3; RRS § 7395. Formerly RCW 90.28.110.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.440 Partnership ditches—Procedure for division of water between joint owners.** When two or more persons, joint owners in an irrigation ditch or reservoir, not incorporated, or their lessees, are unable to agree relative to the division or distribution of water received through their ditch or from their reservoir, and where there is no disagreement as to the ownership of said water, it shall be lawful for any such owner or owners, his or her or their lessee or lessees, or either of them, to apply to the department, in writing, setting forth such fact and giving such information as shall enable the department to estimate the probable expense of such service, asking the department to appoint some suitable person to take charge of such ditch or reservoir for the purpose of making a just division or distribution of the water from the same to the parties entitled to the use thereof. The department shall upon the receipt of such application notify the applicant of the probable expense of such division and upon receipt of certified check for said amount, the department shall appoint a suitable person to make such division. The person so appointed shall take exclusive charge of such ditch or reservoir for the purpose of dividing the water therefrom in accordance with the established rights of the diverters therefrom, and continue the said work until the necessity therefor shall cease to exist. The expense of such investigation and division shall be a charge upon all of the co-owners and the person advancing the payment to the department shall be entitled to recover in any court of competent jurisdiction from his or her co-owners their proportionate share of the expense. [2013 c 23 § 599; 1987 c 109 § 97; 1919 c 71 § 4; RRS § 7396. Formerly RCW 90.28.130.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.450 Partnership ditches—Lien for labor performed.** Upon the failure of any co-owner to pay his or her proportionate share of such expense as mentioned in RCW 90.03.430 within thirty days after receiving a statement of the same as performed by his or her co-owner or owners, such person or persons so performing such labor may secure payment of said claim by filing an itemized and sworn statement thereof, setting forth the date of the performance and the nature of the labor so performed, with the county auditor of the county wherein said ditch is situated, and when so filed it shall constitute a valid lien against the interest of such person or persons who shall fail to perform their proportionate share of the work requisite to the proper maintenance of said ditch, which said lien when so taken may be enforced in the same manner as provided by law for the enforcement of mechanics' and builders' liens. [2013 c 23 § 600; 1919 c 71 § 5; RRS § 7397. Formerly RCW 90.28.120.]

*Mechanics' and materialmen's liens: Chapter 60.04 RCW.*

**RCW 90.03.460 Inchoate rights not affected.** Nothing in this chapter contained shall operate to effect an impairment of any inchoate right to divert and use water while the application of the water in question to a beneficial use is being prosecuted with reasonable diligence, having due regard to the circumstances

surrounding the enterprise, including the magnitude of the project for putting the water to a beneficial use and the market for the resulting water right for irrigation or power or other beneficial use, in the locality in question. [1917 c 117 § 43; RRS § 7398. Formerly RCW 90.28.140.]

**RCW 90.03.470 Schedule of fees.** The fees specified in this section shall be collected by the department in advance of the requested action.

(1) For the examination of an application for a permit to appropriate water, a minimum fee of fifty dollars must be remitted with the application. For an amount of water exceeding one-half cubic foot per second, the examination fee shall be assessed at the rate of one dollar per one-hundredth cubic foot per second. In no case will the examination fee be less than fifty dollars or more than twenty-five thousand dollars. No fee is required under this subsection (1) for an application filed by a party to a cost-reimbursement agreement made under RCW 90.03.265.

(2) For the examination of an application to store water, a fee of two dollars for each acre foot of storage proposed shall be charged, but a minimum fee of fifty dollars must be remitted with the application. In no case will the examination fee for a storage project be less than fifty dollars or more than twenty-five thousand dollars. No fee is required under this subsection (2) for an application filed by a party to a cost-reimbursement agreement made under RCW 90.03.265.

(3) (a) For the examination of an application to transfer, change, or amend a water right certificate, permit, or claim as authorized by RCW 90.44.100, 90.44.105, or 90.03.380, a minimum fee of fifty dollars must be remitted with the application. For an application for change involving an amount of water exceeding one cubic foot per second, the total examination fee shall be assessed at the rate of fifty cents per one-hundredth cubic foot per second. For an application for change of a storage water right, the total examination fee shall be assessed at the rate of one dollar for each acre foot of water involved in the change. The fee shall be based on the amount of water subject to change as proposed in the application, not on the total amount of water reflected in the water right certificate, permit, or claim. In no case will the examination fee charged for a change application be less than fifty dollars or more than twelve thousand five hundred dollars.

(b) The examination fee for a temporary or seasonal change under RCW 90.03.390 is fifty dollars and must be remitted with the application.

(c) No fee is required under this subsection (3) for:

(i) An application to process a change relating to donation of a trust water right to the state;

(ii) An application to process a change when the department otherwise acquires a trust water right for purposes of improving instream flows or for other public purposes;

(iii) An application filed with a water conservancy board according to chapter 90.80 RCW or for the review of a water conservancy board's record of decision submitted to the department according to chapter 90.80 RCW; or

(iv) An application filed by a party to a cost-reimbursement agreement made under RCW 90.03.265.

(d) For a change, transfer, or amendment involving a single project operating under more than one water right, including related secondary diversion rights, or involving the consolidation of multiple water rights, only one examination fee and one certificate fee are required to be paid.

(4) The fifty-dollar minimum fee payable with the application shall be a credit to the total amount whenever the examination fee totals more than fifty dollars under the schedule specified in subsections (1) through (3) of this section and in such case the further fee due shall be the total computed amount, less the amount previously paid. Within five working days from receipt of an application, the department shall notify the applicant by registered mail of any additional fees due under subsections (1) through (3) of this section.

(5) The fees specified in subsections (1) through (3) of this section do not apply to any filings for emergency withdrawal authorizations or temporary drought-related water right changes authorized under RCW 43.83B.410 that are received by the department while a drought condition order issued under RCW 43.83B.405 is in effect.

(6) For applying for each extension of time for beginning construction work under a permit to appropriate water, for completion of construction work, or for completing application of water to a beneficial use, a fee of fifty dollars is required. These fees also apply to similar extensions of time requested under a change or transfer authorization.

(7) For the inspection of any hydraulic works to insure safety to life and property, a fee based on the actual cost of the inspection, including the expense incident thereto, is required except as follows:

(a) For any hydraulic works less than ten years old, that the department examined and approved the construction plans and specifications as to its safety when required under RCW 90.03.350, there shall be no fee charged; or (b) for any hydraulic works more than ten years old, but less than twenty years old, that the department examined and approved the construction plans and specifications as to its safety when required under RCW 90.03.350, the fee charged shall not exceed the fee for a significant hazard dam.

(8) For the examination of plans and specifications as to safety of controlling works for storage of ten acre feet or more of water, a minimum fee of ten dollars, or a fee equal to the actual cost, is required.

(9) For recording an assignment either of a permit to appropriate water or of an application for such a permit, a fee of fifty dollars is required.

(10) For preparing and issuing all water right certificates, a fee of fifty dollars is required.

(11) For filing and recording a formal protest against granting any application, a fee of fifty dollars is required. No fee is required to submit a comment, by mail or otherwise, regarding an application.

(12) For filing an application to amend a water right claim filed under chapter 90.14 RCW, a fee of fifty dollars is required.

(13) An application or request for an action as provided for under this section is incomplete unless accompanied by the fee or the minimum fee. If no fee or an amount less than the minimum fee accompanies an application or other request for an action as provided under this section, the department shall return the application or

request to the applicant with advice as to the fee that must be remitted with the application or request for it to be accepted for processing. If additional fees are due, the department shall provide timely notification by certified mail with return receipt requested to the applicant. No action may be taken by the department until the fee is paid in full. Failure to remit fees within sixty days of the department's notification is grounds for rejecting the application or request or canceling the permit. Cash shall not be accepted. Fees must be paid by check or money order and are nonrefundable.

(14) For purposes of calculating fees for groundwater filings, one cubic foot per second shall be regarded as equivalent to four hundred fifty gallons per minute.

(15) Eighty percent of the fees collected by the department under this section shall be deposited in the state general fund. Twenty percent of the fees collected by the department under this section shall be deposited in the water rights tracking system account established in RCW 90.14.240.

(16) Except for the fees relating to the inspection of hydraulic works and the examination of plans and specifications of controlling works provided for in subsections (7) and (8) of this section, nothing in this section is intended to grant authority to the department to amend the fees in this section by adoption of rules or otherwise. [2005 c 412 § 2; 1993 c 495 § 2; 1987 c 109 § 98; 1965 ex.s. c 160 § 1; 1951 c 57 § 5; 1929 c 122 § 8; 1925 ex.s. c 161 § 2; 1917 c 117 § 44; RRS § 7399. Formerly RCW 90.04.040.]

**Findings—Intent—2005 c 412:** "The legislature finds that the fees associated with various actions of the department of ecology relating to the processing and administration of water rights are outdated and are insufficient even to recover the cost of handling the funds submitted. The legislature also finds that water right processing fees are currently collected at three different stages of the water rights process and that reducing the number of instances of fee collection to two stages of the process would increase efficiency and reduce administrative costs. The legislature further finds that several current statutory fees are archaic or are otherwise covered by other general statutes, including the state's public disclosure laws. The legislature therefore intends to update and modernize the fee schedule associated with water right-related actions of the department of ecology." [2005 c 412 § 1.]

**Findings—1993 c 495:** "The legislature finds that a water right confers significant economic benefits to the water right holder. The fees associated with acquiring a water right have not changed significantly since 1917. Water rights applicants pay less than two percent of the costs of the administration of the water rights program. The legislature finds that, since water rights are of significant value, water rights applicants should contribute more to the cost of administration of the water rights program.

The legislature also finds that an abrupt increase in water rights fees could be disruptive to water rights holders and applicants. The legislature further finds that water rights applicants have a right to know that the water rights program is being administered efficiently and that the fees charged for various services relate directly to the cost of providing those services.

Therefore, the legislature creates a task force to review the water rights program, to make recommendations for streamlining the application process and increasing the overall efficiency and accountability of the administration of the program, and to return to the legislature with a proposal for a fee schedule where the fee levels relate clearly to the cost of services provided." [1993 c 495 § 1.]

**Reviser's note:** 1993 c 495 § 3 created a water rights task force that expired June 30, 1994.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.471 Disposition of fees.** All fees, collections and revenues derived under RCW 90.03.470 or by virtue of RCW 90.03.180, shall be used exclusively for the purpose of carrying out the work and performing the functions of the division of water resources of the department. [1987 c 109 § 99; 1925 ex.s. c 161 § 3; RRS § 7399-1.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.500 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Legislative findings.** The legislature finds that increasing the surface water or stormwater accumulation on or flow over real property, beyond that which naturally occurs on the real property, may cause severe damage to the real property and limit the gainful use or enjoyment of the real property, resulting in a tort, nuisance, or taking. The damage can arise from activities increasing the point or nonpoint flow of surface water or stormwater over the real property, or altering or interrupting the natural drainage from the real property. The legislature finds that it is in the public interest to permit the construction and operation of public improvements to lessen the damage. The legislature further finds that it is in the public interest to provide for the equitable imposition of special assessments, rates, and charges to fund such improvements. This shall include the imposition of special assessments, rates, and charges on real property to fund that reasonable portion of the public improvements that alleviate the damage arising from activities that are the proximate cause of the damage on other real property. Except as otherwise provided in RCW 90.03.525, these special assessments, rates, and charges may be imposed on any publicly-owned, including state-owned, real property that causes such damage. [1986 c 278 § 62; 1983 c 315 § 8.]

**Severability—1986 c 278:** See note following RCW 36.01.010.

**Severability—1983 c 315:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1983 c 315 § 26.]

*Flood control zone districts—Stormwater control improvements: Chapter 86.15 RCW.*

*Public property subject to rates and charges for stormwater control facilities: RCW 35.67.025, 35.92.021, 36.89.085, and 36.94.145.*

**RCW 90.03.510 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Credit for other improvements.** Whenever a county, city, town, water-sewer district, or flood control zone district imposes rates or charges to fund stormwater control facilities or improvements and the operation and maintenance of such facilities or improvements under RCW 35.67.020, 35.92.020, 36.89.080, 36.94.140, 57.08.005, or 57.08.081, it may provide a credit for the value of stormwater control facilities or improvements that a person or entity has installed or located that mitigate or lessen the impact of stormwater which otherwise would occur. [1996 c 230 § 1616; 1986 c 278 § 63; 1983 c 315 § 9.]

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**Severability—1986 c 278:** See note following RCW 36.01.010.

**Severability—1983 c 315:** See note following RCW 90.03.500.

**RCW 90.03.520 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges—Definitions.** The definitions set forth in this section apply to RCW 90.03.525 and 35.67.025.

(1) "State highway right-of-way" means the right-of-way for a state highway. The phrase includes the right-of-way of a state limited access highway inside or outside a city or town but does not include city or town streets forming a part of the route of state highways that are not limited access highways. The term does not include state property under the jurisdiction of the department of transportation that is outside the right-of-way lines of a state highway.

(2) "Stormwater control facility" means any facility, improvement, development, property, or interest therein, made, constructed, or acquired for the purpose of controlling, or protecting life or property from, any storm, waste, flood, or surplus waters.

(3) "Rate" means the dollar amount charged per unit of surface area of a parcel of real property based upon factors established by the local government utility.

(4) "Comparable real property" means real property equal to the state highway right-of-way or a section of state highway right-of-way in terms of the factors considered by the local government utility in establishing rates. [1986 c 278 § 53.]

**Severability—1986 c 278:** See note following RCW 36.01.010.

*Public property subject to rates and charges for stormwater control facilities: RCW 35.67.025.*

**RCW 90.03.525 Stormwater control facilities—Imposition of rates and charges with respect to state highway rights-of-way—Annual plan for expenditure of charges.**

(1) The rate charged by a local government utility to the department of transportation with respect to state highway right-of-way or any section of state highway right-of-way for the construction, operation, and maintenance of stormwater control facilities under chapters 35.67, 35.92, 36.89, 36.94, 57.08, and 86.15 RCW, shall be thirty percent of the rate for comparable real property, except as otherwise provided in this section. The rate charged to the department with respect to state highway right-of-way or any section of state highway right-of-way within a local government utility's jurisdiction shall not, however, exceed the rate charged for comparable city street or county road right-of-way within the same jurisdiction. The legislature finds that the aforesaid rates are presumptively fair and equitable because of the traditional and continuing expenditures of the department of transportation for the construction, operation, and maintenance of stormwater control facilities designed to control surface water or stormwater runoff from state highway rights-of-way.

(2) Charges paid under subsection (1) of this section by the department of transportation must be used solely for stormwater control facilities that directly reduce state highway runoff impacts or implementation of best management practices that will reduce the need for such facilities. By January 1st of each year, beginning with calendar year 2020, the local government utility, in coordination with the department of transportation, shall develop a plan for the expenditure of the charges for that calendar year. The plan must be consistent with the objectives identified in former RCW 90.78.010. In addition, the utility shall provide a progress report on the use of charges assessed for the prior year. No charges may be paid until the plan and report have been submitted to the department of transportation.

(3) The utility imposing the charge and the department of transportation may, however, agree to either higher or lower rates with respect to the construction, operation, or maintenance of any specific stormwater control facilities based upon the annual plan prescribed in subsection (2) of this section. If, after mediation, the local government utility and the department of transportation cannot agree upon the proper rate, either may commence an action in the superior court for the county in which the state highway right-of-way is located to establish the proper rate. The court in establishing the proper rate shall take into account the extent and adequacy of stormwater control facilities constructed by the department and the actual benefits to the sections of state highway rights-of-way from stormwater control facilities constructed, operated, and maintained by the local government utility. Control of surface water runoff and stormwater runoff from state highway rights-of-way shall be deemed an actual benefit to the state highway rights-of-way. The rate for sections of state highway right-of-way as determined by the court shall be set forth in terms of the percentage of the rate for comparable real property, but shall in no event exceed the rate charged for comparable city street or county road right-of-way within the same jurisdiction.

(4) The legislature finds that the federal clean water act (national pollutant discharge elimination system, 40 C.F.R. parts 122-124), the state water pollution control act, chapter 90.48 RCW,



and the highway runoff program under chapter 90.71 RCW, mandate the treatment and control of stormwater runoff from state highway rights-of-way owned by the department of transportation. Appropriations made by the legislature to the department of transportation for the construction, operation, and maintenance of stormwater control facilities are intended to address applicable federal and state mandates related to stormwater control and treatment. This section is not intended to limit opportunities for sharing the costs of stormwater improvements between cities, counties, and the state. [2019 c 435 § 1; 2015 c 231 § 1; (2014 c 222 § 708 expired June 30, 2015); 2005 c 319 § 140. Prior: 1996 c 285 § 1; 1996 c 230 § 1617; 1986 c 278 § 54.]

**Effective date—2015 c 231:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect June 30, 2015." [2015 c 231 § 2.]

**Expiration date—2014 c 222 § 708:** "Section 708 of this act expires June 30, 2015." [2014 c 222 § 803.]

**Effective date—2014 c 222:** See note following RCW 47.28.030.

**Findings—Intent—Part headings—Effective dates—2005 c 319:** See notes following RCW 43.17.020.

**Part headings not law—Effective date—1996 c 230:** See notes following RCW 57.02.001.

**Severability—1986 c 278:** See note following RCW 36.01.010.

**RCW 90.03.540 Highway construction improvement projects—Joint stormwater treatment facilities.** In the development of highway construction improvement projects, the department of transportation shall coordinate with adjacent local governments, ports, and other public and private organizations to determine opportunities for cost-effective joint stormwater treatment facilities for both new and existing impervious surfaces. [1996 c 285 § 6.]

**RCW 90.03.550 Municipal water supply purposes—Beneficial uses.** Beneficial uses of water under a municipal water supply purposes water right may include water withdrawn or diverted under such a right and used for:

- (1) Uses that benefit fish and wildlife, water quality, or other instream resources or related habitat values; or
- (2) Uses that are needed to implement environmental obligations called for by a watershed plan approved under chapter 90.82 RCW, or a comprehensive watershed plan adopted under RCW 90.54.040(1) after September 9, 2003, a federally approved habitat conservation plan prepared in response to the listing of a species as being endangered or threatened under the federal endangered species act, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq., a hydropower license of the federal energy regulatory commission, or a comprehensive irrigation district management plan. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 2.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.560 Municipal water supply purposes—Identification.**

When requested by a municipal water supplier or when processing a change or amendment to the right, the department shall amend the water right documents and related records to ensure that water rights that are for municipal water supply purposes, as defined in RCW 90.03.015, are correctly identified as being for municipal water supply purposes. This section authorizes a water right or portion of a water right held or acquired by a municipal water supplier that is for municipal water supply purposes as defined in RCW 90.03.015 to be identified as being a water right for municipal water supply purposes. However, it does not authorize any other water right or other portion of a right held or acquired by a municipal water supplier to be so identified without the approval of a change or transfer of the right or portion of the right for such a purpose. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 3.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.570 Change or transfer of an unperfected surface water right for municipal water supply purposes.** (1) An unperfected surface water right for municipal water supply purposes or a portion thereof held by a municipal water supplier may be changed or transferred in the same manner as provided by RCW 90.03.380 for any purpose if:

(a) The supplier is in compliance with the terms of an approved water system plan or small water system management program under chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW that applies to the supplier, including those regarding water conservation;

(b) Instream flows have been established by rule for the water resource inventory area, as established in chapter 173-500 WAC as it exists on September 9, 2003, that is the source of the water for the transfer or change;

(c) A watershed plan has been approved for the water resource inventory area referred to in (b) of this subsection under chapter 90.82 RCW and a detailed implementation plan has been completed that satisfies the requirements of RCW 90.82.043 or a watershed plan has been adopted after September 9, 2003, for that water resource inventory area under RCW 90.54.040(1) and a detailed implementation plan has been completed that satisfies the requirements of RCW 90.82.043; and

(d) Streamflows that satisfy the instream flows referred to in (b) of this subsection are met or the milestones for satisfying those instream flows required under (c) of this subsection are being met.

(2) If the criteria listed in subsection (1)(a) through (d) of this section are not satisfied, an unperfected surface water right for municipal water supply purposes or a portion thereof held by a municipal water supplier may nonetheless be changed or transferred in the same manner as provided by RCW 90.03.380 if the change or transfer is:

(a) To provide water for an instream flow requirement that has been established by the department by rule;

(b) Subject to streamflow protection or restoration requirements contained in: A federally approved habitat conservation plan under the federal endangered species act, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq., a hydropower license of the federal energy regulatory commission, or a watershed agreement established under RCW 90.03.590;

(c) For a water right that is subject to instream flow requirements or agreements with the department and the change or transfer is also subject to those instream flow requirements or agreements; or

(d) For resolving or alleviating a public health or safety emergency caused by a failing public water supply system currently providing potable water to existing users, as such a system is described in RCW 90.03.580, and if the change, transfer, or amendment is for correcting the actual or anticipated cause or causes of the public water system failure. Inadequate water rights for a public water system to serve existing hookups or to accommodate future population growth or other future uses do not constitute a public health or safety emergency.

(3) If the recipient of water under a change or transfer authorized by subsection (1) of this section is a water supply system, the receiving system must also be in compliance with the terms of an approved water system plan or small water system management program under chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW that applies to the system, including those regarding water conservation.

(4) The department must provide notice to affected tribes of any transfer or change proposed under this section. [2020 c 20 § 1493; 2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 14.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.580 Failing public water system—Conditions.** To be considered a failing public water system for the purposes of RCW 90.03.570, the department of health, in consultation with the department and the local health authority, must make a determination that the system meets one or more of the following conditions:

(1) A public water system has failed, or is in danger of failing within two years, to meet state board of health standards for the delivery of potable water to existing users in adequate quantity or quality to meet basic human drinking, cooking, and sanitation needs or to provide adequate fire protection flows;

(2) The current water source has failed or will fail so that the public water system is or will become incapable of exercising its existing water rights to meet existing needs for drinking, cooking, and sanitation purposes after all reasonable conservation efforts have been implemented; or

(3) A change in source is required to meet drinking water quality standards and avoid unreasonable treatment costs, or the state department of health determines that the existing source of supply is unacceptable for human use. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 15.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.590 Municipal water suppliers—Watershed agreement—Pilot project.** (1) On a pilot project basis, the department may enter into a watershed agreement with one or more municipal water suppliers in water resource inventory area number one to meet the objectives established in a water resource management program approved or being developed under chapter 90.82 RCW with the consent of the initiating governments of the water resource inventory area. The term of an agreement may not exceed ten years, but the agreement may be renewed or amended upon agreement of the parties.

(2) A watershed agreement must be consistent with:

(a) Growth management plans developed under chapter 36.70A RCW where these plans are adopted and in effect;

(b) Water supply plans and small water system management programs approved under chapter 43.20 or 70A.100 RCW;

(c) Coordinated water supply plans approved under chapter 70A.100 RCW; and

(d) Water use efficiency and conservation requirements and standards established by the state department of health or such requirements and standards as are provided in an approved watershed plan, whichever are the more stringent.

(3) A watershed agreement must:

(a) Require the public water system operated by the participating municipal water supplier to meet obligations under the watershed plan;

(b) Establish performance measures and timelines for measures to be completed;

(c) Provide for monitoring of streamflows and metering of water use as needed to ensure that the terms of the agreement are met; and

(d) Require annual reports from the water users regarding performance under the agreement.

(4) As needed to implement watershed agreement activities, the department may provide or receive funding, or both, under its existing authorities.

(5) The department must provide opportunity for public review of a proposed agreement before it is executed. The department must make proposed and executed watershed agreements and annual reports available on the department's internet website.

(6) The department must consult with affected local governments and the state departments of health and fish and wildlife before executing an agreement.

(7) Before executing a watershed agreement, the department must conduct a government-to-government consultation with affected tribal governments. The municipal water suppliers operating the public water systems that are proposing to enter into the agreements must be invited to participate in the consultations. During these consultations, the department and the municipal water suppliers shall explore the potential interest of the tribal governments or governments in participating in the agreement.

(8) Any person aggrieved by the department's failure to satisfy the requirements in subsection (3) of this section as embodied in the department's decision to enter into a watershed agreement under this section may, within thirty days of the execution of such an agreement, appeal the department's decision to the pollution control hearings board under chapter 43.21B RCW.

(9) Any projects implemented by a municipal water system under the terms of an agreement reached under this section may be continued and maintained by the municipal water system after the agreement

expires or is terminated as long as the conditions of the agreement under which they were implemented continue to be met.

(10) Before December 31, 2003, and December 31, 2004, the department must report to the appropriate committees of the legislature the results of the pilot project provided for in this section. Based on the experience of the pilot project, the department must offer any suggested changes in law that would improve, facilitate, and maximize the implementation of watershed plans adopted under this chapter. [2020 c 20 § 1494; 2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 16.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.591 New watershed agreements prohibited after July 1, 2008.** The department may not enter into new watershed agreements under RCW 90.03.590 after July 1, 2008. This section does not apply to the renewal of agreements in effect prior to that date. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 17.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.03.600 Civil penalties.** In determining the amount of a penalty to be levied, the department shall consider the seriousness of the violation, whether the violation is repeated or continuous after notice of the violation is given, and whether any damage has occurred to the health or property of other persons. Except as provided in RCW 43.05.060 through 43.05.080 and 43.05.150, the department of ecology may levy civil penalties ranging from one hundred dollars to five thousand dollars per day for violation of any of the provisions of this chapter and chapters 43.83B, 90.22, and 90.44 RCW, and rules, permits, and similar documents and regulatory orders of the department of ecology adopted or issued pursuant to such chapters. The procedures of RCW 90.48.144 shall be applicable to all phases of the levying of a penalty as well as review and appeal of the same. [2003 1st sp.s. c 15 § 3; 1995 c 403 § 635; 1987 c 109 § 157; 1977 ex.s. c 1 § 8. Formerly RCW 43.83B.335.]

**Findings—Short title—Intent—1995 c 403:** See note following RCW 34.05.328.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.03.605 Compliance—Sequence of enforcement measures—Location of compliance personnel.** (1) The department shall, through a network of water masters appointed under this chapter, stream patrollers appointed under chapter 90.08 RCW, and other assigned compliance staff to the extent such a network is funded, achieve compliance with the water laws and rules of the state of Washington in the following sequence:

(a) The department shall prepare and distribute technical and educational information to the general public to assist the public in

complying with the requirements of their water rights and applicable water laws;

(b) When the department determines that a violation has occurred or is about to occur, it shall first attempt to achieve voluntary compliance. As part of this first response, the department shall offer information and technical assistance to the person in writing identifying one or more means to accomplish the person's purposes within the framework of the law; and

(c) If education and technical assistance do not achieve compliance the department shall issue a notice of violation, a formal administrative order under RCW 43.27A.190, or assess penalties under RCW 90.03.600 unless the noncompliance is corrected expeditiously or the department determines no impairment or harm.

(2) Nothing in the section is intended to prevent the department of ecology from taking immediate action to cause a violation to be ceased immediately if in the opinion of the department the nature of the violation is causing harm to other water rights or to public resources.

(3) The department of ecology shall to the extent practicable station its compliance personnel within the watershed communities they serve. To the extent practicable, compliance personnel shall be distributed evenly among the regions of the state. [2002 c 329 § 2.]

**RCW 90.03.615 Calculating annual consumptive quantity.** For purposes of calculating annual consumptive quantity as defined under RCW 90.03.380(1), if, within the most recent five-year period, the water right has been in the trust water rights program under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW, or the nonuse of the water right has been excused from relinquishment under RCW 90.14.140, the department shall look to the most recent five-year period of continuous beneficial use preceding the date where the excuse for nonuse under RCW 90.14.140 was established and remained in effect. [2009 c 283 § 7.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** See note following RCW 90.42.100.

**RCW 90.03.620 Water rights adjudication—Disqualification of judge.** (1) A judge in a water right adjudication filed under this chapter may be partially or fully disqualified from hearing the adjudication. Partial disqualification means disqualification from hearing specified claims. Full disqualification means disqualification from hearing any aspect of the adjudication.

(a) A judge is partially disqualified when the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned and the apparent or actual partiality is limited to specified claims.

(b) A judge is fully disqualified when the judge's impartiality might reasonably be questioned and the apparent or actual partiality extends beyond limited claims such that the judge should not hear any part of the adjudication.

(2) A judge may recuse himself or herself under this section or a party may file a motion for disqualification. A motion for disqualification must state whether the remedy being sought is full or partial disqualification.

(3) (a) For parties who are named in the original pleadings, a motion for disqualification is timely if it is filed before the judge issues a discretionary order or ruling in the adjudication.

(b) For a party who is joined in the adjudication after the original pleadings have been filed, a motion for disqualification is timely if it is filed within the earliest of either (i) thirty days of being joined in the adjudication; or (ii) after the joinder of the party, before the judge issues a discretionary order or ruling relating to the joined party.

(c) When a motion for disqualification is untimely filed under this subsection (3), the motion will be granted only when necessary to correct a substantial injustice.

(d) For purposes of this section, "discretionary order or ruling" has the same meaning as "order or ruling involving discretion" in RCW 4.12.050.

(4) A party filing a motion for disqualification under this section has the burden of proving by a preponderance of the evidence that the judge should be disqualified under the standards of subsection (1) of this section.

(5) The motion for disqualification may not be heard by the judge against whom the motion is filed. Subject to this limitation, the court may assign the disqualification motion to any superior court judge of the judicial district in which the adjudication was filed or to a visiting superior court judge under RCW 2.56.040.

(6) The standards set forth in RCW 2.28.030, which govern the disqualification of judicial officers generally, may be grounds for disqualification under this section. [2009 c 332 § 3.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.625 Water rights adjudication—Motion for default.**

Upon expiration of the filing period established under RCW 90.03.120, the department shall file a motion for default against defendants who have been served but who have failed to timely file an adjudication claim under RCW 90.03.140. A party in default may file a late claim under the same circumstances the party could respond or defend under court rules on default judgments. [2023 c 160 § 4; 2009 c 332 § 4.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.630 Water rights adjudication—Use for which a statement of claim is required.** If an adjudication claim is for a use for which a statement of claim was required to be filed under chapter 90.14 RCW and no such claim was filed, the department may move that the adjudication claim be denied. The court shall grant the department's motion unless the claimant shows good cause why the motion should not be granted. [2009 c 332 § 5.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.635 Water rights adjudication—Filing of evidence.**

(1) Within the date set by the court for filing evidence, each claimant shall file with the court evidence to support the claimant's

adjudication claims. The court is encouraged to set a date for filing evidence that is reasonable and fair for the timely processing of the adjudication. The evidence may include, without limitation, permits or certificates of water right, statements of claim made under chapter 90.14 RCW, deeds, documents related to issuance of a land patent, aerial photographs, decrees of previous water rights adjudications, crop records, records of livestock purchases and sales, records of power use, metering records, declarations containing testimonial evidence, records of diversion, withdrawal or storage and delivery by irrigation districts or ditch companies, and any other evidence to support that a water right was obtained and was not thereafter abandoned or relinquished. The evidence filed may include matters that are outside the original adjudication claim filed, and within the date set by the court for filing evidence, the claimant may amend the adjudication claim to conform to the evidence filed. Thereafter, except for good cause shown, a claimant may not file additional evidence to support the claim.

(2) For an adjudication filed in water resource inventory area 1 after June 1, 2023, the latest date for filing evidence to support the claimant's adjudication claims shall be no less than three years after the date for the filing of adjudication claims by a party set by the court under RCW 90.03.120, unless special rules of procedure established by the court pursuant to RCW 90.03.160(3) provide for a later date. Simplified procedures for claimants of small uses of water under RCW 90.03.160(3) are not subject to this provision. [2023 c 160 § 5; 2009 c 332 § 8.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.640 Water rights adjudication—Preliminary investigation—Department's report of findings.** (1) Upon the receipt of adjudication claims and the filing of claimants' evidence, the department shall conduct a preliminary investigation for the purpose of examining:

(a) The uses of the subject waters by and any physical works in connection with the persons to whom the adjudication applies; and  
(b) The uses for which a statement of claim has been filed under chapter 90.14 RCW or for which the department has a permit or certificate of water right on record.

(2)(a) The examination may include, as the department deems appropriate:

(i) An estimation of the amount of water that is reasonably necessary to accomplish various beneficial uses within the area;  
(ii) The measurement of streamflows;  
(iii) The measurement of any diversion or withdrawal rates;  
(iv) An estimation of storage capacity and the amount of water stored;  
(v) The types and numbers of stock watered;  
(vi) The number of residences served;  
(vii) The location and size of any irrigated land areas; and  
(viii) Any other information pertinent to the determination of water rights in an adjudication under this chapter.

(b) The department may also take other necessary steps and gather other data and information as may be essential to the proper understanding of the water uses and associated rights of the affected



water users, including review of each claimant's adjudication claim and evidence the claimant filed to support the claim. The claimants and the department are encouraged to confer as may be beneficial to clarify the factual and legal basis for the claim. To the extent consistent with court rules, the court may deem it appropriate to encourage claimants and the department to work closely together to reach agreement on a claimed water right that may result in timely settlement of water rights, reduced costs for the parties, greater equity and general public service, and better information that may be used for overall water management.

(3) The department shall file with the court the department's report of findings as to each adjudication claim filed timely under RCW 90.03.140. The department may divide its report of findings into two or more segments, covering particular drainages, uses, or other appropriate bases for dividing the report on adjudication claims. Based on the evidence filed by claimants and the department's report of findings, the department shall file with the superior court either or both of the following motions:

(a) A motion for a partial decree in favor of all stated claims under RCW 90.03.140 that the department finds to be substantiated with factual evidence; or

(b) A motion seeking determination of contested claims before the court. [2009 c 332 § 9.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.645 Water rights adjudication—Early settlement encouraged—Approval of settlement.** (1) The legislature finds that early settlement of contested claims is needed for a fair and efficient adjudication of water rights. Therefore, the department and other parties should identify opportunities for settlement following the date set by the court for filing of claims. To the extent consistent with court rules, the court as it deems beneficial is encouraged to urge as many parties to the adjudication as possible to reach timely agreement on claimed water rights in a manner that limits costs to the public, claimants, counties, courts, and the department. Further, at appropriate times throughout the process the court as it deems beneficial is encouraged to direct parties to utilize alternative methods of dispute resolution, including informal meetings, negotiation, mediation, or other methods to reach agreement on disputed claims.

(2) Any time after the filing of all claims under RCW 90.03.140, the department or another party may move the superior court to allow parties to meet for settlement discussions for a set length of time, either before an appointed mediator or without a mediator. For good cause shown, the court may extend the length of time for settlement discussions. The costs of mediation must be equitably borne by the parties to the mediation.

(3) If the department and a claimant reach agreement on settlement, the department shall file a motion to approve the settlement pursuant to RCW 90.03.640(3)(a) and shall disclose the terms of the settlement to other parties to the adjudication. The court shall conduct a hearing prior to approving a settlement and any party to the adjudication may object or offer modifications to the settlement. [2023 c 160 § 6; 2009 c 332 § 11.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**RCW 90.03.650 Water rights processing account.** The water rights processing account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from the fees collected under RCW 90.03.655, 90.03.665, and 90.44.540 must be deposited into the account. Money in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may only be used to support the processing of water right applications for a new appropriation, change, transfer, or amendment of a water right as provided in this chapter and chapters 90.42 and 90.44 RCW or for the examination, certification, and renewal of certification of water right examiners as provided in RCW 90.03.665. During the 2015-2017 fiscal biennium the legislature may transfer from the water rights processing account to the state drought preparedness account. [2016 sp.s. c 36 § 949; 2010 c 285 § 4.]

**Effective date—2016 sp.s. c 36:** See note following RCW 18.20.430.

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.03.655 Expedited processing of applications—On department's own volition—Notice—Fees.** (1) The department may expedite processing of applications within the same source of water on its own volition when there is interest from a sufficient number of applicants or upon receipt of written requests from at least ten percent of the applicants within the same source of water.

(2) If the conditions of subsection (1) of this section have been met and the department determines that the public interest is best served by expediting applications within a water source, the department must notify in writing all persons who have pending applications on file for a new appropriation, change, transfer, or amendment of a water right from that water source. A water source may include surface water only, groundwater only, or surface and groundwater together if the department determines that they are hydraulically connected. The notice must be posted on the department's website and published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where affected properties are located. The notice must also be made individually by way of mail to:

- (a) Inform those applicants that expedited processing of applications within the described water source is being initiated;
- (b) Provide to individual applicants the criteria under which the applications will be examined and determined;
- (c) Provide to individual applicants the estimated cost for having an application processed on an expedited basis;
- (d) Provide an estimate of how long the expedited process will take before an application is approved or denied; and
- (e) Provide at least sixty days for the applicants to respond in writing regarding the applicant's decision to participate in the expedited processing of their applications.

(3) In addition to the application fees provided in RCW 90.03.470, the department must recover the full cost of processing all the applications from applicants who elect to participate within the water source through expedited processing fees. The department must

calculate an expedited processing fee based primarily on the proportionate quantity of water requested by each applicant and may adjust the fee if it appears that the application will require a disproportionately greater amount of time and effort to process due to its complexity. Any application fees that were paid by the applicant under RCW 90.03.470 must be credited against the applicant's share of the cost of processing applications under the provisions of this section.

(4) The expedited processing fee must be collected by the department prior to the expedited processing of an application. Revenue collected from these fees must be deposited into the water rights processing account created in RCW 90.03.650. An applicant who has stated in writing that he or she wants his or her application processed using the expedited procedures in this section must transmit the processing fee within sixty days of the written request. Failure to do so will result in the applicant not being included in expedited processing for that water source.

(5) If an applicant elects not to participate in expedited processing, the application remains on file with the department, the applicant retains his or her priority date, and the application may be processed through regular processing, priority processing, expedited processing, coordinated cost-reimbursement processing, cost-reimbursement processing, or through conservancy board processing as authorized under chapter 90.80 RCW. Such an application may not be processed through expedited processing within twelve months after the department's issuance of decisions on participating applications at the conclusion of expedited processing unless the applicant agrees to pay the full proportionate share that would otherwise have been paid during such processing. Any proceeds collected from an applicant under this delayed entry into expedited processing shall be used to reimburse the other applicants who participated in the previous expedited processing of applications, provided sufficient proceeds remain to fully cover the department's cost of processing the delayed entry application and the department's estimated administrative costs to reimburse the previously expedited applicants. [2010 c 285 § 5.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.03.660 Expedited processing of applications—Notice to tribal governments.** The department must post notice on its website and provide additional electronic notice and opportunity for comment to affected federally recognized tribal governments concurrently when providing notice to applicants under RCW 90.03.265, 90.03.655, and 90.44.540. [2010 c 285 § 6.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.03.665 Certified water right examiners—Fees—Rules.** (1) The department shall establish and maintain a list of certified water right examiners. Certified water right examiners on the list are eligible to perform final proof examinations of permitted water uses leading to the issuance of a water right certificate under RCW 90.03.330. The list must be updated annually and must be made available to the public through written and electronic media.

(2) In order to qualify, an individual must be registered in Washington as a professional engineer, professional land surveyor, or registered hydrogeologist, or an individual must demonstrate at least five years of applicable experience to the department, or be a board member of a water conservancy board. Qualified individuals must also pass a written examination prior to being certified by the department. Such an examination must be administered by either the department or an entity formally approved by the department. Each certified water right examiner must demonstrate knowledge and competency regarding:

- (a) Water law in the state of Washington;
- (b) Measurement of the flow of water through open channels and enclosed pipes;
- (c) Water use and water level reporting;
- (d) Estimation of the capacity of reservoirs and ponds;
- (e) Irrigation crop water requirements;
- (f) Aerial photo interpretation;
- (g) Legal descriptions of land parcels;
- (h) Location of land and water infrastructure through the use of maps and global positioning;
- (i) Proper construction and sealing of well bores; and
- (j) Other topics related to the preparation and certification of water rights in Washington state.

(3) Except as provided in subsection (9) of this section, upon completion of a water appropriation and putting water to beneficial use, in order to receive a final water right certificate, the permit holder must secure the services of a certified water right examiner who has been tested and certified by the department. The examiner shall carry out a final examination of the project to verify its completion and to determine and document for the permit holder and the department the amount of water that has been appropriated for beneficial use, the location of diversion or withdrawal and conveyance facilities, and the actual place of use. The examiner shall take measurements or make estimates of the maximum diversion or withdrawal, the capacity of water storage facilities, the acreage irrigated, the type and number of residences served, the type and number of stock watered, and other information relevant to making a final determination of the amount of water beneficially used. The examiner shall take photographs of the facilities to document the use or uses of water and the photographs must be submitted with the examiner's report to the department. The department shall specify the format and required content of the reports and may provide a form for that purpose.

(4) The department may suspend or revoke a certification based on poor performance, malfeasance, failure to acquire continuing education credits, or excessive complaints from the examiner's customers. The department may require the retesting of an examiner. The department may interview any examiner to determine whether the person is qualified for this work. The department shall spot-check the work of examiners to ensure that the public is being competently served. Any person aggrieved by an order of the department including the granting, denial, revocation, or suspension of a certificate issued by the department under this chapter may appeal pursuant to chapter 43.21B RCW.

(5) The decision regarding whether to issue a final water right certificate is solely the responsibility and function of the department.

(6) The department shall make its final decision under RCW 90.03.330 within sixty days of the date of receipt of the proof of examination from the certified water right examiner, unless otherwise requested by the applicant or returned for correction by the department. The department may return an initial proof of examination for correction within thirty days of the department's receipt of such initial proof from a certified water right examiner. Such proof must be returned to both the certified water right examiner and the applicant. Within thirty days of the department's receipt of such returned proof from the certified water right examiner, the department shall make its final decision under RCW 90.03.330, unless otherwise requested by the applicant.

(7) Each certified water right examiner must complete eight hours annually of qualifying continuing education in the water resources field. The department shall determine and specify the qualifying continuing education and shall inform examiners of the opportunities. The department shall track whether examiners are current in their continuing education and may suspend the certification of an examiner who has not complied with the continuing education requirement.

(8) Each certified water right examiner must furnish evidence of insurance or financial responsibility in a form acceptable to the department.

(9) The department may waive the requirement to secure the services of a certified water right examiner in situations in which the department has already conducted a final proof of examination or finds it unnecessary for purposes of issuing a certificate of water right.

(10) The department shall establish and collect fees for the examination, certification, and renewal of certification of water right examiners. Revenue collected from these fees must be deposited into the water rights processing account created in RCW 90.03.650. Pursuant to RCW 43.135.055, the department is authorized to set fees for examination, certification, and renewal of certification for water right examiners.

(11) The department may adopt rules appropriate to carry out the purposes of this section. [2013 c 70 § 1; 2010 c 285 § 7.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.03.670 Processing of water right applications—Scope of chapter 285, Laws of 2010.** Nothing in chapter 285, Laws of 2010 affects or diminishes the processing of water right applications under any other existing authority, including but not limited to existing authority for the priority processing of applications by the department. [2010 c 285 § 13.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.03.675 Stormwater retention ponds—Mosquito abatement.**

(1) A county, city, town, water-sewer district, or flood control zone district constructing, improving, operating, or maintaining stormwater control facilities under chapter 35.67, 35.92, 36.89, 36.94, 57.08, or 86.15 RCW that include stormwater retention ponds, also known as wet ponds, wet retention ponds, or wet extended detention ponds, as part

of a stormwater control facility for which the primary function of the pond is to detain stormwater, must:

(a) Consider and to the extent possible consistent with department design guidelines, and without compromising the intended function of the stormwater retention pond, construct stormwater retention ponds to maintain and control vegetation to minimize mosquito propagation;

(b) Consult with the local mosquito control district, where established, in the development of construction plans that include stormwater retention ponds; and

(c) Provide for maintenance and control of vegetation growth in stormwater retention ponds to reduce mosquito habitat and inhibit mosquito propagation without compromising the intended function of a stormwater retention pond.

(2) A county, city, town, water-sewer district, or flood control zone district operating or maintaining stormwater control facilities must, except where mosquito control districts are established, when notified by the department of health or a local health jurisdiction of the positive identification of west nile virus or other mosquito-borne human disease viruses in mosquitoes, birds, or mammals, including humans, consult with the department of health or a mosquito control district concerning which integrated pest management strategies, as defined under chapter 17.15 RCW, for mosquito control or abatement in stormwater retention ponds would be most effective to prevent the spread of the disease.

(3) Where a mosquito control district is established, when notified by the department of health or a local health jurisdiction of the positive identification of west nile virus or other mosquito-borne human disease viruses in mosquitoes, birds, or mammals, including humans, the mosquito control district is responsible for mosquito control or abatement in stormwater retention ponds. [2013 c 209 § 1.]

**Chapter 90.08 RCW**  
**STREAM PATROLLERS**

**Sections**

- 90.08.040 Stream patroller—Appointment—Powers.
- 90.08.050 Stream patrollers—Compensation, travel expenses.
- 90.08.060 Stream patrollers—Users to share in payment of  
compensation.
- 90.08.070 Right of county to sue user for unpaid share of expenses.

**Chapter 90.08 RCW  
STREAM PATROLLERS**

**Sections**

- 90.08.040 Stream patroller—Appointment—Powers.
- 90.08.050 Stream patrollers—Compensation, travel expenses.
- 90.08.060 Stream patrollers—Users to share in payment of compensation.
- 90.08.070 Right of county to sue user for unpaid share of expenses.

**RCW 90.08.040 Stream patroller—Appointment—Powers.** Where water rights of a stream have been adjudicated a stream patroller shall be appointed by the director of the department of ecology upon application of water users having adjudicated water rights in each particular water resource making a reasonable showing of the necessity therefor, which application shall have been approved by the district water master if one has been appointed, at such time, for such stream, and for such periods of service as local conditions may indicate to be necessary to provide the most practical supervision and to secure to water users and owners the best protection in their rights.

The stream patroller shall have the same powers as a water master appointed under RCW 90.03.060, but his or her district shall be confined to the regulation of waters of a designated stream or streams. Such patroller shall be under the supervision of the director or his or her designated representative. He or she shall also enforce such special rules and regulations as the director may prescribe from time to time. [2013 c 23 § 601; 1977 c 22 § 1; 1925 ex.s. c 162 § 1; RRS § 7351-1.]

*Water masters*

*appointment, compensation: RCW 90.03.060.*

*duties: RCW 90.03.070.*

*power of arrest: RCW 90.03.090.*

**RCW 90.08.050 Stream patrollers—Compensation, travel expenses.** Each stream patroller shall receive a wage per day for each day actually employed in the duties of his or her office, or if employed by the month, he or she shall receive a salary per month, which wage or salary shall be fixed in the manner provided by law for the fixing of the salaries or compensation of other state officers or employees, plus travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060 as now existing or hereafter amended, to be paid by the county in which the work is performed. In case the service extends over more than one county, each county shall pay its equitable part of such wage to be apportioned by the director. He or she shall be reimbursed for actual necessary expenses when absent from his or her designated headquarters in the performance of his or her duties, such expense to be paid by the county in which he or she renders the service. The accounts of the stream patroller shall be audited and certified by the director and the county auditor shall issue a warrant therefor upon the current expense fund. [2013 c 23 § 602; 1977 c 22 § 2; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 34 § 180; 1947 c 123 § 1; 1925 ex.s. c 162 § 2; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7351-2.]



**Effective date—Severability—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 34:** See notes following RCW 2.08.115.

*Public officers, salaries and fees: Chapter 42.16 RCW.*

*State government, salaries and expenses: Chapter 43.03 RCW.*

**RCW 90.08.060 Stream patrollers—Users to share in payment of compensation.** The salary of the stream patroller shall be borne by the water users receiving the benefits and shall be paid to the county or counties in the following manner:

The county or counties may assess each water user for his or her proportionate share of the total stream patroller expense in the same ratio that the amount of water diverted by him or her bears to the total amount diverted from the stream during each season, on an annual basis, to recover all such county expenses. The stream patroller shall keep an accurate record of the amount of water diverted by each water user coming under his or her supervision. On the first of each month the stream patroller shall present his or her record of water diversion to the county or counties for the preceding month. Where the water users are organized into an irrigation district or water users' association, such organization may enter into an agreement with the county or counties for direct payment to the stream patroller in order to minimize administrative costs. [2013 c 23 § 603; 1977 c 22 § 3; 1925 ex.s. c 162 § 3; RRS § 7351-3.]

*Irrigation districts generally: Chapter 87.03 RCW.*

**RCW 90.08.070 Right of county to sue user for unpaid share of expenses.** Upon failure of any water user to pay his or her proportionate share of the expense referred to in RCW 90.08.050 and 90.08.060, the county or counties shall be entitled to sue for and recover any such unpaid portion in any court of competent jurisdiction. [2013 c 23 § 604; 1977 c 22 § 4; 1925 ex.s. c 162 § 4; RRS § 7351-4.]

**Chapter 90.14 RCW**  
**WATER RIGHTS—REGISTRATION—WAIVER AND RELINQUISHMENT, ETC.**

**Sections**

- 90.14.010 Purpose.
- 90.14.020 Legislative declaration.
- 90.14.031 Definitions.
- 90.14.041 Claim of right to withdraw, divert or use ground or surface waters—Filing statement of claim required—Exemptions.
- 90.14.043 Claim of right to withdraw, divert or use ground or surface waters—Claim upon certification by board—Procedure—Cut-off date for accepting petitions.
- 90.14.044 Existing water rights not impaired.
- 90.14.051 Statement of claim—Contents—Short form.
- 90.14.061 Statement of claim—Filing procedure—Processing of claim—Fee.
- 90.14.065 Statement of claim—Amendment—Surface water right claim change or transfer—Review of department of ecology's determination.
- 90.14.068 Statement of claim—New filing period.
- 90.14.071 Failure to file claim waives and relinquishes right.
- 90.14.081 Filing of claim not deemed adjudication of right—Prima facie evidence.
- 90.14.091 Definitions—Water rights notice—Form.
- 90.14.101 Notice of chapter provisions—How given—Requirements.
- 90.14.111 Water rights claims registry.
- 90.14.121 Penalty for overstating claim.
- 90.14.130 Reversion of rights to state due to nonuse—Notice by order—Relinquishment determinations—Appeal.
- 90.14.140 "Sufficient cause" for nonuse defined—Rights exempted.
- 90.14.150 Rights arising from permit to withdraw public waters not affected—Extensions.
- 90.14.160 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Prior rights acquired through appropriation, custom or general adjudication.
- 90.14.170 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Rights acquired due to ownership of land abutting stream, lake, or watercourse.
- 90.14.180 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Future rights acquired through appropriation.
- 90.14.190 Water resources decisions—Appeals—Attorneys' fees.
- 90.14.200 Implementation and enforcement of chapter—Proceedings under RCW 90.14.130 deemed adjudicative—Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings.
- 90.14.210 Chapter applies to all rights to withdraw groundwaters.
- 90.14.215 Chapter not applicable to trust water rights under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW.
- 90.14.220 No rights to be acquired by prescription or adverse use.
- 90.14.230 Rules and regulations.
- 90.14.240 Water rights tracking system account.

90.14.900 Effective date—1967 c 233.  
90.14.910 Severability—1967 c 233.

**Chapter 90.14 RCW**  
**WATER RIGHTS—REGISTRATION—WAIVER AND RELINQUISHMENT, ETC.**

**Sections**

- 90.14.010 Purpose.
- 90.14.020 Legislative declaration.
- 90.14.031 Definitions.
- 90.14.041 Claim of right to withdraw, divert or use ground or surface waters—Filing statement of claim required—Exemptions.
- 90.14.043 Claim of right to withdraw, divert or use ground or surface waters—Claim upon certification by board—Procedure—Cut-off date for accepting petitions.
- 90.14.044 Existing water rights not impaired.
- 90.14.051 Statement of claim—Contents—Short form.
- 90.14.061 Statement of claim—Filing procedure—Processing of claim—Fee.
- 90.14.065 Statement of claim—Amendment—Surface water right claim change or transfer—Review of department of ecology's determination.
- 90.14.068 Statement of claim—New filing period.
- 90.14.071 Failure to file claim waives and relinquishes right.
- 90.14.081 Filing of claim not deemed adjudication of right—Prima facie evidence.
- 90.14.091 Definitions—Water rights notice—Form.
- 90.14.101 Notice of chapter provisions—How given—Requirements.
- 90.14.111 Water rights claims registry.
- 90.14.121 Penalty for overstating claim.
- 90.14.130 Reversion of rights to state due to nonuse—Notice by order—Relinquishment determinations—Appeal.
- 90.14.140 "Sufficient cause" for nonuse defined—Rights exempted.
- 90.14.150 Rights arising from permit to withdraw public waters not affected—Extensions.
- 90.14.160 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Prior rights acquired through appropriation, custom or general adjudication.
- 90.14.170 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Rights acquired due to ownership of land abutting stream, lake, or watercourse.
- 90.14.180 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Future rights acquired through appropriation.
- 90.14.190 Water resources decisions—Appeals—Attorneys' fees.
- 90.14.200 Implementation and enforcement of chapter—Proceedings under RCW 90.14.130 deemed adjudicative—Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings.
- 90.14.210 Chapter applies to all rights to withdraw groundwaters.
- 90.14.215 Chapter not applicable to trust water rights under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW.
- 90.14.220 No rights to be acquired by prescription or adverse use.
- 90.14.230 Rules and regulations.
- 90.14.240 Water rights tracking system account.

90.14.900 Effective date—1967 c 233.

90.14.910 Severability—1967 c 233.

**RCW 90.14.010 Purpose.** The future growth and development of the state is dependent upon effective management and efficient use of the state's water resources. The purpose of this chapter is to provide adequate records for efficient administration of the state's waters, and to cause a return to the state of any water rights which are no longer exercised by putting said waters to beneficial use. [1967 c 233 § 1.]

**RCW 90.14.020 Legislative declaration.** The legislature finds that:

(1) Extensive uncertainty exists regarding the volume of private claims to water in the state;

(2) Such uncertainty seriously retards the efficient utilization and administration of the state's water resources, and impedes the fullest beneficial use thereof;

(3) A strong beneficial use requirement as a condition precedent to the continued ownership of a right to withdraw or divert water is essential to the orderly development of the state;

(4) Enforcement of the state's beneficial use policy is required by the state's rapid growth;

(5) All rights to divert or withdraw water, except riparian rights which do not diminish the quantity of water remaining in the source such as boating, swimming, and other recreational and aesthetic uses must be subjected to the beneficial use requirement;

(6) The availability for appropriation of additional water as a result of the requirements of this chapter will accelerate growth, development, and diversification of the economy of the state;

(7) Water rights will gain sufficient certainty of ownership as a result of this chapter to become more freely transferable, thereby increasing the economic value of the uses to which they are put, and augmenting the alienability of titles to land. [1967 c 233 § 2.]

**RCW 90.14.031 Definitions.** Unless a different meaning is plainly required by the context, the following words and phrases as used in RCW 90.14.031 through 90.14.121 shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Person" shall mean an individual, partnership, association, public or private corporation, city or other municipality, county, or a state agency, and the United States of America when claiming water rights established under the laws of the state of Washington.

(2) "Beneficial use" shall include, but not be limited to, use for domestic water, irrigation, fish, shellfish, game and other aquatic life, municipal, recreation, industrial water, generation of electric power, and navigation. [1969 ex.s. c 284 § 12.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.041 Claim of right to withdraw, divert or use ground or surface waters—Filing statement of claim required—Exemptions.** All

persons using or claiming the right to withdraw or divert and make beneficial use of public surface or ground waters of the state, except as provided in this section, RCW 90.14.043, and 90.14.068, shall file with the department of ecology not later than June 30, 1974, a statement of claim for each water right asserted on a form provided by the department. Neither this section nor RCW 90.14.068 apply to any water rights which are based on the authority of a permit or certificate issued by the department of ecology or one of its predecessors. Further, RCW 90.14.068 does not apply to the beneficial uses of water which are the subject of statements of claim in the water rights claims registry prior to September 1, 1997, or which are exempted from permit and application requirements by RCW 90.44.050 and neither this section nor RCW 90.14.068 requires that statements of claims for such uses be filed during the filing period established by RCW 90.14.068. [1997 c 440 § 2; 1988 c 127 § 73; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 13.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.043 Claim of right to withdraw, divert or use ground or surface waters—Claim upon certification by board—Procedure—Cut-off date for accepting petitions.** (1) Notwithstanding any time restrictions imposed by the provisions of chapter 90.14 RCW, a person may file a claim pursuant to RCW 90.14.041 if such person obtains a certification from the pollution control hearings board as provided in this section.

(2) A certification shall be issued by the pollution control hearings board if, upon petition to the board, it is shown to the satisfaction of the board that:

(a) Waters of the state have been applied to beneficial use continuously (with no period of nonuse exceeding five consecutive years) in the case of surface water beginning not later than June 7, 1917, and in the case of groundwater beginning not later than June 7, 1945, or

(b) Waters of the state have been applied to beneficial use continuously (with no period of nonuse exceeding five consecutive years) from the date of entry of a court decree confirming a water right and any failure to register a claim resulted from a reasonable misinterpretation of the requirements as they related to such court decreed rights.

(3) The board shall have jurisdiction to accept petitions for certification from any person through September 1, 1985, and not thereafter.

(4) A petition for certification shall include complete information on the claim pursuant to RCW 90.14.051 (1) through (8), and any such information as the board may require.

(5) The department of ecology is directed to accept for filing any claim certified by the board as provided in subsection (2) of this section. The department of ecology, upon request of the board, may provide assistance to the board pertinent to any certification petition.

(6) A certification by the pollution control hearings board or a filing with the department of ecology of a claim under this section shall not constitute a determination or confirmation that a water right exists.

(7) The provisions of RCW 90.14.071 shall have no applicability to certified claims filed pursuant to this section.

(8) This section shall have no applicability to groundwaters resulting from the operations of reclamation projects. [1985 c 435 § 1; 1979 ex.s. c 216 § 4.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

**RCW 90.14.044 Existing water rights not impaired.** The provisions of chapter 435, Laws of 1985 authorizing the acceptance of a petition for certification filed during the period beginning on July 28, 1985, and ending on midnight, September 1, 1985, shall not affect or impair in any respect whatsoever any water right existing prior to July 28, 1985. [1985 c 435 § 2.]

**RCW 90.14.051 Statement of claim—Contents—Short form.** The statement of claim for each right shall include substantially the following:

- (1) The name and mailing address of the claimant.
- (2) The name of the watercourse or water source from which the right to divert or make use of water is claimed, if available.
- (3) The quantities of water and times of use claimed.
- (4) The legal description, with reasonable certainty, of the point or points of diversion and places of use of waters.
- (5) The purpose of use, including, if for irrigation, the number of acres irrigated.
- (6) The approximate dates of first putting water to beneficial use for the various amounts and times claimed in subsection (3).
- (7) The legal doctrine or doctrines upon which the right claimed is based, including if statutory, the specific statute.
- (8) The sworn statement that the claim set forth is true and correct to the best of claimant's knowledge and belief.

Except, however, that any claim for diversion or withdrawal of surface or ground water for those uses described in the exemption from the permit requirements of RCW 90.44.050 may be filed on a short form to be provided by the department. Such short form shall only require inclusion of sufficient data to identify the claimant, source of water, purpose of use and legal description of the land upon which the water is used: PROVIDED, That the provisions of RCW 90.14.081 pertaining to evidentiary value of filed claims shall not apply to claims submitted in short form: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That claimants for such minimal uses may, at their option, file statements of claim on the standard form used by all other claimants. [1973 1st ex.s. c 113 § 1; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 14.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.061 Statement of claim—Filing procedure—Processing of claim—Fee.** Filing of a statement of a claim shall take place and be completed upon receipt by the department of ecology, at its office in Olympia, of an original statement signed by the claimant or his or her authorized agent, and two copies thereof. Any person required to file

hereunder may file through a designated representative. A company, district, public or municipal corporation, or the United States when furnishing to persons water pertaining to water rights required to be filed under RCW 90.14.041, shall have the right to file one claim on behalf of said persons on a form prepared by the department for the total benefits of each person served; provided that a separate claim shall be filed by such company, district, public or private corporation, or the United States for each operating unit of the filing entity providing such water and for each water source. Within thirty days after receipt of a statement of claim the department shall acknowledge the same by a notation on one copy indicating receipt thereof and the date of receipt, together with the wording of the first sentence of RCW 90.14.081, and shall return said copy by certified or registered mail to the claimant at the address set forth in the statement of claim. No statement of claim shall be accepted for filing by the department of ecology unless accompanied by a two dollar filing fee. [2013 c 23 § 605; 1988 c 127 § 74; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 15.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.065 Statement of claim—Amendment—Surface water right claim change or transfer—Review of department of ecology's determination.**

(1)(a) Any person or entity, or successor to such person or entity, having a statement of claim on file with the water rights claims registry may submit to the department of ecology for filing an amendment to such a statement of claim if the submitted amendment is based on:

(i) An error in estimation of the quantity of the applicant's water claim prescribed in RCW 90.14.051 if the applicant provides reasons for the failure to claim such right in the original claim;

(ii) A change in circumstances not foreseeable at the time the original claim was filed, if such change in circumstances relates only to the manner of transportation or diversion of the water and not to the use or quantity of such water; or

(iii) The amendment is ministerial in nature.

(b) The department shall accept any such submission and file the same in the registry unless the department by written determination concludes that the requirements of (a)(i), (ii), or (iii) of this subsection have not been satisfied.

(2) In addition to subsection (1) of this section, a surface water right claim may be changed or transferred in the same manner as a permit or certificate under RCW 90.03.380, and a water right claim for groundwater may be changed or transferred as provided under RCW 90.03.380 and 90.44.100.

(3) Any person aggrieved by a determination of the department may obtain a review thereof by filing a petition for review with the pollution control hearings board within thirty days of the date of the determination by the department. The provisions of RCW 90.14.081 shall apply to any amendment filed or approved under this section. [2010 c 285 § 8; 1987 c 93 § 1.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.



**RCW 90.14.068 Statement of claim—New filing period.** (1) A new period for filing statements of claim for water rights is established. The filing period shall begin September 1, 1997, and shall end at midnight June 30, 1998. Each person or entity claiming under state law a right to withdraw or divert and beneficially use surface water under a right that was established before \*the effective date of [the] water code established by chapter 117, Laws of 1917, and any person claiming under state law a right to withdraw and beneficially use groundwater under a right that was established before \*\*the effective date of the groundwater code established by chapter 263, Laws of 1945, shall register the claim with the department during the filing period unless the claim has been filed in the state water rights claims registry before July 27, 1997. A person who claims such a right and fails to register the claim as required is conclusively deemed to have waived and relinquished any right, title, or interest in the right. A statement filed during this filing period shall be filed as provided in RCW 90.14.051 and 90.14.061 and shall be subject to the provisions of this chapter regarding statements of claim. This reopening of the period for filing statements of claim shall not affect or impair in any respect whatsoever any water right existing prior to July 27, 1997. A water right embodied in a statement of claim filed under this section is subordinate to any water right embodied in a permit or certificate issued under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW prior to the date the statement of claim is filed with the department and is subordinate to any water right embodied in a statement of claim filed in the water rights claims registry before July 27, 1997.

(2) The department of ecology shall, at least once each week during the month of August 1997 and at least once each month during the filing period, publish a notice regarding this new filing period in newspapers of general circulation in the various regions of the state. The notice shall contain the substance of the following notice:

**WATER RIGHTS NOTICE**

Each person or entity claiming a right to withdraw or divert and beneficially use surface water under a right that was established before June 7, 1917, or claiming a right to withdraw and beneficially use groundwater under a right that was established before June 7, 1945, under the laws of the state of Washington must register the claim with the department of ecology, Olympia, Washington. The claim must be registered on or after September 1, 1997, and not later than five o'clock on June 30, 1998.

**FAILURE TO REGISTER THE CLAIM  
WILL RESULT IN A WAIVER AND  
RELINQUISHMENT OF THE WATER  
RIGHT OR CLAIMED WATER RIGHT**

Registering a claim is NOT required for:

1. A water right that is based on the authority of a permit or certificate issued by the department of ecology or one of its predecessors;

2. A water right that is based on the exemption from permitting requirements provided by RCW 90.44.050 for certain very limited uses of groundwater; or

3. A water right that is based on a statement of claim that has previously been filed in the state's water rights claims registry during other registration periods.

For further information, for a copy of the law establishing this filing period, and for an explanation of the law and its requirements, contact the department of ecology, Olympia, Washington.

The department shall also prepare, make available to the public, and distribute to the communications media information describing the types of rights for which statements of claim need not be filed, the effect of filing, the effect of RCW 90.14.071, and other information relevant to filings and statements of claim.

(3) The department of ecology shall ensure that employees of the department are readily available to respond to inquiries regarding filing statements of claim and that all of the information the department has at its disposal that is relevant to an inquiry regarding a particular potential claim, including information regarding other rights and claims in the vicinity of the potentially claimed right, is available to the person making the inquiry. The department shall dedicate additional staff in each of the department's regional offices and in the department's central office to ensure that responses and information are provided in a timely manner during each of the business days during the month of August 1997 and during the new filing period.

(4) To assist the department in avoiding unnecessary duplication, the department shall provide to a requestor, within ten working days of receiving the request, the records of any water right claimed, listed, recorded, or otherwise existing in the records of the department or its predecessor agencies, including any report of a referee in a water rights adjudication. This information shall be provided as required by this subsection if the request is provided in writing from the owner of the water right or from the holder of a possessory interest in any real property for water right records associated with the property or if the requestor is an attorney for such an owner. The information regarding water rights in the area served by a regional office of the department shall also be provided within ten working days to any requestor who requests to review the information in person in the department's regional office. The information held by the headquarters office of the department shall also be provided within ten working days to any requestor who requests to review the information in person in the department's headquarters office. The requirements of this subsection that records and information be provided to requestors within ten working days may not be construed as limiting in any manner the obligations of the department to provide public access to public records as required by chapter 42.56 RCW.

(5) This section does not apply to claims for the use of groundwater withdrawn in an area that is, during the period established by subsection (2) of this section, the subject of a general adjudication proceeding for water rights in superior court under RCW 90.03.110 through 90.03.245 and the proceeding applies to groundwater rights. This section does not apply to claims for the use of surface water withdrawn in an area that is, during the period established by subsection (2) of this section, the subject of a general adjudication proceeding for water rights in superior court

under RCW 90.03.110 through 90.03.245 and the proceeding applies to surface water rights.

(6) This section does not apply to claims for the use of water in a groundwater area or subarea for which a management program adopted by the department by rule and in effect on July 27, 1997, establishes acreage expansion limitations for the use of groundwater. [2005 c 274 § 365; 1997 c 440 § 1.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) The effective date of chapter 117, Laws of 1917, is June 7, 1917.

\*\* (2) The effective date of chapter 263, Laws of 1945, is June 7, 1945.

**RCW 90.14.071 Failure to file claim waives and relinquishes right.** Except as provided in \*section 5 of this act or as exempted from filing by RCW 90.14.041, any person claiming the right to divert or withdraw waters of the state as set forth in RCW 90.14.041, who fails to file a statement of claim as provided in RCW 90.14.041, 90.14.043, or 90.14.068 and in RCW 90.14.051 and 90.14.061, shall be conclusively deemed to have waived and relinquished any right, title, or interest in said right. [1997 c 440 § 3; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 16.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Section 5 of this act was vetoed by the governor.

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.081 Filing of claim not deemed adjudication of right—Prima facie evidence.** The filing of a statement of claim does not constitute an adjudication of any claim to the right to use of waters as between the water use claimant and the state, or as between one or more water use claimants and another or others. A statement of claim filed pursuant to RCW 90.14.061 shall be admissible in a general adjudication of water rights as prima facie evidence of the times of use and the quantity of water the claimant was withdrawing or diverting as of the year of the filing, if, but only if, the quantities of water in use and the time of use when a controversy is mooted are substantially in accord with the times of use and quantity of water claimed in the statement of claim. A statement of claim shall not otherwise be evidence of the priority of the claimed water right. [1969 ex.s. c 284 § 17.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.091 Definitions—Water rights notice—Form.** For the purpose of RCW 90.14.031 through 90.14.121 the following words and phrases shall have the following meanings:

(1) "Statement of taxes due" means the statement required under RCW 84.56.050.

(2) "Notice in writing" means a notice substantially in the following form:

WATER RIGHTS NOTICE

Every person, including but not limited to an individual, partnership, association, public or private corporation, city or other municipality, county, state agency and the state of Washington, and the United States of America, when claiming water rights established under the laws of the state of Washington, are hereby notified that all water rights or claimed water rights relating to the withdrawal or diversion of public surface or ground waters of the state, except those water rights based upon authority of a permit or certificate issued by the department of ecology or one of its predecessors, must be registered with the department of ecology, Olympia, Washington not later than June 30, 1974. FAILURE TO REGISTER AS REQUIRED BY LAW WILL RESULT IN A WAIVER AND RELINQUISHMENT OF SAID WATER RIGHT OR CLAIMED WATER RIGHT. For further information contact the Department of Ecology, Olympia, Washington, for a copy of the act and an explanation thereof. [1988 c 127 § 75; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 18.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.101 Notice of chapter provisions—How given—**

**Requirements.** To insure that all persons referred to in RCW 90.14.031 and 90.14.041 are notified of the registration provisions of this chapter, the department of ecology is directed to give notice of the registration provisions of this chapter as follows:

(1) It shall cause a notice in writing to be placed in a prominent and conspicuous place in all newspapers of the state having a circulation of more than fifty thousand copies for each weekday, and in at least one newspaper published in each county of the state, at least once each year for five consecutive years.

(2) It shall cause a notice substantially the same as a notice in writing to be broadcast by each commercial television station operating in the United States and viewed in the state, and by at least one commercial radio station operating from each county of the state having such a station regularly at six month intervals for five consecutive years.

(3) It shall cause a notice in writing to be placed in a prominent and conspicuous location in each county courthouse in the state.

(4) The county treasurer of each county shall enclose with each mailing of one or more statements of taxes due issued in 1972 a copy of a notice in writing and a declaration that it shall be the duty of the recipient of the statement of taxes due to forward the notice to the beneficial owner of the property. A sufficient number of copies of the notice and declaration shall be supplied to each county treasurer by the director of ecology before the fifteenth day of January, 1972. In the implementation of this subsection the department of ecology shall provide reimbursement to the county treasurer for the reasonable additional costs, if any there may be, incurred by said treasurer arising from the inclusion of a notice in writing as required herein.

(5) It shall provide copies of the notice in writing to the press services with offices located in Thurston county during January of the years 1970, 1971, 1972, 1973, and 1974.

The director of the department may also in his or her discretion give notice in any other manner which will carry out the purposes of this section. Where notice in writing is given pursuant to subsections (1) and (3) of this section, RCW 90.14.041, 90.14.051, and 90.14.071

shall be set forth and quoted in full. [2013 c 23 § 606; 1988 c 127 § 76; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 19.]

**Reviser's note:** "this 1969 amendatory act" has been changed to "this chapter" in the first paragraph. "This 1969 amendatory act" [1969 ex.s. c 284] consists of RCW 90.48.290, former RCW 90.48.295, since repealed, RCW 90.22.010 through 90.22.040, 90.14.031 through 90.14.121, 43.27A.190 through 43.27A.220, 43.27A.075, and repeals RCW 43.21.145 and 90.14.030 through 90.14.120.

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.111 Water rights claims registry.** The department of ecology is directed to establish a registry entitled the "Water Rights Claims Registry". All claims set forth pursuant to RCW 90.14.041, 90.14.051 and 90.14.061 shall be filed in the registry alphabetically and consecutively by control number, and by such other manner as deemed appropriate by the department. [1988 c 127 § 77; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 20.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.121 Penalty for overstating claim.** The filing of a statement of claim pursuant to RCW 90.14.061 which knowingly provides for an overstatement of a right either in quantities of water or times of use claimed shall constitute a misdemeanor punishable by a fine of not more than two hundred fifty dollars or by imprisonment for not more than ninety days, or both. [1969 ex.s. c 284 § 21.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.14.130 Reversion of rights to state due to nonuse—Notice by order—Relinquishment determinations—Appeal.** When it appears to the department of ecology that a person entitled to the use of water has not beneficially used his or her water right or some portion thereof, and it appears that said right has or may have reverted to the state because of such nonuse, as provided by RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, or 90.14.180, the department of ecology shall notify such person by order: PROVIDED, That where a company, association, district, or the United States has filed a blanket claim under the provisions of \*RCW 90.14.060 for the total benefits of those served by it, the notice shall be served on such company, association, district or the United States and not upon any of its individual water users who may not have used the water or some portion thereof which they were entitled to use. The order shall contain: (1) A description of the water right, including the approximate location of the point of diversion, the general description of the lands or places where such waters were used, the water source, the amount involved, the purpose of use, and the apparent authority upon which the right is based; (2) a statement that unless sufficient cause be shown on appeal the water right will be declared relinquished; and (3) a statement that such order may be appealed to the pollution control hearings board. Any person aggrieved by such an order may appeal it to the pollution control hearings board pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310. The order shall be

served by registered or certified mail to the last known address of the person and be posted at the point of division or withdrawal. The order by itself shall not alter the recipient's right to use water, if any. [2013 c 23 § 607; 1987 c 109 § 13; 1967 c 233 § 13.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 90.14.060 was repealed by 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 23, which act added new sections relating to the registration of claims for water rights as codified in this chapter.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Proceedings under this section deemed adjudicative—Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings: RCW 90.14.200.*

**RCW 90.14.140 "Sufficient cause" for nonuse defined—Rights exempted.** (1) For the purposes of RCW 90.14.130 through 90.14.180, "sufficient cause" shall be defined as the nonuse of all or a portion of the water by the owner of a water right for a period of five or more consecutive years where such nonuse occurs as a result of:

- (a) Drought, or other unavailability of water;
- (b) Active service in the armed forces of the United States during military crisis;
- (c) Nonvoluntary service in the armed forces of the United States;
- (d) The operation of legal proceedings;
- (e) Federal or state agency leases of or options to purchase lands or water rights which preclude or reduce the use of the right by the owner of the water right;
- (f) Federal laws imposing land or water use restrictions either directly or through the voluntary enrollment of a landowner in a federal program implementing those laws, or acreage limitations, or production quotas;
- (g) Temporarily reduced water need for irrigation use where such reduction is due to varying weather conditions, including but not limited to precipitation and temperature, that warranted the reduction in water use, so long as the water user's diversion and delivery facilities are maintained in good operating condition consistent with beneficial use of the full amount of the water right;
- (h) Temporarily reduced diversions or withdrawals of irrigation water directly resulting from the provisions of a contract or similar agreement in which a supplier of electricity buys back electricity from the water right holder and the electricity is needed for the diversion or withdrawal or for the use of the water diverted or withdrawn for irrigation purposes;
- (i) Water conservation measures implemented under the Yakima river basin water enhancement project, so long as the conserved water is reallocated in accordance with the provisions of P.L. 103-434;
- (j) Reliance by an irrigation water user on the transitory presence of return flows in lieu of diversion or withdrawal of water from the primary source of supply, if such return flows are measured or reliably estimated using a scientific methodology generally accepted as reliable within the scientific community;
- (k) The reduced use of irrigation water resulting from crop rotation. For purposes of this subsection, crop rotation means the temporary change in the type of crops grown resulting from the

exercise of generally recognized sound farming practices. Unused water resulting from crop rotation will not be relinquished if the remaining portion of the water continues to be beneficially used; or

(1) Waiting for a final determination from the department of ecology on a change application filed under RCW 90.03.250, 90.03.380, or 90.44.100.

(2) Notwithstanding any other provisions of RCW 90.14.130 through 90.14.180, there shall be no relinquishment of any water right:

(a) If such right is claimed for power development purposes under chapter 90.16 RCW and annual license fees are paid in accordance with chapter 90.16 RCW;

(b) If such right is used for a standby or reserve water supply to be used in time of drought or other low flow period so long as withdrawal or diversion facilities are maintained in good operating condition for the use of such reserve or standby water supply;

(c) If such right is claimed for a determined future development to take place either within fifteen years of July 1, 1967, or the most recent beneficial use of the water right, whichever date is later;

(d) If such right is claimed for municipal water supply purposes under chapter 90.03 RCW;

(e) If such waters are not subject to appropriation under the applicable provisions of RCW 90.40.030;

(f) If such right or portion of the right is leased to another person for use on land other than the land to which the right is appurtenant as long as the lessee makes beneficial use of the right in accordance with this chapter and a transfer or change of the right has been approved by the department in accordance with RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.383, 90.03.390, or 90.44.100;

(g) If such a right or portion of the right is authorized for a purpose that is satisfied by the use of agricultural industrial process water as authorized under RCW 90.46.150; or

(h) If such right is a trust water right under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW.

(3) In adding provisions to this section by chapter 237, Laws of 2001, the legislature does not intend to imply legislative approval or disapproval of any existing administrative policy regarding, or any existing administrative or judicial interpretation of, the provisions of this section not expressly added or revised. [2012 c 7 § 2; (2012 c 7 § 1 expired June 30, 2019); (2009 c 183 § 14 expired June 30, 2021). Prior: 2001 c 240 § 1; 2001 c 237 § 27; 2001 c 69 § 5; 1998 c 258 § 1; 1987 c 125 § 1; 1967 c 233 § 14.]

**Effective date—2012 c 7 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act takes effect June 30, 2019." [2012 c 7 § 4.]

**Expiration date—2012 c 7 § 1:** "Section 1 of this act expires June 30, 2019." [2012 c 7 § 3.]

**Expiration date—2019 c 78; 2009 c 183:** See note following RCW 90.03.380.

**Effective date—2001 c 240:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 11, 2001]." [2001 c 240 § 2.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**Effective date—1967 c 233:** See RCW 90.14.900.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.150 Rights arising from permit to withdraw public waters not affected—Extensions.** Nothing in this chapter shall be construed to affect any rights or privileges arising from any permit to withdraw public waters or any application for such permit, but the department of ecology shall grant extensions of time to the holder of a preliminary permit only as provided by RCW 90.03.290. [1987 c 109 § 100; 1967 c 233 § 15.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.160 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Prior rights acquired through appropriation, custom or general adjudication.** Any person entitled to divert or withdraw waters of the state through any appropriation authorized by enactments of the legislature prior to enactment of chapter 117, Laws of 1917, or by custom, or by general adjudication, who abandons the same, or who voluntarily fails, without sufficient cause, to beneficially use all or any part of said right to divert or withdraw for any period of five successive years after July 1, 1967, shall relinquish such right or portion thereof, and said right or portion thereof shall revert to the state, and the waters affected by said right shall become available for appropriation in accordance with RCW 90.03.250. [1981 c 291 § 1; 1979 ex.s. c 216 § 5; 1967 c 233 § 16.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

**Effective date—1967 c 233:** See RCW 90.14.900.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

*Implementation and enforcement of chapter—Proceedings under RCW 90.14.130 deemed adjudicative—Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings: RCW 90.14.200.*

**RCW 90.14.170 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Rights acquired due to ownership of land abutting stream, lake, or watercourse.** Any person entitled to divert or withdraw waters of the state by virtue of his or her ownership of land abutting a stream, lake, or watercourse, who



abandons the same, or who voluntarily fails, without sufficient cause, to beneficially use all or any part of said right to withdraw or divert said water for any period of five successive years after July 1, 1967, shall relinquish such right or portion thereof, and such right or portion thereof shall revert to the state, and the waters affected by said right shall become available for appropriation in accordance with the provisions of RCW 90.03.250. [2013 c 23 § 608; 1967 c 233 § 17.]

**Effective date—1967 c 233:** See RCW 90.14.900.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights:* RCW 90.38.040.

*Availability for other uses qualified:* RCW 90.14.160.

*Implementation and enforcement of chapter—Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings:* RCW 90.14.200.

**RCW 90.14.180 Relinquishment of right for abandonment or failure to beneficially use without sufficient cause—Future rights acquired through appropriation.** Any person hereafter entitled to divert or withdraw waters of the state through an appropriation authorized under RCW 90.03.330, 90.44.080, or 90.44.090 who abandons the same, or who voluntarily fails, without sufficient cause, to beneficially use all or any part of said right to withdraw for any period of five successive years shall relinquish such right or portion thereof, and such right or portion thereof shall revert to the state, and the waters affected by said right shall become available for appropriation in accordance with RCW 90.03.250. All certificates hereafter issued by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.03.330 shall expressly incorporate this section by reference. [1987 c 109 § 101; 1967 c 233 § 18.]

**~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:~~** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights:* RCW 90.38.040.

*Availability for other uses qualified:* RCW 90.14.160.

*Implementation and enforcement of chapter—Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings:* RCW 90.14.200.

**RCW 90.14.190 Water resources decisions—Appeals—Attorneys' fees.** Any person feeling aggrieved by any decision of the department of ecology may have the same reviewed pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310. In any such review, the findings of fact as set forth in the report of the department of ecology shall be prima facie evidence of the fact of any waiver or relinquishment of a water right or portion thereof. If the hearings board affirms the decision of the department, a party seeks review in superior court of that hearings board decision pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW, and the court determines that the party was injured by an arbitrary, capricious, or erroneous order of the

department, the court may award reasonable attorneys' fees. [1987 c 109 § 14; 1967 c 233 § 19.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.200 Implementation and enforcement of chapter—**  
**Proceedings under RCW 90.14.130 deemed adjudicative—Application of**  
**RCW sections to specific proceedings.** (1) All matters relating to the implementation and enforcement of this chapter by the department of ecology shall be carried out in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW, the Administrative Procedure Act, except where the provisions of this chapter expressly conflict with chapter 34.05 RCW. Proceedings held pursuant to RCW 90.14.130 are adjudicative proceedings within the meaning of chapter 34.05 RCW. Final decisions of the department of ecology in these proceedings are subject to review in accordance with chapter 43.21B RCW.

(2) RCW 90.14.130 provides nonexclusive procedures for determining a relinquishment of water rights under RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, and 90.14.180. RCW 90.14.160, 90.14.170, and 90.14.180 may be applied in, among other proceedings, general adjudication proceedings initiated under RCW 90.03.110 or 90.44.220: PROVIDED, That nothing herein shall apply to litigation involving determinations of the department of ecology under RCW 90.03.290 relating to the impairment of existing rights. [1989 c 175 § 180; 1979 ex.s. c 216 § 6; 1967 c 233 § 20.]

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.210 Chapter applies to all rights to withdraw groundwaters.** The provisions of this chapter shall apply to all rights to withdraw groundwaters of the state, whether authorized by chapter 90.44 RCW or otherwise. [1967 c 233 § 21.]

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.215 Chapter not applicable to trust water rights under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW.** This chapter shall not apply to trust water rights held or exercised by the department of ecology under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW. [1991 c 347 § 14.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.14.220 No rights to be acquired by prescription or adverse use.** No rights to the use of surface or ground waters of the

state affecting either appropriated or unappropriated waters thereof may be acquired by prescription or adverse use. [1967 c 233 § 22.]

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.230 Rules and regulations.** The department of ecology is authorized to promulgate such rules and regulations as are necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. [1987 c 109 § 102; 1967 c 233 § 23.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.240 Water rights tracking system account.** The water rights tracking system account is created in the state treasury. Twenty percent of the fees collected by the department of ecology according to RCW 90.03.470 must be deposited in the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used by the department of ecology for the development, implementation, and management of a water rights tracking system, including a water rights mapping system and a water rights database. [2005 c 412 § 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2005 c 412:** See note following RCW 90.03.470.

**RCW 90.14.900 Effective date—1967 c 233.** The effective date of this act is July 1, 1967. [1967 c 233 § 25.]

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**RCW 90.14.910 Severability—1967 c 233.** If any provisions of this act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the act can be given effect without the invalid provision or application; and to this end the provisions of this act are declared to be severable. This act shall be liberally construed to effectuate its purpose. [1967 c 233 § 26.]

*Application to Yakima river basin trust water rights: RCW 90.38.040.*

**Chapter 90.16 RCW**  
**APPROPRIATION OF WATER FOR PUBLIC AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES**

**Sections**

- 90.16.010 Appropriation by certain water companies.
- 90.16.020 Appropriation for industrial purposes.
- 90.16.025 Appropriation for industrial purposes—Procedure.
- 90.16.030 Right of eminent domain by water power companies.
- 90.16.040 Right of eminent domain by water power companies—Right of entry.
- 90.16.045 Right of eminent domain by water power companies—Procedure.
- 90.16.050 Use of water for power development—Annual license fee—Progress report—Exceptions to the fee schedule—Ensuring accountability in the programs.
- 90.16.060 Schedule of fees for claimants of water power—Statement of claim—Penalties—Excessive claim—Abandonment.
- 90.16.090 Disposition of fees.
- 90.16.100 Appropriation of lands by corporations conveying water.
- 90.16.110 Water for use outside state.
- 90.16.120 Water for use outside state—Reciprocity.

*Use of waters for irrigation, mining, manufacturing, deemed a public use: State Constitution Art. 21.*

**Chapter 90.16 RCW**  
**APPROPRIATION OF WATER FOR PUBLIC AND INDUSTRIAL PURPOSES**

**Sections**

- 90.16.010 Appropriation by certain water companies.
- 90.16.020 Appropriation for industrial purposes.
- 90.16.025 Appropriation for industrial purposes—Procedure.
- 90.16.030 Right of eminent domain by water power companies.
- 90.16.040 Right of eminent domain by water power companies—Right of entry.
- 90.16.045 Right of eminent domain by water power companies—Procedure.
- 90.16.050 Use of water for power development—Annual license fee—Progress report—Exceptions to the fee schedule—Ensuring accountability in the programs.
- 90.16.060 Schedule of fees for claimants of water power—Statement of claim—Penalties—Excessive claim—Abandonment.
- 90.16.090 Disposition of fees.
- 90.16.100 Appropriation of lands by corporations conveying water.
- 90.16.110 Water for use outside state.
- 90.16.120 Water for use outside state—Reciprocity.

*Use of waters for irrigation, mining, manufacturing, deemed a public use: State Constitution Art. 21.*

**RCW 90.16.010 Appropriation by certain water companies.** Such water companies incorporated for the purposes specified in the preceding section shall have the right to purchase or take possession of and use and hold such lands and waters for the purposes of the company, lying without the limits of the city or town intended to be supplied with water upon making compensation therefor. The mode of proceeding to obtain possession of such lands for the use of the company, right-of-way for laying pipes and aqueducts for the use of the company, when the parties cannot agree shall so far as the same be applicable be as prescribed in chapter 187: PROVIDED, That nothing therein contained, shall be so construed, as to authorize the appropriation of water belonging to any person, unless the owner thereof shall refuse to supply said town or city with water after being requested so to do by the town board or city council. [1883 p 45 § 1, subd. 8; Code 1881 § 2448; 1873 p 408 § 28; 1869 p 340 § 30; RRS § 11570.]

**Reviser's note:** The language "for the purposes specified in the preceding section" refers to Code 1881 § 2447 (repealed by 1939 c 143 § 19) which stated in part: ". . . for the purpose of supplying any cities or towns in this territory, or the inhabitants thereof with pure and freshwater."

The language "chapter 187" refers to chapter 187 of the Code of 1881 the existing sections of which chapter are codified in chapter 81.36 RCW and RCW 90.16.100; the remaining sections thereof have been repealed.

**Validating—1881 Act:** "All persons who have organized themselves as a corporation under the provisions of this chapter for purposes other than those enumerated in section 2421, are hereby declared

incorporate bodies, with all the powers the same as they would enjoy had they been incorporated for the purposes set forth in section 2421." [Code 1881 § 2445.] The language "this chapter" refers to chapter 185, Code of 1881 which embodied the territorial laws relating to the formation of corporations; current provisions relating thereto are codified in Titles 23 and 24 RCW. The language "section 2421" refers to Code 1881 § 2421 which set forth the purposes for which a corporation might then be formed. General purposes for which a corporation may be formed under existing law are codified in Title 23B RCW; see also Table of Prior Laws following Title 23 RCW digest.

**RCW 90.16.020 Appropriation for industrial purposes.** Any person or persons, or company now incorporated, or that may hereafter become incorporated under the laws of this state, for the purpose of mining or manufacturing, shall have the right to purchase or appropriate and take possession of and divert from its natural channel, and use and hold the waters of any river, creek or stream in this state that may be required for the mining and manufacturing purposes of any such person or persons, corporation or corporations, and to construct all dams, canals, reservoirs, ditches, pipes, flumes and aqueducts, suitable and necessary for the controlling, directing and running such waters to their mines or manufacturing establishments of any such person or persons, corporation or corporations, where the same may be intended to be utilized for such purposes: PROVIDED, That no such appropriation or diversion of the waters of any such river, creek, or stream, from its natural channel; nor shall any such dam, canal, reservoir, ditch, pipe, flume or aqueduct, be constructed to the detriment of any person or persons, corporation or corporations, occupying the lands or being located below the point or place of such appropriation or diversion on any such stream or its tributaries, or above or below such dam, canal, reservoir, ditch, pipe, flume or aqueduct, or of the owners of the lands, through which the waters run in the natural course for the deprivation of the same, or the owners of the land through or upon which such dam, canal, reservoirs, ditch, pipe, flume or aqueduct, may pass through or over, or be situated upon, unless just and adequate compensation be previously ascertained and paid therefor. [Code 1881 Bagley's Supp. p 38-39 § 1; 1879 p 124 § 1; RRS § 11575.]

**RCW 90.16.025 Appropriation for industrial purposes—Procedure.** The mode of proceeding to appropriate, take possession of and divert such waters and to build such dam, canal, ditch, reservoir, pipe, flume, or aqueduct, as prescribed in RCW 90.16.020, when the parties cannot agree upon the purchase thereof, shall be the same as prescribed in chapter four of an act to provide for the formation of corporations, approved November thirteenth, eighteen hundred and seventy-three, except that the amount of the benefits accruing to the residue of the property of the same individual or corporation, by reason of the use made of that taken, to be estimated by the parties assessing the damages, shall be deducted from the value of the property taken. [Code 1881 Bagley's Supp. p 39 § 2; 1879 p 125 § 2.]

**RCW 90.16.030 Right of eminent domain by water power companies.**

The right of eminent domain for the purpose of appropriating real estate is hereby extended to all corporations that are now or that may hereafter be incorporated under the laws of this state, or of any state or territory of the United States and doing business in this state, for the purpose of conveying water by ditches, flumes, pipe lines, tunnels or any other means for the utilization of water power: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That said right of eminent domain shall not be exercised in respect to any residence or business structure or structures. [1901 c 143 § 1; RRS § 11572. FORMER PART OF SECTION: 1901 c 143 § 3; RRS § 11574, now codified as RCW 90.16.045.]

**RCW 90.16.040 Right of eminent domain by water power companies—**

**Right of entry.** Every corporation that is now or that may hereafter be incorporated under the laws of this state, or of any other state or territory of the United States and doing business in this state, for the purpose of conveying water by ditches, flumes, pipe lines, tunnels or any other means for the utilization of water power, shall have the right to enter upon any land between the termini of the proposed ditches, flumes, pipe lines, tunnels or any other means for the utilization of water power, for the purpose of examining, locating and surveying such ditches, flumes, pipe lines, tunnels or any other means for the utilization of water power, doing no unnecessary damage thereby. [1901 c 143 § 2; RRS § 11573.]

**RCW 90.16.045 Right of eminent domain by water power companies—**

**Procedure.** Every such corporation shall have the right, subject to the proviso contained in RCW 90.16.030 to appropriate real estate or other property for a right-of-way for such ditches, flumes, pipe lines, tunnels or other means of conveying water, and for any other corporate purposes, in the same manner and under the same procedure as now is or may be hereafter provided by law in the case of other corporations authorized by the laws of the state to exercise the right of eminent domain. [1901 c 143 § 3; RRS § 11574. Formerly RCW 90.16.030, part.]

*Eminent domain by corporations: Chapter 8.20 RCW.*

**RCW 90.16.050 Use of water for power development—Annual license fee—Progress report—Exceptions to the fee schedule—Ensuring accountability in the programs.**

(1) Every person, firm, private or municipal corporation, or association hereinafter called "claimant", claiming the right to the use of water within or bordering upon the state of Washington for power development, shall on or before the first day of January of each year pay to the state of Washington in advance an annual license fee, based upon the theoretical water power claimed under each and every separate claim to water according to the following schedule:

(a) For projects in operation: For each and every theoretical horsepower claimed up to and including one thousand horsepower, at the rate of eighteen cents per horsepower; for each and every theoretical horsepower in excess of one thousand horsepower, up to and including ten thousand horsepower, at the rate of three and six-tenths cents per

horsepower; for each and every theoretical horsepower in excess of ten thousand horsepower, at the rate of one and eight-tenths cents per horsepower.

(b) For federal energy regulatory commission projects in operation that are subject to review for certification under section 401 of the federal clean water act, the following fee schedule applies in addition to the fees in (a) of this subsection: For each theoretical horsepower of capacity up to and including one thousand horsepower, at the rate of thirty-two cents per horsepower; for each theoretical horsepower in excess of one thousand horsepower, up to and including ten thousand horsepower, at the rate of six and four-tenths cents per horsepower; for each theoretical horsepower in excess of ten thousand horsepower, at the rate of three and two-tenths cents per horsepower.

(c) To justify the appropriate use of fees collected under (b) of this subsection, the department of ecology shall submit a progress report to the appropriate committees of the legislature prior to December 31, 2009, and biennially thereafter. The progress report will: (i) Describe how license fees and other funds used for the work of the licensing program were expended in direct support of the federal energy regulatory commission licensing process and license implementation during the current biennium, and expected workload and full-time equivalent employees for federal energy regulatory commission licensing in the next biennium. In order to increase the financial accountability of the licensing, relicensing, and license implementation program, the report must include the amount of licensing fees and program funds that were expended on licensing work associated with each hydropower project. This project-specific program expenditure list must detail the program costs and staff time associated with each hydropower project during the time period immediately prior to license issuance process, the program costs and staff time deriving from the issuance or reissuance of a license to each hydropower project, and the program costs and staff time associated with license implementation after the issuance or reissuance of a license to a hydropower project. This program cost and staff time information must be collected beginning July 1, 2016, and included in biennial reports addressing program years 2016 or later. The report must also include an estimate of the total workload, program costs, and staff time for work associated with either certification under section 401 of the federal clean water act or license implementation for federally licensed hydropower projects expected to occur in the next reporting period, or both. In addition, the report must provide sufficient information to determine that the fees charged are not for activities already performed by other state or federal agencies or tribes that have jurisdiction over a specific license requirement and that duplicative work and expense is avoided; (ii) include any recommendations based on consultation with the departments of ecology and fish and wildlife, hydropower project operators, and other interested parties; and (iii) recognize hydropower operators that exceed their environmental regulatory requirements.

(d) The fees required in (b) of this subsection expire June 30, 2029. The biennial program reports submitted by the department of ecology will serve as a record for considering the extension of the fee structure in (b) of this subsection.

(2) The following are exceptions to the fee schedule in subsection (1) of this section:



(a) For undeveloped projects, the fee shall be at one-half the rates specified for projects in operation; for projects partly developed and in operation the fees paid on that portion of any project that shall have been developed and in operation shall be the full annual license fee specified in subsection (1) of this section for projects in operation, and for the remainder of the power claimed under such project the fees shall be the same as for undeveloped projects.

(b) The fees required in subsection (1) of this section do not apply to any hydropower project owned by the United States.

(c) The fees required in subsection (1) of this section do not apply to the use of water for the generation of fifty horsepower or less.

(d) The fees required in subsection (1) of this section for projects developed by an irrigation district in conjunction with the irrigation district's water conveyance system shall be reduced by fifty percent to reflect the portion of the year when the project is not operable.

(e) Any irrigation district or other municipal subdivision of the state, developing power chiefly for use in pumping of water for irrigation, upon the filing of a statement showing the amount of power used for irrigation pumping, is exempt from the fees in subsection (1) of this section to the extent of the power used for irrigation pumping.

(3) In order to ensure accountability in the licensing, relicensing, and license implementation programs of the department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife, the departments must implement the following administrative requirements:

(a) (i) Both the department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife must be responsible for producing an annual work plan that addresses the work anticipated to be completed by each department associated with federal hydropower licensing and license implementation.

(ii) Both the department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife must assign one employee to each licensed hydropower project to act as each department's designated licensing and implementation lead for a hydropower project. The responsibility assigned by each department to hydropower project licensing and implementation leads must include resolving conflicts with the license applicant or license holder and the facilitation of department decision making related to license applications and license implementation for the particular hydropower project assigned to a licensing lead.

(b) The department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife must host an annual meeting with parties interested in or affected by hydropower project licensing and the associated fees charged under this section. The purposes of the annual meeting must include soliciting information from interested parties related to the annual hydropower work plan required by (a) of this subsection and to the biennial progress report produced pursuant to subsection (1)(c) of this section.

(c) Prior to the annual meeting required by (b) of this subsection, the department of fish and wildlife and the department of ecology must circulate a survey to hydropower licensees soliciting feedback on the responsiveness of department staff, clarity of staff roles and responsibilities in the hydropower licensing and implementation process, and other topics related to the

professionalism and expertise of department staff assigned to hydropower project licensing projects. This survey must be designed by the department of fish and wildlife and the department of ecology after consulting with hydropower licensees and the results of the survey must be included in the biennial progress report produced pursuant to subsection (1)(c) of this section. Prior to the annual meeting, the department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife must analyze the survey results. The departments must present summarized information based on their analysis of survey results at the annual meeting for purposes of discussion with hydropower project licensees. [2022 c 139 § 1; 2016 c 75 § 1; 2007 c 286 § 1; 1929 c 105 § 1; RRS § 11575-1.]

**RCW 90.16.060 Schedule of fees for claimants of water power—Statement of claim—Penalties—Excessive claim—Abandonment.** The license fee herein required shall be paid in advance to the state department of ecology and shall be accompanied by written statement, showing the extent of the claim. Said statement shall set forth the name and address of the claimant, the name of the stream from which the water is appropriated or claimed for power development, a description of the forty acres or smallest legal subdivision in which the point of diversion and point of return are located, the date of the right as claimed, the maximum amount of water claimed, expressed in cubic feet per second of time, the total average fall utilized under such claim, the manner of developing power and the use to which the power is applied. If the regular flow is supplemented by water stored in a reservoir, the location of such reservoir, its capacity in acre feet, and the stream from which it is filled and fed, should be given, also the date of the right as claimed for storage purposes.

Should any claimant fail or neglect to file such statement within the time specified, or fail or neglect to pay such fees within the time specified, the fees due and payable shall be at the schedule rates set out in RCW 90.16.050, increased twenty-five percent, and the state shall have preference lien therefor, with interest at the rate of ten percent per annum from the date of delinquency, upon the property of claimant used or necessary for use in the development of the right or claim, together with any improvements erected thereon for such development, and upon request from the director of ecology the attorney general shall proceed to foreclose the lien, and collect the amount due, as herein provided, in the same manner as other liens for general state and county taxes on real property are foreclosed.

The filing of a claim to water in excess of the amount to which the claimant is legally entitled shall not operate to vest in such claimant any right to the use of such excess water, nor shall the payment of the annual license fees, provided for herein, operate to vest in any claimant any right to the use of such water beyond the amount to which claimant is legally entitled. The filing of such claim, or claims to water shall be conclusive evidence of abandonment by the claimant of all right to water for power purposes not covered by the claim, or claims, as filed; and the failure to file statement and pay the fees, as herein required, for any power site or claim of power rights on account of riparian ownership within two years after June 12, 1929, shall be conclusive evidence of abandonment. The amount of the theoretical horsepower upon which fees shall be paid shall be computed by multiplying the maximum amount of water claimed, expressed

in cubic feet per second of time, by the average fall utilized, expressed in feet, and dividing the product by 8.8. [1988 c 127 § 78; 1929 c 105 § 2; RRS § 11575-2. Formerly RCW 90.16.060, 90.16.070 and 90.16.080.]

*Property taxes*

*lien foreclosure: Chapter 84.64 RCW.*

*lien of taxes: Chapter 84.60 RCW.*

**RCW 90.16.090 Disposition of fees.** (1) All fees paid under provisions of this chapter, shall be credited by the state treasurer to the reclamation account created in RCW 89.16.020 and subject to legislative appropriation, be allocated and expended by the director of ecology for:

(a) Investigations and surveys of natural resources in cooperation with the federal government, or independently thereof, including stream gaging, hydrographic, topographic, river, underground water, mineral and geological surveys; and

(b) Expenses associated with staff at the departments of ecology and fish and wildlife working on federal energy regulatory commission relicensing and license implementation.

(2) Unless otherwise required by the omnibus biennial appropriations acts, the expenditures for these purposes must be proportional to the revenues collected under RCW 90.16.050(1). [2007 c 286 § 2; 1988 c 127 § 79; 1973 c 106 § 39; 1939 c 209 § 1; 1929 c 105 § 3; RRS § 11575-3.]

**RCW 90.16.100 Appropriation of lands by corporations conveying water.** All corporations, authorized to do business in the state, and who have been, or may hereafter be organized, for the purpose of erecting and maintaining flumes and aqueducts to convey water for consumption or for mining, irrigation, milling or other industrial purposes, shall have the same right to appropriate lands for necessary corporate purposes, and under the same regulations and instructions as are provided for other corporations; and such corporations organized for such purposes, in order to carry out the object of their incorporation, are authorized to take and use any water not otherwise legally appropriated. [Code 1881 § 2472; 1879 p 134 § 1; RRS § 11576.]

**RCW 90.16.110 Water for use outside state.** Whenever the use of water shall be necessary for domestic, manufacturing, irrigation, or in interstate transportation at or for any incorporated or unincorporated city, town, village or hamlet situated partly in Washington and partly in an adjoining state or where any city, town, village or hamlet is incorporated on one side of the state line and there are inhabitants living in adjacent and contiguous territory on the other side, it shall be lawful for any person, association or corporation to locate, appropriate, divert and deliver any of the unappropriated public waters of this state necessary for the use of such city, town, village or hamlet and the inhabitants thereof and those residing in and embracing such contiguous territory both within this state and such adjoining state; and locations may be made and authority is hereby granted for such purpose the same as for any other

appropriation within the state and a diversion and delivery for such purpose shall have the same force and effect as if made for use wholly within this state and any appropriation, diversion or use heretofore made for such purpose shall be deemed as valid and legal as if made for a use wholly within this state and priority thereof shall date from the appropriation and diversion the same as if it had been made for use wholly within this state. [1919 c 41 § 1; RRS § 11577.]

**RCW 90.16.120 Water for use outside state—Reciprocity.** The provisions of \*this act shall not apply to any territory or the inhabitants thereof situated or located in any adjoining state which does not by its laws, usages or legal regulations grant similar or reciprocal rights, privileges and opportunities to this state and its inhabitants and adjacent and contiguous territory whether incorporated or unincorporated as in \*this act specified. [1919 c 41 § 2; RRS § 11578.]

**\*Reviser's note:** "this act" [1919 c 41], is codified in RCW 90.16.110 and 90.16.120.

**Chapter 90.22 RCW**  
**MINIMUM WATER FLOWS AND LEVELS**

**Sections**

- 90.22.010 Establishment of minimum water flows or levels—Authorized—Purposes.
- 90.22.020 Establishment of minimum water flows or levels—Hearings—Notice—Rules.
- 90.22.030 Existing water and storage rights—Right to divert or store water.
- 90.22.040 Stockwatering requirements.
- 90.22.050 Civil penalties.
- 90.22.060 Instream flow evaluations—Statewide list of priorities—Salmon impact.

**Chapter 90.22 RCW**  
**MINIMUM WATER FLOWS AND LEVELS**

**Sections**

- 90.22.010 Establishment of minimum water flows or levels—Authorized—Purposes.
- 90.22.020 Establishment of minimum water flows or levels—Hearings—Notice—Rules.
- 90.22.030 Existing water and storage rights—Right to divert or store water.
- 90.22.040 Stockwatering requirements.
- 90.22.050 Civil penalties.
- 90.22.060 Instream flow evaluations—Statewide list of priorities—Salmon impact.

**RCW 90.22.010 Establishment of minimum water flows or levels—Authorized—Purposes.** The department of ecology may establish minimum water flows or levels for streams, lakes or other public waters for the purposes of protecting fish, game, birds or other wildlife resources, or recreational or aesthetic values of said public waters whenever it appears to be in the public interest to establish the same. In addition, the department of ecology shall, when requested by the department of fish and wildlife to protect fish, game or other wildlife resources under the jurisdiction of the requesting state agency, or if the department of ecology finds it necessary to preserve water quality, establish such minimum flows or levels as are required to protect the resource or preserve the water quality described in the request or determination. Any request submitted by the department of fish and wildlife shall include a statement setting forth the need for establishing a minimum flow or level. When the department acts to preserve water quality, it shall include a similar statement with the proposed rule filed with the code reviser. This section shall not apply to waters artificially stored in reservoirs, provided that in the granting of storage permits by the department of ecology in the future, full recognition shall be given to downstream minimum flows, if any there may be, which have theretofore been established hereunder. [1997 c 32 § 4; 1994 c 264 § 86; 1988 c 47 § 6. Prior: 1987 c 506 § 96; 1987 c 109 § 103; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 3.]

**Application—1988 c 47:** See note following RCW 90.54.030.

**Legislative findings and intent—1987 c 506:** See note following RCW 77.04.020.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.22.020 Establishment of minimum water flows or levels—Hearings—Notice—Rules.** Flows or levels authorized for establishment under RCW 90.22.010, or subsequent modification thereof by the department shall be provided for through the adoption of rules. Before

the establishment or modification of a water flow or level for any stream or lake or other public water, the department shall hold a public hearing in the county in which the stream, lake, or other public water is located. If it is located in more than one county the department shall determine the location or locations therein and the number of hearings to be conducted. Notice of the hearings shall be given by publication in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties in which the stream, lake, or other public waters is located, once a week for two consecutive weeks before the hearing. The notice shall include the following:

- (1) The name of each stream, lake, or other water source under consideration;
- (2) The place and time of the hearing;
- (3) A statement that any person, including any private citizen or public official, may present his or her views either orally or in writing.

Notice of the hearing shall also be served upon the administrators of the departments of social and health services, natural resources, fish and wildlife, and transportation. [1994 c 264 § 87; 1987 c 506 § 97; 1985 c 196 § 1; 1984 c 7 § 384; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 4.]

**Legislative findings and intent—1987 c 506:** See note following RCW 77.04.020.

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.22.030 Existing water and storage rights—Right to divert or store water.** The establishment of levels and flows pursuant to RCW 90.22.010 shall in no way affect existing water and storage rights and the use thereof, including but not limited to rights relating to the operation of any hydroelectric or water storage reservoir or related facility. No right to divert or store public waters shall be granted by the department of ecology which shall conflict with regulations adopted pursuant to RCW 90.22.010 and 90.22.020 establishing flows or levels. All regulations establishing flows or levels shall be filed in a "Minimum Water Level and Flow Register" of the department of ecology. [1988 c 127 § 81; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 5.]

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.22.040 Stockwatering requirements.** It shall be the policy of the state, and the department of ecology shall be so guided in the implementation of RCW 90.22.010 and 90.22.020, to retain sufficient minimum flows or levels in streams, lakes or other public waters to provide adequate waters in such water sources to satisfy stockwatering requirements for stock on riparian grazing lands which drink directly therefrom where such retention shall not result in an unconscionable waste of public waters. The policy hereof shall not apply to stockwatering relating to feed lots and other activities which are not related to normal stockgrazing land uses. [1987 c 109 § 104; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 6.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

~~Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:~~ See note following RCW 90.48.290.

**RCW 90.22.050 Civil penalties.** See RCW 90.03.600.

**RCW 90.22.060 Instream flow evaluations—Statewide list of priorities—Salmon impact.** By December 31, 1993, the department of ecology shall, in cooperation with the Indian tribes, and the department of fish and wildlife, establish a statewide list of priorities for evaluation of instream flows. In establishing these priorities, the department shall consider the achievement of wild salmonid production as its primary goal. [1998 c 245 § 172; 1993 sp.s. c 4 § 13.]

~~Findings—Grazing lands—1993 sp.s. c 4:~~ See RCW 79.13.600.



**Chapter 90.24 RCW**  
**REGULATION OF OUTFLOW OF LAKES**

**Sections**

- 90.24.010 Petition to regulate flow—Order—Exceptions.
- 90.24.020 Contents of petition.
- 90.24.030 Title of petition—Service of petition and order—Notice.
- 90.24.040 Hearing on petition—Order—Continuing jurisdiction.
- 90.24.050 Devices to protect the fish—Cost—Special fund.
- 90.24.060 Installation of devices.
- 90.24.066 Jurisdiction over weed control.
- 90.24.070 Appellate review.

**Chapter 90.24 RCW**  
**REGULATION OF OUTFLOW OF LAKES**

**Sections**

90.24.010	Petition to regulate flow—Order—Exceptions.
90.24.020	Contents of petition.
90.24.030	Title of petition—Service of petition and order—Notice.
90.24.040	Hearing on petition—Order—Continuing jurisdiction.
90.24.050	Devices to protect the fish—Cost—Special fund.
90.24.060	Installation of devices.
90.24.066	Jurisdiction over weed control.
90.24.070	Appellate review.

**RCW 90.24.010 Petition to regulate flow—Order—Exceptions.** Ten or more owners of real property abutting on a lake may petition the superior court of the county in which the lake is situated, for an order to provide for the regulation of the outflow of the lake in order to maintain a certain water level therein. If there are fewer than ten owners, a majority of the owners abutting on a lake may petition the superior court for such an order. The court, after notice to the department of fish and wildlife and a hearing, is authorized to make an order fixing the water level thereof and directing the department of ecology to regulate the outflow therefrom in accordance with the purposes described in the petition. This section shall not apply to any lake or reservoir used for the storage of water for irrigation or other beneficial purposes, or to lakes navigable from the sea. [1999 c 162 § 1; 1985 c 398 § 28; 1959 c 258 § 1; 1939 c 107 § 2; RRS § 7388-1.]

**Effective date—1985 c 398:** "Sections 28 through 30 of this act shall take effect January 1, 1986." [1985 c 398 § 31.]

*Lake and beach management districts: Chapter 36.61 RCW.*

**RCW 90.24.020 Contents of petition.** Such petition shall contain a complete description of the property surrounding said lake with the number of front feet contained in each tract with the name of the owner thereof and his or her address together with a brief statement of the reasons and necessity for such application; that the level sought to be established will in no wise interfere with the navigability of said lake or in any manner affect or interfere with fish or game fish which may be then contained or may thereafter be deposited in said lake, but that in order to protect fish or game fish in said lake the construction of fish ladders or other devices may be required to conserve and protect such fish or game fish, then in that event the property owners to be benefited by the establishment of said water level in such lake shall be required to pay the cost thereof, in proportion to lineal feet of water front owned by each. [2013 c 23 § 609; 1939 c 107 § 3; RRS § 7388-2.]

**RCW 90.24.030 Title of petition—Service of petition and order—Notice.** The petition shall be entitled "In the matter of fixing the

level of Lake . . . . . in . . . . . county, Washington", and shall be filed with the clerk of the court and a copy thereof, together with a copy of the order fixing the time for hearing the petition, shall be served on each owner of property abutting on the lake, not less than ten days before the hearing. Like copies shall also be served upon the director of fish and wildlife and the director of ecology. The copy of the petition and of the order fixing time for hearing shall be served in the manner provided by law for the service of summons in civil actions, or in such other manner as may be prescribed by order of the court. For the benefit of every riparian owner abutting on a stream or river flowing from such lake, a copy of the notice of hearing shall be published at least once a week for two consecutive weeks before the time set for hearing in a newspaper in each county or counties wherein located, said notice to contain a brief statement of the reasons and necessity for such application. [1994 c 264 § 88; 1988 c 36 § 67; 1987 c 109 § 105; 1963 c 243 § 1; 1959 c 258 § 2; 1947 c 210 § 1; 1939 c 107 § 4; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7388-3.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.24.040 Hearing on petition—Order—Continuing jurisdiction.** At the hearing evidence shall be introduced in support of the petition and all interested parties may be heard for or against it. The court shall make findings and conclusions and enter an order granting or refusing the petition, and if the petition is granted, shall fix the water level to be maintained and direct the department of ecology to regulate and control the outflow of the lake so as to properly maintain the water level so far as practicable within maximum and minimum limits when the proper control devices are installed: PROVIDED, That the court shall have continuing jurisdiction after a petition is once granted and shall, upon subsequent petition filed and heard in accordance with the preceding sections, make such further findings and conclusions and enter such further orders as are necessary to accomplish fully the objectives sought in the initial petition: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That shall the court find any such riparian owners abutting on a stream or river flowing from such lake be adversely affected in any way by the granting of such a petition, such petition shall be refused. [1985 c 398 § 29; 1959 c 258 § 3; 1939 c 107 § 5; RRS § 7388-4.]

**Effective date—1985 c 398:** See note following RCW 90.24.010.

**RCW 90.24.050 Devices to protect the fish—Cost—Special fund.** In the event the court shall find that to protect fish and game fish in said lake that fish ladders or other devices should be constructed therein or that other construction shall be necessary in order to maintain the determined lake level, the court shall find the proper device to be constructed, the probable cost thereof and by its order and judgment shall apportion the cost thereof among the persons whose property abuts on said lake in proportion to the lineal feet of waterfront owned by each, which sum so found shall constitute a lien against said real property and shall be paid to the county treasurer

and by him or her placed in a special fund to be known as "Lake . . . . . Improvement Fund." The director of ecology shall appoint a suitable person to be compensated by the property owners to regulate the determined level as decreed by the court. [2013 c 23 § 610; 1988 c 127 § 82; 1939 c 107 § 6; RRS § 7388-5.]

**RCW 90.24.060 Installation of devices.** Such improvement or device in said lake for the protection of the fish and game fish therein shall be installed by and under the direction of the board of county commissioners of said county with the approval of the respective directors of the department of fish and wildlife and the department of ecology of the state of Washington and paid for out of the special fund provided for in RCW 90.24.050. [1994 c 264 § 89; 1988 c 36 § 68; 1987 c 109 § 106. Prior: 1939 c 107 § 7; RRS § 7388-6.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.24.066 Jurisdiction over weed control.** A superior court may continue its jurisdiction over weed control in those lakes that had been under the court's jurisdiction for such purposes prior to July 28, 1985. The continuing jurisdiction of a superior court for such weed control purposes shall be subject to the provisions of chapter 90.24 RCW in the same manner as the continuing jurisdiction of a superior court over the maintenance of lake water levels.

The superior court shall hold hearings under RCW 90.24.040 whenever subsequent petitions are filed with it concerning weed control on a lake over which it has continuing jurisdiction for weed control purposes. If the court finds that the weed control proposals are in the best interests of the abutting property owners, it shall determine what measures should be taken to accomplish these objectives, the probable annual cost thereof, and by its order apportion the cost among the persons whose property abuts on the lake in proportion to the lineal feet of waterfront owned by each, which sum shall constitute a lien against the real property. Payments of these sums shall be made to the county treasurer who shall place these payments into a special fund to be known as "Lake . . . . . weed removal fund." The court shall appoint a suitable person, to be compensated by the property owners, to undertake weed control activities as decreed by the court. [1988 c 133 § 1.]

**RCW 90.24.070 Appellate review.** Any person aggrieved by the order of judgment of the superior court may seek appellate review in the same manner as in other civil actions. [1988 c 202 § 93; 1971 c 81 § 177; 1939 c 107 § 8; RRS § 7388-7.]

~~Severability—~~**1988 c 202:** See note following RCW 2.24.050.

**Chapter 90.28 RCW**  
**MISCELLANEOUS RIGHTS AND DUTIES**

**Sections**

- 90.28.010 Right to back and hold waters over roads, streets, and alleys—Procedure.
- 90.28.020 Right to back and hold waters over roads, streets, and alleys—Relocation—Acquisition of rights—Abandonment.
- 90.28.040 Limitation on number of irrigation ditches across land.
- 90.28.160 Fencing across streams.
- 90.28.170 Dams across streams.

**Chapter 90.28 RCW**  
**MISCELLANEOUS RIGHTS AND DUTIES**

**Sections**

- 90.28.010 Right to back and hold waters over roads, streets, and alleys—Procedure.
- 90.28.020 Right to back and hold waters over roads, streets, and alleys—Relocation—Acquisition of rights—Abandonment.
- 90.28.040 Limitation on number of irrigation ditches across land.
- 90.28.160 Fencing across streams.
- 90.28.170 Dams across streams.

**RCW 90.28.010 Right to back and hold waters over roads, streets, and alleys—Procedure.** The department of transportation may, in its sole discretion, grant to any person or corporation the right, privilege, and authority to perpetually back and hold the waters of any lake, river, stream, slough, or other body of water, upon or over any state, county, or permanent highway or road, or any street or alley within the limits of any town, or any part thereof, and overflow and inundate the same whenever the director of ecology deems it necessary for the purpose of erecting, constructing, maintaining, or operating any water power plant, reservoir, or works for impounding water for power purposes, irrigation, mining, or other public use and shall so certify to the department of transportation. The decision of the department of transportation, in the absence of bad faith, arbitrary, capricious, or fraudulent action, is conclusive. But the right shall not be granted until it has been heretofore or is hereafter determined in a condemnation suit instituted by the person or corporation desiring to obtain the right or rights in the county wherein is situated that part of the road, highway, street, or alley so to be affected that the use for which the grant is sought is a public use, nor until there is filed with the clerk of the court in which the order or decree of public use was entered a bond or undertaking signed by the person or corporation seeking the grant, executed by a surety company authorized to do business in this state, conditioned to pay all costs and expenses of every kind and description connected with and incident to the relocation and reconstruction of any such highway, road, street, or alley, the same to be of substantially the same type and grade of construction as that of the highway, road, street, or alley to be overflowed or inundated, including any such relocation, reconstruction, and maintenance costs and expenses as may arise within a period of eighteen months after the new highway, road, street, or alley has been opened in its entirety to public travel, and also including any and all damages for which the state, county, city, or town may be liable because of the vacation of any such highway, road, street, or alley and the relocation thereof in the manner provided herein and to save harmless the state, county, city, or town from the payment of the same or any part thereof. The bond shall be in a penal sum of double the estimated amount of the expenses, costs, and damages referred to above. In the case of a state highway the estimate shall be made by the department of transportation. In case of a county road or permanent highway the estimate shall be made by the county legislative authority, and in the case of a street or alley of a town the estimate shall be made by the city or town council. The bond shall be approved by the department of

transportation when the road to be affected is a state highway, and in all other cases by a judge of the superior court in which the order or decree of public use was entered. In the condemnation suit the state of Washington shall be made a party defendant when the road affected is a state highway. If the road is a county road or permanent highway the county in which the road or permanent highway is situated shall be made a party defendant, and when any street or alley in any town is affected the city or town shall be made a party defendant. Any person or corporation may acquire the right to overflow as against the owner of the fee in any such highway, road, street, or alley by making the owner of the fee or of any part thereof a party defendant in the condemnation suit provided for herein or by instituting a separate condemnation suit against any such owner. The damages sustained by any such owner as a result of the overflow of any such highway, road, street, or alley shall be determined as in other condemnation cases, separate and apart from any damage sustained by the state, county, city, or town. [1994 c 81 § 87; 1984 c 7 § 385; 1929 c 154 § 1; 1927 c 202 § 1; RRS § 7354-1.]

*Eminent domain by corporations: Chapter 8.20 RCW.*

*Private ways of necessity: Chapter 8.24 RCW.*

**RCW 90.28.020 Right to back and hold waters over roads, streets, and alleys—Relocation—Acquisition of rights—Abandonment.** It shall be the duty of the department of transportation, if the road to be affected shall be a state highway, or of the county legislative authority of the county in which such road is located, if the road to be affected shall be a county road, or permanent highway, or of the council of any town in which the road is located, if the road to be affected shall be a street or alley, within thirty days after entry of said order or decree of public use and the filing of the bond mentioned in RCW 90.28.010, to enter an appropriate order or resolution directing the relocation and reestablishment and completion forthwith of such highway, road, street or alley in place of that so to be overflowed or inundated, and promptly thereafter to acquire all property and rights-of-way necessary therefor, instituting and diligently prosecuting such condemnation suits as may be necessary in order to secure such property and rights-of-way. The decision of the committee, board or council as to relocation and reestablishment set forth in such order or resolution shall be final and conclusive as to all matters and things set forth therein, including the question of public use and necessity in any and all condemnation suits to be brought under RCW 90.28.010 and 90.28.020. After the reestablishment and relocation of any such highway, road, street or alley and the construction and opening thereof in its entirety to public travel and the signing of the grant authorized in RCW 90.28.010, the state highway, county road or permanent highway, street or alley or such part thereof described in said grant shall be deemed to be abandoned and thereafter cease to be a highway, road, street or alley. [1994 c 81 § 88; 1927 c 202 § 2; RRS § 7354-2.]

*Eminent domain by corporations: Chapter 8.20 RCW.*

*Private ways of necessity: Chapter 8.24 RCW.*

**RCW 90.28.040 Limitation on number of irrigation ditches across land.** No tract or parcel of improved or occupied land in this state shall, without the written consent of the owner thereof, be subjected to the burden of two or more irrigating ditches constructed for the purpose of conveying water through said property to lands adjoining or beyond the same, when the same object can feasibly and practicably be attained by uniting and conveying all the water necessary to be conveyed through such property in one ditch. [1890 p 717 § 39; RRS § 7401.]

**RCW 90.28.160 Fencing across streams.** Owners of land or their agents shall have the right to fence across all unmeandered streams at any time when such streams are not used for a public highway, or by making a fence that will not be an obstruction. [1891 c 120 § 3; no RRS.]

**RCW 90.28.170 Dams across streams.** There is hereby granted to persons, firms and corporations organized among other things, for irrigation and power purposes, the right to construct and maintain dams and works incident thereto over, upon and across the beds of the rivers of the state of Washington in connection with such power and irrigation purposes, and there is hereby granted to such persons, firms and corporations an easement over, upon and across the beds of such rivers for such purposes. Such easement shall be limited however, to so much of the beds of such rivers as may be reasonably convenient and necessary for such uses. All such dams and works shall be completed within five years after the commencement of construction work upon the same. The rights and privileges granted by this section shall inure to the benefit of such persons, firms or corporations from the date of the commencement of construction work upon such dams and works incident thereto, and such construction work shall be diligently prosecuted to completion, and the rights, privileges and easements granted by this section shall continue so long as the same shall be utilized by the grantees for the purposes herein specified, and the failure to maintain and use such dams and works after the same shall have been constructed, for a continuous period of two years, shall operate as a forfeiture of all the rights hereby granted and the same shall revert to the state of Washington: PROVIDED, That nothing in this section shall be construed in such a way as to interfere with the use of said rivers for navigation purposes, and all of such rights, privileges and easements granted hereby shall be subject to the paramount control of such rivers for navigation purposes by the United States: AND, PROVIDED FURTHER, That the use and enjoyment of the grants and privileges of this section shall not interfere with the lawful and rightful diversion of the waters of said rivers by other parties under water appropriations in existence at the time any such persons, firms or corporations shall avail themselves of the benefits and privileges of this section, but no such persons, firms or corporations shall have any right to construct any such dams or works over, upon or across the land between ordinary high water and extreme low water of any river of this state without first having acquired the right to do so from the owner or owners of the lands adjoining the land between ordinary high water and extreme low water over or across which said dam or works are constructed. [1911 c 95 § 1; RRS § 7416.]



**Reviser's note:** For later enactment, see chapter 90.03 RCW.

*Height of dams on tributaries of Columbia river: Chapter 77.55 RCW.*

**Chapter 90.36 RCW**  
**ARTESIAN WELLS**

**Sections**

- 90.36.010 Right-of-way to wells.
- 90.36.020 Flow limited during certain period—Exceptions.
- 90.36.030 Capping well—Exceptions.
- 90.36.040 Right of neighboring owner to cap well—Lien.
- 90.36.050 Penalty—1901 c 121.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**Chapter 90.36 RCW  
ARTESIAN WELLS**

**Sections**

- 90.36.010 Right-of-way to wells.
- 90.36.020 Flow limited during certain period—Exceptions.
- 90.36.030 Capping well—Exceptions.
- 90.36.040 Right of neighboring owner to cap well—Lien.
- 90.36.050 Penalty—1901 c 121.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**RCW 90.36.010 Right-of-way to wells.** Any person who may be entitled to water from any artesian well shall have the right to condemn the right-of-way for a ditch to convey such water for the purpose of irrigation over the lands intervening between such well and the place where the party owning such water wishes to use the same, and such right-of-way may be condemned sufficient for the purposes of conveying the water, together with the right of ingress and egress, to construct, maintain and repair said ditch, \*as is hereinafter provided for in this act. [1890 p 711 § 18; RRS § 7403.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The language "as is hereinafter provided for in this act" refers to 1889-90 pp 706-728 §§ 1-67 which has since been repealed with the exception of those sections now codified as RCW 90.28.030 and 90.28.040. Compare the provisions of later enactment in chapter 90.03 RCW.

**RCW 90.36.020 Flow limited during certain period—Exceptions.** It shall be unlawful for any person, firm, corporation or company having possession or control of any artesian well within the state, whether as contractor, owner, lessee, agent or manager, to allow or permit water to flow or escape from such well between the fifteenth day of October in any year and the fifteenth day of March next ensuing; PROVIDED, That \*this act shall only apply to sections and communities wherein the use of water for the purpose of irrigation is necessary or customary; and PROVIDED FURTHER, That nothing herein contained shall prevent or prohibit the use of water from any such well between said fifteenth day of October and the fifteenth day of March next ensuing, for household, stock and domestic purposes only, water for said last named purposes to be taken from such well through a three-quarters inch stop and waste cock to be inserted in the piping of such well for that purpose. [1929 c 138 § 1; 1901 c 121 § 1; RRS § 7404.]

**\*Reviser's note:** "this act" refers to 1901 c 121 codified in RCW 90.36.020 through 90.36.050.

**RCW 90.36.030 Capping well—Exceptions.** It shall be the duty of every person, firm, corporation or company having possession or control of any artesian well, as provided in RCW 90.36.020, to securely cap the same over on or before the fifteenth day of October in each and every year in such manner as to prevent the flow or escape of water therefrom, and to keep the same securely capped and prevent

the flow or escape of water therefrom until the fifteenth day of March next ensuing; PROVIDED, HOWEVER, It shall and may be lawful for any such person, firm, corporation or company to insert a three-quarters inch stop and waste cock in the piping of such well, and to take and use water therefrom through such stop and waste cock at any time for household, stock, or domestic purposes, but not otherwise. [1929 c 138 § 2; 1901 c 121 § 2; RRS § 7405.]

**RCW 90.36.040 Right of neighboring owner to cap well—Lien.**

Whenever any person, firm, corporation or company in possession or control of an artesian well shall fail to comply with the provisions of \*this act, any person, firm, corporation or company lawfully in the possession of land situate adjacent to or in the vicinity or neighborhood of such well and within five miles thereof may enter upon the land upon which such well is situate, and take possession of such from which water is allowed to flow or escape in violation of the provisions of RCW 90.36.020, and cap such well and shut in and secure the flow or escape of water therefrom, and the necessary expenses incurred in so doing shall constitute a lien upon said well, and a sufficient quantity of land surrounding the same for the convenient use and operation thereof, which lien may be foreclosed in a civil action in any court of competent jurisdiction, and the court in any such case shall allow the plaintiff a reasonable attorney's fee to be taxed as a part of the cost. This shall be in addition to the penalty provided for in RCW 90.36.050. [1901 c 121 § 4; RRS § 7407.]

**\*Reviser's note:** "this act," see note following RCW 90.36.020.

**RCW 90.36.050 Penalty—1901 c 121.** Any person whether as owner, lessee, agent or manager having possession or control of any such well, violating the provisions of \*this act shall be deemed guilty of a misdemeanor and upon conviction thereof, shall be fined in any sum not exceeding two hundred dollars for each and every such offense, and the further sum of two hundred dollars for each ten days during which such violation shall continue. [1901 c 121 § 3; RRS § 7406.]

**\*Reviser's note:** "this act," see note following RCW 90.36.020.

**Chapter 90.38 RCW**  
**YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER RIGHTS**

**Sections**

- 90.38.005 Findings—Purpose.
- 90.38.010 Definitions.
- 90.38.020 Acquisition or donation of trust water rights.
- 90.38.030 Water conservation projects—Contracts for financial assistance.
- 90.38.040 Trust water rights program.
- 90.38.050 Rules.
- 90.38.060 Integrated water resource management plan.
- 90.38.070 Yakima integrated plan implementation account.
- 90.38.080 Yakima integrated plan implementation taxable bond account.
- 90.38.090 Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account.
- 90.38.100 Report to the legislature and governor.
- 90.38.110 Construction of a water supply project—Prior review by the state of Washington water research center.
- 90.38.120 Legislative intent—Cost to implement the integrated plan.
- 90.38.130 Authorization to purchase land—Management and disposal of land.
- 90.38.900 Existing policies not replaced.
- 90.38.901 Transfer of rights between irrigation districts not intended.
- 90.38.902 Existing rights not impaired.

**Chapter 90.38 RCW**  
**YAKIMA RIVER BASIN WATER RIGHTS**

**Sections**

- 90.38.005 Findings—Purpose.
- 90.38.010 Definitions.
- 90.38.020 Acquisition or donation of trust water rights.
- 90.38.030 Water conservation projects—Contracts for financial assistance.
- 90.38.040 Trust water rights program.
- 90.38.050 Rules.
- 90.38.060 Integrated water resource management plan.
- 90.38.070 Yakima integrated plan implementation account.
- 90.38.080 Yakima integrated plan implementation taxable bond account.
- 90.38.090 Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account.
- 90.38.100 Report to the legislature and governor.
- 90.38.110 Construction of a water supply project—Prior review by the state of Washington water research center.
- 90.38.120 Legislative intent—Cost to implement the integrated plan.
- 90.38.130 Authorization to purchase land—Management and disposal of land.
- 90.38.900 Existing policies not replaced.
- 90.38.901 Transfer of rights between irrigation districts not intended.
- 90.38.902 Existing rights not impaired.

**RCW 90.38.005 Findings—Purpose.** (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Under present physical conditions in the Yakima river basin there is an insufficient supply of ground and surface water to satisfy the present needs of the basin, and that the general health, welfare, and safety of the people of the Yakima river basin depend upon the conservation, management, development, and optimum use of all the basin's water resources;

(b) The future competition for water among municipal, domestic, industrial, agricultural, and instream water interests in the Yakima river basin will be intensified by continued population growth, and by changes in climate and precipitation anticipated to reduce the basin's snow pack and thereby reduce the total water supply available to existing water users, instream flows, and carryover storage;

(c) To address the challenges described in this subsection, congress has enacted several bills to promote Yakima river basin water enhancement, each of which was urged for enactment by this state, the United States has completed a study of ways to provide needed waters through improvements of the federal water project presently existing in the Yakima river basin, and federal, tribal, state, and local cooperators have developed an integrated water resource management plan for improving water supply, habitat, and streamflow conditions in the Yakima river basin;

(d) As part of the Yakima river basin water enhancement project, the United States department of the interior's bureau of reclamation is now seeking funding to support implementation of the integrated water resource management plan for the Yakima river basin, which was

jointly prepared by the Washington state department of ecology and the United States bureau of reclamation and published in a final programmatic environmental impact statement in March 2012;

(e) The interests of the state will be served by developing programs, in cooperation with the United States and the various water users in the basin, that increase the overall ability to manage basin waters in order to better satisfy both present and future needs for water in the Yakima river basin;

(f) The interests of the state will also be served through coordination of federal and state policies and procedures in order to develop and implement projects within the framework of the integrated water resource management plan for the Yakima river basin. The pace of integrated plan implementation over the long term depends upon adequate funding and is subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this purpose;

(g) The current real estate market provides opportunities to acquire community forestlands that are useful for protecting and enhancing watershed function at affordable prices;

(h) Although significant benefits are anticipated to result from the implementation of the Yakima integrated plan, in light of its substantial costs and the state's limited capacity to absorb them within existing resources, there is a need to identify and evaluate potential new state and local revenue sources to assist in paying the state and local share of implementation costs.

(2) It is the purpose of this chapter, consistent with these findings, to:

(a) Improve the ability of the state to work with the United States and various water users of the Yakima river basin in a program designed to satisfy both existing rights, and other presently unmet as well as future needs of the basin;

(b) Establish legislative intent to promote timely and effective implementation of the integrated plan in the Yakima river basin, and to promote the aggressive pursuit of water supply solutions that provide concurrent benefits to both instream and out-of-stream uses in the Yakima river basin as rapidly as possible; and

(c) Take advantage of affordable real estate prices to acquire community forestlands that are useful for protecting and enhancing watershed function.

(3) The provisions of this chapter apply only to waters of the Yakima river basin. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 1; 1989 c 429 § 1.]

**RCW 90.38.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(2) "Integrated plan" means the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan developed through a consensus-based approach by a diverse work group of representatives of the Yakama Nation, federal, state, county, and city governments, environmental organizations, and irrigation districts, which is to be implemented consistent with congressional Yakima river basin water enhancement project enactments and for which the final programmatic environmental impact statement was made available for review through public notice published in the federal register (77 FR 12076 (2012)).

(3) "Net water savings" means the amount of water that through hydrological analysis is determined to be conserved and usable for

other purposes without impairing existing water rights, reducing the ability to deliver water, or reducing the supply of water that otherwise would have been available to other water users.

(4) "Trust water right" means that portion of an existing water right, constituting net water savings, that is no longer required to be diverted for beneficial use due to the installation of a water conservation project that improves an existing system. The term "trust water right" also applies to any other water right acquired by the department under this chapter for management in the Yakima river basin trust water rights program.

(5) "Water conservation project" means any project funded to further the purposes of this chapter and that achieves physical or operational improvements of efficiency in existing systems for diversion, conveyance, or application of water under existing water rights.

(6) "Water supply facility permit and funding milestone" means a date prior to June 30, 2025, when required permits have been approved, and funding has been secured to begin construction on one or more water supply facilities designed to provide at least two hundred fourteen thousand acre feet of water to be used for instream and out-of-stream uses.

(7) "Yakima river basin water enhancement project" means a series of congressional enactments, originally initiated by the United States congress in 1979 under P.L. 96-162, with subsequent federal implementing legislation being passed in 1984 under section 109 of P.L. 98-381 to promote fish passage improvements, and in 1994 under P.L. 103-434, as amended by P.L. 105-62 in 1997 and P.L. 106-372 in 2000, to promote water conservation, water supply, habitat, and stream enhancement improvements in the Yakima river basin. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 2; 1989 c 429 § 2.]

#### **RCW 90.38.020 Acquisition or donation of trust water rights.**

(1) (a) The department may acquire water rights, including but not limited to storage rights, by purchase, lease, gift, or other appropriate means other than by condemnation, from any person or entity or combination of persons or entities. Once acquired, such rights are trust water rights. A water right acquired by the state that is expressly conditioned to limit its use to instream purposes shall be administered as a trust water right in compliance with that condition.

(b) If the holder of a right to water from a body of water chooses to donate all or a portion of the person's water right to the trust water system to assist in providing instream flows on a temporary or permanent basis, the department shall accept the donation on such terms as the person may prescribe as long as the donation satisfies the requirements of subsection (4) of this section and the other applicable requirements of this chapter and the terms prescribed are relevant and material to protecting any interest in the water right retained by the donor. Once accepted, such rights are trust water rights within the conditions prescribed by the donor.

(2) The department may make such other arrangements, including entry into contracts with other persons or entities as appropriate to ensure that trust water rights acquired in accordance with this chapter can be exercised to the fullest possible extent.

(3) The trust water rights may be acquired on a temporary or permanent basis.



(4) A water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section shall not exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the donation nor may the total of any portion of the water right remaining with the donor plus the donated portion of the water right exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the donation. A water right holder who believes his or her water right has been impaired by a trust water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section may request that the department review the impairment claim. If the department determines that exercising the trust water right resulting from the donation or exercising a portion of that trust water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section is impairing existing water rights in violation of RCW 90.38.902, the trust water right shall be altered by the department to eliminate the impairment. Any decision of the department to alter or not alter a trust water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section is appealable to the pollution control hearings board under RCW 43.21B.230. A donated water right's status as a trust water right under this subsection is not evidence of the validity or quantity of the water right.

(5) Any water right conveyed to the trust water right system as a gift that is expressly conditioned to limit its use to instream purposes shall be managed by the department for public purposes to ensure that it qualifies as a gift that is deductible for federal income taxation purposes for the person or entity conveying the water right.

(6) If the department acquires a trust water right by lease, the amount of the trust water right shall not exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the acquisition was made nor may the total of any portion of the water right remaining with the original water right holder plus the portion of the water right leased by the department exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the acquisition. A water right holder who believes his or her water right has been impaired by a trust water right leased under this subsection may request that the department review the impairment claim. If the department determines that exercising the trust water right resulting from the leasing or exercising of a portion of that trust water right leased under this subsection is impairing existing water rights in violation of RCW 90.38.902, the trust water right shall be altered by the department to eliminate the impairment. Any decision of the department to alter or not to alter a trust water right leased under this subsection is appealable to the pollution control hearings board under RCW 43.21B.230. The department's leasing of a trust water right under this subsection is not evidence of the validity or quantity of the water right.

(7) For a water right donated to or acquired by the trust water rights program on a temporary basis, the full quantity of water diverted or withdrawn to exercise the right before the donation or acquisition shall be placed in the trust water rights program and shall revert to the donor or person from whom it was acquired when the trust period ends. [2002 c 329 § 7; 2001 c 237 § 28; 1989 c 429 § 3.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.38.030 Water conservation projects—Contracts for financial assistance.** (1) For the purposes of this chapter, the department is authorized to enter into contracts with water users for the purpose of providing moneys to users to assist in the financing of water conservation projects. In exchange for the financial assistance provided for the purposes of this chapter, the water users shall convey the trust water rights, created as a result of the assistance, to the department of ecology.

(2) No contract shall be entered into by the department with a water user under this chapter unless it appears to the department that, upon the completion of a water conservation project financed with moneys as provided in this section, a valid water right exists for conveyance to the department.

(3) The department shall cooperate fully with the United States in the implementation of this chapter. Trust water rights may be acquired through expenditure of funds provided by the United States and shall be treated in the same manner as trust water rights resulting from the expenditure of state funds.

(4) When water is proposed to be acquired by or conveyed to the department as a trust water right by an irrigation district, evidence of the district's authority to represent the water right holders must be submitted to, and for the satisfaction of, the department.

(5) The department shall not acquire an individual's water right under this chapter that is appurtenant to land lying within an irrigation district without the approval of the board of directors of the irrigation district. [1989 c 429 § 4.]

**RCW 90.38.040 Trust water rights program.** (1) All trust water rights acquired by the department shall be placed in the Yakima river basin trust water rights program to be managed by the department. The department shall issue a water right certificate in the name of the state of Washington for each trust water right it acquires.

(2) Trust water rights shall retain the same priority date as the water right from which they originated. Trust water rights may be modified as to purpose or place of use or point of diversion, including modification from a diversionary use to a nondiversionary instream use.

(3) Trust water rights may be held by the department for instream flows, irrigation use, or other beneficial use. Trust water rights may be acquired on a temporary or permanent basis. To the extent practicable and subject to legislative appropriation, trust water rights acquired in an area with an approved watershed plan developed under chapter 90.82 RCW shall be consistent with that plan if the plan calls for such acquisition.

(4) A schedule of the amount of net water saved as a result of water conservation projects carried out in accordance with this chapter, shall be developed annually to reflect the predicted hydrologic and water supply conditions, as well as anticipated water demands, for the upcoming irrigation season. This schedule shall serve as the basis for the distribution and management of trust water rights each year.

(5) (a) No exercise of a trust water right may be authorized unless the department first determines that no existing water rights, junior or senior in priority, will be impaired as to their exercise or injured in any manner whatever by such authorization.

(b) Before any trust water right is exercised, the department shall publish notice thereof in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county or counties in which the storage, diversion, and use are to be made, and in such other newspapers as the department determines are necessary, once a week for two consecutive weeks. At the same time the department may also send notice thereof containing pertinent information to the director of fish and wildlife.

(c) Subsections (4) and (5)(b) of this section do not apply to a trust water right resulting from a donation for instream flows described in RCW 90.38.020(1)(b) or from the lease of a water right under RCW 90.38.020(6) if the period of the lease does not exceed five years. However, the department shall provide the notice described in (b) of this subsection the first time the trust water right resulting from the donation is exercised.

(6) RCW 90.03.380 and 90.14.140 through 90.14.910 shall have no applicability to trust water rights held by the department under this chapter or exercised under this section. [2001 c 237 § 29; 1994 c 264 § 90; 1989 c 429 § 5.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.38.050 Rules.** The department may adopt rules as appropriate to ensure full implementation of this chapter. [1989 c 429 § 6.]

**RCW 90.38.060 Integrated water resource management plan.** The department is authorized to implement the integrated water resource management plan in the Yakima river basin, through a coordinated effort of affected federal, state, and local agencies and resources, to develop water supply solutions that provide concurrent benefits to both instream and out-of-stream uses, and to address a variety of water resource and ecosystem problems affecting fish passage, habitat functions, and agricultural, municipal, and domestic water supply in the Yakima river basin, consistent with the integrated plan.

(1) Authorized department actions include, but are not limited to:

(a) Accepting funds from any entity, public or private, as necessary to implement the objectives of this chapter;

(b) Assessing, planning, and developing projects under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan, or for any other action designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Yakima river basin, consistent with the integrated plan and including but not limited to: Enhanced water conservation and efficiency measures, water reallocation markets, in-basin surface and groundwater storage facilities, fish passage at existing in-basin reservoirs, structural and operational modifications to existing facilities, habitat protection and restoration, and general watershed enhancements as necessary to implement the objectives of this chapter and the integrated plan; and

(c) Entering into contracts to ensure the effective delivery of water and to provide for the design and construction of facilities

necessary to implement the objectives of the integrated plan and this chapter.

(2) Consistent with the integrated plan, the goals and objectives of department actions authorized under this chapter include, but are not limited to:

(a) Protection, mitigation, and enhancement of fish and wildlife through improved water management; improved instream flows; improved water quality; protection, creation, and enhancement of wetlands; improved fish passage, and by other appropriate means of habitat improvement, including the protection and enhancement of natural wetlands, floodplains, and groundwater storage systems;

(b) Improved water availability and reliability, and improved efficiency of water delivery and use, to enhance basin water supplies for agricultural irrigation, municipal, commercial, industrial, domestic, and environmental water uses;

(c) Establishment of more efficient water markets and more effective operational and structural changes to manage variability of water supplies and to prepare for the uncertainties of climate change, including but not limited to the facilitation of water banking, water right transfers, dry year options, the voluntary sale and lease of land, water, or water rights from any entity or individual willing to limit or forego water use on a temporary or permanent basis, and any other innovative water allocation tools used to maximize the utility of existing Yakima river basin water supplies, as long as the establishment and use of these tools is consistent with the integrated plan.

(3) Water supplies secured through the development of new storage facilities or expansion of existing storage facilities made possible with funding from the Yakima integrated plan implementation account, the Yakima integrated plan implementation taxable bond account, and the Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account must be allocated for out-of-stream uses and to augment instream flows consistent with the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan. Water to be made available to benefit out-of-stream uses under this subsection, but not yet appropriated, must be temporarily available to augment instream flows to the extent that it does not impair existing water rights and is consistent with the integrated plan. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 3.]

**RCW 90.38.070 Yakima integrated plan implementation account.**

(1) The Yakima integrated plan implementation account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature, moneys directed to the account pursuant to this chapter, or moneys directed to the account from any other sources must be deposited in the account. The account is intended to fund projects using tax exempt bonds. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided in this section. Interest earned by deposits in the account will be retained in the account.

(2) Expenditures from the account created in this section may be used to assess, plan, and develop projects under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan or for any other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Yakima river basin for both instream and out-of-stream uses, consistent with the integrated plan and the authorities, goals, and objectives set forth in RCW 90.38.060.

(3) (a) Funds may not be expended from the account for the construction of a new storage facility until the department evaluates the following:

(i) Water uses to be served by the facility;

(ii) The quantity of water necessary to meet the needs of those uses;

(iii) The benefits and costs to the state of serving those uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural, and environmental effects; and

(iv) Alternative means of supplying water to meet those uses, including the costs of those alternatives and an analysis of the extent to which the long-term water supply needs are able to be met using those alternatives.

(b) The department may rely on studies and information developed through compliance with other state and federal requirements and other sources. The department shall compile its findings and conclusions and provide a summary of the information it reviewed.

(c) Before finalizing its evaluation under the provisions of this subsection, the department shall make the preliminary evaluation available to the public. Public comment may be made to the department within thirty days of the date the preliminary evaluation is made public.

(4) For water supplies developed under the integrated plan to support future municipal and domestic water needs, the department shall give preference to other entities in managing water service contracts. Where the department determines that the management of such contracts by other entities is not feasible or suitable, the department may enter into water service contracts with applicants receiving water from the program to recover all or a portion of the cost of developing water supplies made possible with funding from the account created in this section. The department may deny an application if the applicant does not enter into a water service contract. Revenue collected from water service contracts must be deposited into the Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account created in RCW 90.38.090. The department may adopt rules describing the methodology as to how charges will be established and direct costs recovered for water supply developed under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan implementation program. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 4.]

**RCW 90.38.080 Yakima integrated plan implementation taxable bond account.**

(1) The Yakima integrated plan implementation taxable bond account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature, moneys directed to the account pursuant to this chapter, or moneys directed to the account from any other sources must be deposited in the account. The account is intended to fund projects using taxable bonds. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided in this section. Interest earned by deposits in the account will be retained in the account.

(2) Expenditures from the account created in this section may be used to assess, plan, and develop projects under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan or for any other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Yakima river basin for both instream and out-of-stream uses,

consistent with the integrated plan and the authorities, goals, and objectives set forth in RCW 90.38.060.

(3) (a) Funds may not be expended from the account for the construction of a new storage facility until the department evaluates the following:

(i) Water uses to be served by the facility;

(ii) The quantity of water necessary to meet the needs of those uses;

(iii) The benefits and costs to the state of serving those uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural, and environmental effects; and

(iv) Alternative means of supplying water to meet those uses, including the costs of those alternatives and an analysis of the extent to which the long-term water supply needs are able to be met using those alternatives.

(b) The department may rely on studies and information developed through compliance with other state and federal requirements and other sources. The department shall compile its findings and conclusions and provide a summary of the information it reviewed.

(c) Before finalizing its evaluation under the provisions of this subsection, the department shall make the preliminary evaluation available to the public. Public comment may be made to the department within thirty days of the date the preliminary evaluation is made public.

(4) For water supplies developed under the integrated plan to support future municipal and domestic water needs, the department shall give preference to other entities in managing water service contracts. Where the department determines that the management of such contracts by other entities is not feasible or suitable, the department may enter into water service contracts with applicants receiving water from the program to recover all or a portion of the cost of developing water supplies made possible with funding from the account created in this section. The department may deny an application if the applicant does not enter into a water service contract. Revenue collected from water service contracts must be deposited into the Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account created in RCW 90.38.090. The department may adopt rules describing the methodology as to how charges will be established and direct costs recovered for water supply developed under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan implementation program. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 5.]

**RCW 90.38.090 Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account.**

(1) The Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature, moneys directed to the account pursuant to this chapter, or moneys directed to the account from any other sources must be deposited in the account. The account is intended to fund projects using revenues from water service contracts as authorized in this chapter. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided in this section. Interest earned by deposits in the account will be retained in the account.

(2) Expenditures from the account created in this section may be used to assess, plan, and develop projects under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan or for any other

actions designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Yakima river basin for both instream and out-of-stream uses, consistent with the integrated plan and the authorities, goals, and objectives set forth in RCW 90.38.060.

(3) (a) Funds may not be expended from the account for the construction of a new storage facility until the department evaluates the following:

(i) Water uses to be served by the facility;

(ii) The quantity of water necessary to meet the needs of those uses;

(iii) The benefits and costs to the state of serving those uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural, and environmental effects; and

(iv) Alternative means of supplying water to meet those uses, including the costs of those alternatives and an analysis of the extent to which the long-term water supply needs are able to be met using those alternatives.

(b) The department may rely on studies and information developed through compliance with other state and federal requirements and other sources. The department shall compile its findings and conclusions and provide a summary of the information it reviewed.

(c) Before finalizing its evaluation under the provisions of this subsection, the department shall make the preliminary evaluation available to the public. Public comment may be made to the department within thirty days of the date the preliminary evaluation is made public.

(4) For water supplies developed under the integrated plan to support future municipal and domestic water needs in the Yakima basin, the department shall give preference to other entities in managing water service contracts. Where the department determines that the management of such contracts by other entities is not feasible or suitable, the department may enter into water service contracts with applicants receiving water from the program to recover all or a portion of the cost of developing water supplies made possible with funding from the account created in this section. The department may deny an application if the applicant does not enter into a water service contract. Revenue collected from water service contracts must be deposited into the Yakima integrated plan implementation revenue recovery account created in this section. The department may adopt rules describing the methodology as to how charges will be established and direct costs recovered for water supply developed under the Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan implementation program. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 6.]

**RCW 90.38.100 Report to the legislature and governor. (Expires December 31, 2045.)** (1) By December 1, 2015, and by December 1st of every odd-numbered year thereafter, and in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, the department, in consultation with the United States bureau of reclamation, the Yakama Nation, Yakima river basin local governments, and key basin stakeholders, shall provide a Yakima river basin integrated water resource management plan implementation status report to the legislature and to the governor that includes: A description of measures that have been funded and implemented in the Yakima river basin and their effectiveness in meeting the objectives of chapter 11, Laws of 2013 2nd sp. sess., a project funding list that represents the state's percentage cost share to implement the

integrated plan measures for the current biennium and cost estimates for subsequent biennia, a description of progress toward concurrent realization of the integrated plan's fish passage, watershed enhancement, and water supply goals, and an annual summary of all associated costs to develop and implement projects within the framework of the integrated water resource management plan for the Yakima river basin.

(2) The status report required in this section for December 1, 2021, must include a statement of progress in achieving the water supply facility permit and funding milestone, as defined in RCW 90.38.010. If, after a good faith effort to achieve the water supply facility permit and funding milestone, it appears that the milestone cannot or may not be met, the department, in consultation with the United States bureau of reclamation, the Yakama Nation, Yakima river basin local governments, and key basin stakeholders, shall provide a detailed description of the impediments to achieving the milestone, describe the strategy for resolving the identified impediments, and, if necessary, recommend modifications to the milestone.

(3) This section expires December 31, 2045. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 9.]

**RCW 90.38.110 Construction of a water supply project—Prior review by the state of Washington water research center. (Expires July 1, 2025.)**

(1) Prior to the appropriation of funding for the construction of a water supply project proposed in the integrated plan with a cost of greater than one hundred million dollars, the state of Washington water research center shall review, evaluate, and prepare comments on the cost-benefit analysis prepared for the project by the department and the United States bureau of reclamation.

(2) To the greatest extent possible, the center must use information from existing studies, supplemented by primary research, to measure and evaluate each project's benefits and costs.

(3) The center must measure and report the economic benefits of each project subject to subsection (1) of this section, so that it is clear the extent to which an individual project is expected to result in increases in fish populations, increases in the reliability of irrigation water during severe drought years, and improvements in municipal and domestic water supply.

(4) The center may enter into agreements with other state universities and with private consultants as needed to accomplish the scope of work.

(5) The center may consult, as necessary, with the department of ecology and the Yakima river basin water enhancement project work group.

(6) No more than twelve percent of any appropriations provided for the implementation of this section may be retained for administrative overhead expenses.

(7) This section expires July 1, 2025. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 10.]

**RCW 90.38.120 Legislative intent—Cost to implement the integrated plan.** (1)(a) It is the intent of the legislature for the state to pay its fair share of the cost to implement the integrated plan. At least one-half of the total costs to finance the



implementation of the integrated plan must be funded through federal, private, and other nonstate sources, including a significant contribution of funding from local project beneficiaries. This section applies to the total costs of the integrated plan and not to individual projects within the plan.

(b) The state's continuing support for the integrated plan shall be formally reevaluated independently by the governor and the legislature if, after December 31, 2021, and periodically thereafter, the actual funding provided through nonstate sources is less than one-half of all costs and if funding from local project beneficiaries does not comprise a significant portion of the nonstate sources.

(2) The department shall deliver, consistent with the intent of this section, a cost estimate and financing plan that addresses the total estimated cost to implement the integrated plan and analyzes various financing options. The cost estimate and financing plan must include a description of state expenditures as of September 28, 2013, incurred implementing the integrated plan and proposed state expenditures in the 2015-2017 biennium and beyond with proposed financing sources for each project.

(3) In addition, the office of the state treasurer shall prepare supplementary chapters to the cost estimate and financing plan for the department that:

(a) Identifies and evaluates potential new state financing sources to pay for the state's contribution towards the overall costs of the Yakima integrated plan's implementation;

(b) Identifies and evaluates potential new local financing sources to pay for a significant local contribution towards the overall costs of the Yakima integrated plan's implementation;

(c) Considers the viability, and evaluates the advantages and disadvantages of various financing mechanisms such as revenue bonds, general obligation bonds, and other financing models;

(d) Identifies past, current, and anticipated future costs that will be, or are anticipated to be, paid by nonstate sources such as federal sources, private sources, and local sources; and

(e) Considers how cost overruns of projects associated with the integrated plan could affect long-term financing of the overall integrated plan and provides options for how cost overruns can be addressed.

(4) The department may, in the sole discretion of the department, contract with state universities or private consultants for any part of the cost estimate and financing plan required under this section.

(5) The initial cost estimate and financing plan required by this section must be provided to the governor and the legislature, consistent with RCW 43.01.036, by no later than December 15, 2014, for consideration in preparing the 2015-2017 biennial budget and future budgets. The cost estimate and financing plan must be updated by September 1st of each successive even-numbered year. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 11.]

**RCW 90.38.130 Authorization to purchase land—Management and disposal of land.** (1) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of natural resources is authorized to purchase land to be held in the community forest trust under RCW 79.155.040 to serve the purposes of the community forest trust including the protection of Yakima river basin

functioning, without complying with the requirements of RCW 79.155.030(1), 79.155.060, or 79.155.070, relating to the identification, prioritization, local commitment, and financial contribution normally prerequisite to nominating and acquiring community forest trust lands. The purchase must be reviewed and approved by the board of natural resources. In its evaluation of this acquisition pursuant to RCW 79.155.040(3), the board is relieved from considering the criteria for identifying and prioritizing land set forth in RCW 79.155.050. Once purchased, the land must be managed by the department of natural resources in consultation with the department of fish and wildlife. Any investment in the land purchase with funds belonging to the common school trust constitutes a loan from the irreducible principal of the common school trust and may only be made if first determined to be a prudent investment by the board of natural resources. An annual interest payment on the loan of nine percent must be paid, with six percent deposited into the common school construction account and three percent deposited into the real property replacement account. Interest begins to accrue on the date the land purchase is completed and is due and payable July 1st following the completion of the state fiscal year. The principal of the loan must be repaid in accordance with the provisions of subsection (3) of this section.

(2) The land purchased under this authority must be managed under a transitional postacquisition management plan during the period between the date of purchase and the water supply facility permit and funding milestone or until June 30, 2025, whichever is sooner. The plan must be consistent with RCW 79.155.080(1), provided that the lands acquired as community forest trust lands are not required to generate financial support for their management as would otherwise be required by RCW 79.155.020(2), 79.155.030(2)(d), and 79.155.080(3), and provided further that the authority granted to the department to divest of the property under RCW 79.155.080(4) does not apply to these lands. The department of natural resources must develop the transitional postacquisition management plan in consultation with the department of fish and wildlife.

(a) The plan must ensure that the land is managed in a manner that is consistent with the Yakima basin integrated plan principles for forestland acquisitions, including the following:

(i) To protect and enhance the water supply and protect the watershed;

(ii) To maintain working lands for forestry and grazing while protecting key watershed functions and aquatic habitat;

(iii) To maintain and where possible expand recreational opportunities consistent with watershed protection, for activities such as hiking, fishing, hunting, horseback riding, camping, birding, and snowmobiling;

(iv) To conserve and restore vital habitat for fish, including steelhead, spring chinook, and bull trout, and wildlife, including deer, elk, large predators, and spotted owls; and

(v) To support a strong community partnership, in which the Yakama Nation, residents, business owners, local governments, conservation groups, and others provide advice about ongoing land management.

(b) The department of natural resources, in consultation with the department of fish and wildlife, must establish the Teanaway community forest advisory committee that includes representatives from the department of ecology, the local community, land conservation

organizations, the Yakama Nation, the Kittitas county commission, and local agricultural interests.

(c) By June 30, 2015, the department of natural resources must complete the transitional postacquisition management plan with a public process that involves interested stakeholders, particularly residents from Kittitas county, friends of the Teanaway, back country horsemen, off-road vehicle and snowmobile users, a representative from Kittitas field and stream, hikers and wildlife watchers, and ranchers who graze cattle.

(3) After the water supply facility permit and funding milestone or June 30, 2025, whichever is sooner, the land must be disposed of in the following manner:

(a) If the water supply facility permit and funding milestone conditions have been met, the land remains in the community forest trust and the transitional postacquisition management plan must be converted to a permanent postacquisition management plan with whatever updates and amendments are periodically adopted. Under these conditions, the remaining principal of any investment in the land purchased with funds belonging to the common school trust must be repaid to the real property replacement account.

(b) If the water supply facility permit and funding milestone conditions have not been met, the board of natural resources must decide between the following dispositions of the land:

(i) Deposit of the entire amount of land purchased into the ownership of the common school trust for management or disposition for the benefit of the common schools; or

(ii) Disposition under the terms of (a) of this subsection.

[2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 12.]

**RCW 90.38.900 Existing policies not replaced.** The policies and purposes of this chapter shall not be construed as replacing or amending the policies or the purposes for which funds available under chapter 43.83B RCW, RCW 43.83.340 or chapter 90.90 RCW may be used within or without the Yakima river basin. [2015 1st sp.s. c 4 § 54; 2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 7; 1989 c 429 § 7.]

**RCW 90.38.901 Transfer of rights between irrigation districts not intended.** It is not the intent of this chapter to facilitate the transfer of water rights from one irrigation district to another. [1989 c 429 § 8.]

**RCW 90.38.902 Existing rights not impaired.** (1) Nothing in this chapter shall authorize the impairment of, or operate to impair, any existing water rights.

(2) Nothing in this chapter may be construed to limit, impair, waive, abrogate, or diminish:

(a) Any treaty or other rights of the Yakama Nation;

(b) Any powers, rights, or authorities conferred upon irrigation districts under existing law;

(c) Any rights or jurisdictions of the United States, the state of Washington, or other person or entity over waters in the Yakima river basin. [2013 2nd sp.s. c 11 § 8; 1989 c 429 § 9.]

**Chapter 90.40 RCW**  
**WATER RIGHTS OF UNITED STATES**

**Sections**

- 90.40.010 Eminent domain by the United States.
- 90.40.020 Right to use water courses.
- 90.40.030 Notice and certificate, effect of.
- 90.40.040 Appropriation of water—Title to beds and shores.
- 90.40.050 Reservation of needed lands—Procedure.
- 90.40.060 Restrictions on sale of state lands within project.
- 90.40.070 Federal water users' association—Exemption from fees.
- 90.40.080 Federal water users' association—Records by county auditor.
- 90.40.090 Permit for Grand Coulee project.
- 90.40.100 Columbia Basin Project—Water appropriated pursuant to RCW 90.40.030—Periodic renewal not required.

**Chapter 90.40 RCW**  
**WATER RIGHTS OF UNITED STATES**

**Sections**

- 90.40.010 Eminent domain by the United States.
- 90.40.020 Right to use water courses.
- 90.40.030 Notice and certificate, effect of.
- 90.40.040 Appropriation of water—Title to beds and shores.
- 90.40.050 Reservation of needed lands—Procedure.
- 90.40.060 Restrictions on sale of state lands within project.
- 90.40.070 Federal water users' association—Exemption from fees.
- 90.40.080 Federal water users' association—Records by county auditor.
- 90.40.090 Permit for Grand Coulee project.
- 90.40.100 Columbia Basin Project—Water appropriated pursuant to RCW 90.40.030—Periodic renewal not required.

**RCW 90.40.010 Eminent domain by the United States.** The United States is hereby granted the right to exercise the power of eminent domain to acquire the right to the use of any water, to acquire or extinguish any rights, and to acquire any lands or other property, for the construction, operation, repairs to, maintenance or control of any plant or system of works for the storage, conveyance, or use of water for irrigation purposes, and whether such water, rights, lands or other property so to be acquired belong to any private party, association, corporation or to the state of Washington, or any municipality thereof; and such power of eminent domain shall be exercised under and by the same procedure as now is or may be hereafter provided by the law of this state for the exercise of the right of eminent domain by ordinary railroad corporations, except that the United States may exercise such right in the proper court of the United States as well as the proper state court. [1905 c 88 § 1; RRS § 7408.]

*Condemnation by corporations: Chapter 8.20 RCW.*

*Eminent domain, railroads—Corporate powers and duties: RCW 81.36.010.*

*Special railroad eminent domain proceedings: RCW 8.20.140, 28B.20.330, 81.36.020, 81.36.060, 81.53.180.*

**RCW 90.40.020 Right to use water courses.** The United States shall have the right to turn into any natural or artificial water course, any water that it may have acquired the right to store, divert, or store and divert, and may again divert and reclaim said waters from said water course for irrigation purposes subject to existing rights. [1905 c 88 § 2; RRS § 7409.]

**RCW 90.40.030 Notice and certificate, effect of.** Whenever the secretary of the interior of the United States, or any officer of the United States duly authorized, shall notify the commissioner of public lands of this state that pursuant to the provisions of the act of

Congress approved June 17, 1902, entitled, "An act appropriating the receipts from the sale and disposal of public lands in certain states and territories to the construction of irrigation works for the reclamation of arid lands," or any amendment of said act or substitute therefor, the United States intends to make examinations or surveys for the utilization of certain specified waters, the waters so described shall not thereafter be subject to appropriation under any law of this state for a period of one year from and after the date of the receipt of such notice by such commissioner of public lands; but such notice shall not in any wise affect the appropriation of any water theretofore in good faith initiated under any law of this state, but such appropriation may be completed in accordance with the law in the same manner and to the same extent as though such notice had not been given. No adverse claim to any of such waters initiated subsequent to the receipt by the commissioner of public lands of such notice shall be recognized, under the laws of this state, except as to such amount of the waters described in such notice or certificate hereinafter provided as may be formally released in writing by a duly authorized officer of the United States. If the said secretary of the interior or other duly authorized officer of the United States shall, before the expiration of said period of one year, certify in writing to the said commissioner of public lands that the project contemplated in such notice appears to be feasible and that the investigation will be made in detail, the waters specified in such notice shall not be subject to appropriation under any law of this state for the further period of three years following the date of receipt of such certificate, and such further time as the commissioner of public lands may grant, upon application of the United States or some one of its authorized officers and notice thereof first published once in each week for four consecutive weeks in a newspaper published in the county where the works for the utilization of such waters are to be constructed, and if such works are to be in or extend into two or more counties, then for the same period in a newspaper in each of such counties: PROVIDED, That in case such certificate shall not be filed with said commissioner of public lands within the period of one year herein limited therefor the waters specified in such notice shall, after the expiration of said period of one year, become unaffected by such notice and subject to appropriation as they would have been had such notice never been given: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That in case such certificate be filed within said one year and the United States does not authorize the construction of works for the utilization of such waters within said three years after the filing of said certificate, then the waters specified in such notice and certificate shall, after the expiration of said last named period of three years, become unaffected by such notice or certificate and subject to appropriation as they would have been had such notice never been given and such certificate never filed. [1905 c 88 § 3; RRS § 7410.]

**Reviser's note:** This section refers to the "commissioner of public lands" in several instances. Note that a later act, the 1917 Water Code, in section 27 (RCW 90.03.250) states in part:

"PROVIDED, FURTHER, That nothing in this act contained shall be deemed to affect chapter 88 of the Laws of 1905 except that the notice and certificate therein provided for in section 3 thereof shall be addressed to the state hydraulic engineer after the passage of this act, and the state hydraulic engineer shall exercise the powers and perform the duties prescribed by said section 3."

Chapter 88, Laws of 1905 referred to in the above quotation is the instant chapter and "section 3" is the instant section. The language "this act" in the above quotation refers to the 1917 Water Code codified as chapter 90.03 RCW. The "state hydraulic engineer" referred to in the quotation has been changed throughout the remainder of this title because of the devolution of the powers and duties to "supervisor of water resources", see note following the title digest. Thus, the language "commissioner of public lands" is retained in the instant section and in RCW 90.40.050 and 90.40.060 because while some of the duties have been transferred to the hydraulic engineer thence to the supervisor of water resources not all of such duties prescribed in this chapter have so devolved.

**RCW 90.40.040 Appropriation of water—Title to beds and shores.**

Whenever said secretary of the interior or other duly authorized officer of the United States shall cause to be let a contract for the construction of any irrigation works or any works for the storage of water for use in irrigation, or any portion or section thereof, for which the withdrawal has been effected as provided in RCW 90.40.030, any authorized officer of the United States, either in the name of the United States or in such name as may be determined by the secretary of the interior, may appropriate, in behalf of the United States, so much of the unappropriated waters of the state as may be required for the project, or projects, for which water has been withdrawn or reserved under RCW 90.40.030, including any and all divisions thereof, theretofore constructed, in whole or in part, by the United States or proposed to be thereafter constructed by the United States, such appropriation to be made, maintained and perfected in the same manner and to the same extent as though such appropriation had been made by a private person, corporation or association, except that the date of priority as to all rights under such appropriation in behalf of the United States shall relate back to the date of the first withdrawal or reservation of the waters so appropriated, and in case of filings on water previously withdrawn under RCW 90.40.030, no payment of fees will be required. Such appropriation by or on behalf of the United States shall inure to the United States, and its successors in interest, in the same manner and to the same extent as though said appropriation had been made by a private person, corporation or association. The title to the beds and shores of any navigable lake or stream utilized by the construction of any reservoir or other irrigation works created or constructed as a part of such appropriation hereinbefore in this section provided for, shall vest in the United States to the extent necessary for the maintenance, operation and control of such reservoir or other irrigation works. [1929 c 95 § 1; 1905 c 88 § 4; RRS § 7411.]

**RCW 90.40.050 Reservation of needed lands—Procedure.** When the notice provided for in RCW 90.40.030 shall be given to the commissioner of public lands the proper officers of the United States may file with the said commissioner a list of lands (including in the term "lands" as here used, the beds and shores of any lake, river, stream, or other waters) owned by the state, over or upon which the United States may require rights-of-way for canals, ditches or laterals or sites for reservoirs and structures therefor or

appurtenant thereto, or such additional rights-of-way and quantity of land as may be required for the operation and maintenance of the completed works for the irrigation project contemplated in such notice, and the filing of such list shall constitute a reservation from the sale or other disposal by the state of such lands so described, which reservation shall, upon the completion of such works and upon the United States by its proper officers filing with the commissioner of public lands of the state a description of such lands by metes and bounds or other definite description, ripen into a grant from the state to the United States. The state, in the disposal of lands granted from the United States to the state, shall reserve for the United States rights-of-way for ditches, canals, laterals, telephone and transmission lines which may be required by the United States for the construction, operation and maintenance of irrigation works. [1905 c 88 § 5; RRS § 7412.]

**Reviser's note:** See note following RCW 90.40.030.

**RCW 90.40.060 Restrictions on sale of state lands within project.** After the receipt by the commissioner of public lands of the notice from the secretary of the interior or other officer of the United States provided for in RCW 90.40.030, no lands belonging to the state, susceptible of irrigation and within the area to be irrigated from the works projected by the United States and specified in such notice shall be sold except in conformity to the classification of farm units by the United States, and the title to such lands shall not pass from the state until the applicant therefor shall have fully complied with the provisions of the laws of the United States and the regulations thereunder concerning the acquisition of the right to use water from such works and shall produce the evidence thereof duly issued: PROVIDED, That the restrictions upon the sale or other disposal by the state of any state lands provided for in this section shall continue for the same periods, respectively, and upon the same conditions, as specified in RCW 90.40.030 for the withdrawal of waters from appropriation: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That in case the authorization by the United States for the construction of irrigation works pursuant to RCW 90.40.030 shall be made within the period of three years specified therefor in said section, then the restrictions upon and conditions prescribed for the sale or other disposal of said lands in this section shall continue so long as any such lands shall remain unsold or not disposed of. [1905 c 88 § 6; RRS § 7413.]

**Reviser's note:** See note following RCW 90.40.030.

**RCW 90.40.070 Federal water users' association—Exemption from fees.** Any water users' association which is organized in conformity with the requirements of the United States under said act of congress, and which under its articles of incorporation is authorized to furnish water only to its stockholders, shall be exempt from the payment of any incorporation tax, and from the payment of any annual franchise tax; but shall be required to pay, as preliminary to its incorporation, only a fee of twenty dollars for the filing and recording of its articles of incorporation and the issuance of certificates of incorporation. Whenever, with the consent of the secretary of the interior of the United States, the stockholders of



any such association shall adopt any other form of organization to manage the affairs of such reclamation project in connection with which any such water users' association has been organized, such association may dissolve or disincorporate itself by the procedure and subject to the laws relating to the disincorporation of corporations in this state when such dissolution is authorized by a vote of two-thirds of all the stockholders represented at a meeting of the stockholders called for such purpose. [1919 c 42 § 1; 1905 c 88 § 7; RRS § 7414.]

*Corporations and associations (nonprofit): Title 24 RCW.*

**RCW 90.40.080 Federal water users' association—Records by county auditor.** It shall be the duty of the county auditor to provide record books containing printed forms of the articles of incorporation and stock subscriptions to the stock of water users' associations organized in conformity with the requirements of the United States under said act of congress, and to use such books for recording stock subscriptions of such associations; and the charges for the recording thereof shall be made on the basis of the number of words actually written therein and not for the printed form. [1905 c 88 § 8; RRS § 7415.]

**RCW 90.40.090 Permit for Grand Coulee project.** An application filed by the department of ecology or its assignee, the United States Bureau of Reclamation, for a permit to appropriate waters of the Columbia River under chapter 90.03 RCW, for the development of the Grand Coulee project shall be perfected in the same manner and to the same extent as though such appropriation had been made by a private person, corporation or association, but no fees, as provided for in RCW 90.03.470, shall be required. [1988 c 127 § 83; 1933 ex.s. c 13 § 4; RRS § 7399-1, pocket part.]

**Severability—1933 ex.s. c 13:** "The adjudication of invalidity of any section, clause, or part of a section of this act, shall not impair or otherwise affect the validity of the act as a whole or any part thereof." [1933 ex.s. c 13 § 6; RRS § 7399-2.]

**RCW 90.40.100 Columbia Basin Project—Water appropriated pursuant to RCW 90.40.030—Periodic renewal not required.** Any water withdrawn from appropriation pursuant to RCW 90.40.030 associated with the Columbia Basin Project shall continue as withdrawn from appropriation, without need for periodic renewal, until the project is declared completed or abandoned by the United States acting by and through the secretary of the interior or such other duly authorized officer of the United States. [1987 c 491 § 1.]

**Chapter 90.42 RCW**  
**WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**Sections**

- 90.42.005 Policy—Findings.
- 90.42.010 Findings—Intent.
- 90.42.020 Definitions.
- 90.42.030 Contracts to finance water conservation projects—Public benefits—Trust water rights.
- 90.42.040 Trust water rights program—Water right certificate—Notice of creation or modification.
- 90.42.050 Guidelines governing trust water rights—Submission of guidelines to joint select committee.
- 90.42.060 Chapter 43.83B RCW or RCW 43.83.340 not replaced or amended.
- 90.42.070 Involuntary impairment of existing water rights not authorized.
- 90.42.080 Trust water rights—Acquisition, donation, exercise, and transfer—Appropriation required for expenditure of funds.
- 90.42.090 Jurisdictional authorities not altered.
- 90.42.100 Water banking.
- 90.42.110 Water banking—Application to transfer water rights.
- 90.42.120 Water banking—Transfer of water rights—Requirements—Appeals.
- 90.42.130 Water banking—Input from affected entities.
- 90.42.135 Limitations of act—2003 c 144.
- 90.42.138 Construction—2003 c 144.
- 90.42.150 Recovery of department's costs associated with water service contracts with federal agencies.
- 90.42.160 Adoption of rules.
- 90.42.170 Water banking—Department must maintain information on its website.

**Chapter 90.42 RCW**  
**WATER RESOURCE MANAGEMENT**

**Sections**

- 90.42.005 Policy—Findings.
- 90.42.010 Findings—Intent.
- 90.42.020 Definitions.
- 90.42.030 Contracts to finance water conservation projects—Public benefits—Trust water rights.
- 90.42.040 Trust water rights program—Water right certificate—Notice of creation or modification.
- 90.42.050 Guidelines governing trust water rights—Submission of guidelines to joint select committee.
- 90.42.060 Chapter 43.83B RCW or RCW 43.83.340 not replaced or amended.
- 90.42.070 Involuntary impairment of existing water rights not authorized.
- 90.42.080 Trust water rights—Acquisition, donation, exercise, and transfer—Appropriation required for expenditure of funds.
- 90.42.090 Jurisdictional authorities not altered.
- 90.42.100 Water banking.
- 90.42.110 Water banking—Application to transfer water rights.
- 90.42.120 Water banking—Transfer of water rights—Requirements—Appeals.
- 90.42.130 Water banking—Input from affected entities.
- 90.42.135 Limitations of act—2003 c 144.
- 90.42.138 Construction—2003 c 144.
- 90.42.150 Recovery of department's costs associated with water service contracts with federal agencies.
- 90.42.160 Adoption of rules.
- 90.42.170 Water banking—Department must maintain information on its website.

**RCW 90.42.005 Policy—Findings.** (1) It is the policy of the state of Washington to recognize and preserve water rights in accordance with RCW 90.03.010.

(2) The legislature finds that:

(a) The state of Washington is faced with a shortage of water with which to meet existing and future needs, particularly during the summer and fall months and in dry years when the demand is greatest;

(b) Consistent with RCW 90.54.180, issuance of new water rights, voluntary water transfers, and conservation and water use efficiency programs, including storage, all are acceptable methods of addressing water uses because they can relieve current critical water situations, provide for presently unmet needs, and assist in meeting future water needs. Presently unmet needs or current needs includes the water required to increase the frequency of occurrence of base or minimum flow levels in streams of the state, the water necessary to satisfy existing water rights, or the water necessary to provide full supplies to existing water systems with current supply deficiencies;

(c) The interests of the state and its citizens will be served by developing programs and regional water resource plans, in cooperation with local governments, federally recognized tribal governments,

appropriate federal agencies, private citizens, and the various water users and water interests in the state, that increase the overall ability to manage the state's waters in order to resolve conflicts and to better satisfy both present and future needs for water; and

(d) Water banking as a function of the trust water [rights] program and as authorized by this chapter can provide an effective means to facilitate the voluntary transfer of water rights established through conservation, purchase, lease, or donation, to preserve water rights and provide water for presently unmet and future needs; and to achieve a variety of water resource management objectives throughout the state, including drought response, improving streamflows on a voluntary basis, providing water mitigation, or reserving water supply for future uses. [2003 c 144 § 1; 1991 c 347 § 1.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 7, 2003]." [2003 c 144 § 8.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** "The purposes of this act are to:

(1) Improve the ability of the state to work with the United States, local governments, federally recognized tribal governments, water right holders, water users, and various water interests in water conservation and water use efficiency programs designed to satisfy existing rights, presently unmet needs, and future needs, both instream and out-of-stream;

(2) Establish new incentives, enhance existing incentives, and remove disincentives for efficient water use;

(3) Establish improved means to disseminate information to the public and provide technical assistance regarding ways to improve the efficiency of water use;

(4) Create a trust water rights mechanism for the acquisition of water rights on a voluntary basis to be used to meet presently unmet needs and future needs;

(5) Prohibit the sale of nonconforming plumbing fixtures and require the marking and labeling of fixtures meeting state standards;

(6) Reduce tax disincentives to water conservation, reuse, and improved water use efficiency; and

(7) Add achievement of water conservation as a factor to be considered by water supply utilities in setting water rates." [1991 c 347 § 2.]

**RCW 90.42.010 Findings—Intent.** The legislature finds that a need exists to develop and test a means to facilitate the voluntary transfer of water and water rights, including conserved water, to provide water for presently unmet needs and emerging needs. Further, the legislature finds that water conservation activities have the potential of affecting the quantity of return flow waters to which existing water right holders have a right to and rely upon. It is the intent of the legislature that persons holding rights to water, including return flows, not be adversely affected in the implementation of the provisions of this chapter. [1998 c 245 § 173. Prior: 1993 sp.s. c 4 § 14; 1993 c 98 § 1; 1991 c 347 § 5.]

**Findings—Grazing lands—1993 sp.s. c 4:** See RCW 79.13.600.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.020 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(2) "Local government" means a city, town, public utility district, irrigation district, public port, county, sewer district, or water district.

(3) "Net water savings" means the amount of water that is determined to be conserved and usable within a specified stream reach or reaches for other purposes without impairment or detriment to water rights existing at the time that a water conservation project is undertaken, reducing the ability to deliver water, or reducing the supply of water that otherwise would have been available to other existing water uses.

(4) "Pilot planning areas" means the geographic areas designated under RCW 90.54.045(2).

(5) "Trust water right" means any water right acquired by the state under this chapter for management in the state's trust water rights program.

(6) "Water conservation project" means any project or program that achieves physical or operational improvements that provide for increased water use efficiency in existing systems of diversion, conveyance, application, or use of water under water rights existing on July 28, 1991. [2009 c 283 § 3; 1991 c 347 § 6.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** See note following RCW 90.42.100.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.030 Contracts to finance water conservation projects—Public benefits—Trust water rights.** (1) For purposes of this chapter, the state may enter into contracts to provide moneys to assist in the financing of water conservation projects. In consideration for the financial assistance provided, the state shall obtain public benefits defined in guidelines developed under RCW 90.42.050.

(2) If the public benefits to be obtained require conveyance or modification of a water right, the recipient of funds shall convey to the state the recipient's interest in that part of the water right or claim constituting all or a portion of the resulting net water savings for deposit in the trust water rights program. The amount to be conveyed shall be finitely determined by the parties, in accordance with the guidelines developed under RCW 90.42.050, before the expenditure of state funds. Conveyance may consist of complete transfer, lease contracts, or other legally binding agreements. When negotiating for the acquisition of conserved water or net water savings, or a portion thereof, the state may require evidence of a valid water right.

(3) As part of the contract, the water right holder and the state shall specify the process to determine the amount of water the water

right holder would continue to be entitled to once the water conservation project is in place.

(4) The state shall cooperate fully with the United States in the implementation of this chapter. Trust water rights may be acquired through expenditure of funds provided by the United States and shall be treated in the same manner as trust water rights resulting from the expenditure of state funds.

(5) If water is proposed to be acquired by or conveyed to the state as a trust water right by an irrigation district, evidence of the district's authority to represent the water right holders shall be submitted to and for the satisfaction of the department.

(6) The state shall not contract with any person to acquire a water right served by an irrigation district without the approval of the board of directors of the irrigation district. Disapproval by a board shall be factually based on probable adverse effects on the ability of the district to deliver water to other members or on maintenance of the financial integrity of the district. [1993 c 98 § 2; 1991 c 347 § 7.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.040 Trust water rights program—Water right certificate—Notice of creation or modification.** (1) A trust water right acquired by the state shall be placed in the state trust water rights program to be managed by the department. The department shall exercise its authorities under the law in a manner that protects trust water rights. Trust water rights acquired by the state shall be held in trust and authorized for use by the department for instream flows, irrigation, municipal, or other beneficial uses consistent with applicable regional plans for pilot planning areas, or to resolve critical water supply problems. The state may acquire a groundwater right to be placed in the state trust water rights program. To the extent practicable and subject to legislative appropriation, trust water rights acquired in an area with an approved watershed plan developed under chapter 90.82 RCW shall be consistent with that plan if the plan calls for such acquisition.

(2) The department shall issue a water right certificate in the name of the state of Washington for each permanent trust water right conveyed to the state indicating the quantity of water transferred to trust, the reach or reaches of the stream or the body of public groundwater that constitutes the place of use of the trust water right, and the use or uses to which it may be applied. A superseding certificate shall be issued that specifies the amount of water the water right holder would continue to be entitled to as a result of the water conservation project. The superseding certificate shall retain the same priority date as the original right. For nonpermanent conveyances, the department shall issue certificates or such other instruments as are necessary to reflect the changes in purpose or place of use or point of diversion or withdrawal.

(3) A trust water right retains the same priority date as the water right from which it originated, but as between the two rights, the trust right shall be deemed to be inferior in priority unless otherwise specified by an agreement between the state and the party holding the original right.

(4) (a) Exercise of a trust water right may be authorized only if the department first determines that neither water rights existing at the time the trust water right is established, nor the public interest will be impaired.

(b) If impairment becomes apparent during the time a trust water right is being exercised, the department shall cease or modify the use of the trust water right to eliminate the impairment.

(c) A trust water right acquired by the state and held or authorized for beneficial use by the department is considered to be exercised as long as it is in the trust water rights program.

(d) For the purposes of RCW 90.03.380(1) and 90.42.080(9), the consumptive quantity of a trust water right acquired by the state and held or authorized for use by the department is equal to the consumptive quantity of the right prior to transfer into the trust water rights program.

(5) (a) Before any trust water right is created or modified, the department shall, at a minimum, require that a notice be published in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county or counties in which the storage, diversion, and use are to be made, and in other newspapers as the department determines is necessary, once a week for two consecutive weeks.

(b) At the same time the department shall send a notice containing pertinent information to all appropriate state agencies, potentially affected local governments and federally recognized tribal governments, and other interested parties.

(c) For a trust water right donation described in RCW 90.42.080(1)(b), or for a trust water right lease described in RCW 90.42.080(8) that does not exceed five years, the department may post equivalent information on its website to meet the notice requirements in (a) of this subsection and may send pertinent information by email to meet the notice requirements in (b) of this subsection.

(6) RCW 90.14.140 through 90.14.230 have no applicability to trust water rights held by the department under this chapter or exercised under this section.

(7) RCW 90.03.380 has no applicability to trust water rights acquired by the state through the funding of water conservation projects.

(8) Subsection (4)(a) of this section does not apply to a trust water right resulting from a donation for instream flows described in RCW 90.42.080(1)(b) or to a trust water right leased under RCW 90.42.080(8) if the period of the lease does not exceed five years.

(9) Where a portion of an existing water right that is acquired or donated to the trust water rights program will assist in achieving established instream flows, the department shall process the change or amendment of the existing right without conducting a review of the extent and validity of the portion of the water right that will remain with the water right holder. [2009 c 283 § 4; 2002 c 329 § 8; 2001 c 237 § 30; 1993 c 98 § 3; 1991 c 347 § 8.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** See note following RCW 90.42.100.

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.050 Guidelines governing trust water rights—Submission of guidelines to joint select committee.** The department, in cooperation with federally recognized Indian tribes, local governments, state agencies, and other interested parties, shall establish guidelines by July 1, 1992, governing the acquisition, administration, and management of trust water rights. The guidelines shall address at a minimum the following:

(1) Methods for determining the net water savings resulting from water conservation projects or programs carried out in accordance with this chapter, and other factors to be considered in determining the quantity or value of water available for potential designation as a trust water right;

(2) Criteria for determining the portion of net water savings to be conveyed to the state under this chapter;

(3) Criteria for prioritizing water conservation projects;

(4) A description of potential public benefits that will affect consideration for state financial assistance in RCW 90.42.030;

(5) Procedures for providing notification to potentially interested parties;

(6) Criteria for the assignment of uses of trust water rights acquired in areas of the state not addressed in a regional water resource plan or critical area agreement; and

(7) Contracting procedures and other procedures not specifically addressed in this section.

These guidelines shall be submitted to the joint select committee on water resource policy before adoption. [1991 c 347 § 9.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.060 Chapter 43.83B RCW or RCW 43.83.340 not replaced or amended.** The policies and purposes of this chapter shall not be construed as replacing or amending the policies or the purposes for which funds available under chapter 43.83B RCW or RCW 43.83.340 may be used. [2015 1st sp.s. c 4 § 55; 1991 c 347 § 10.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See notes following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.070 Involuntary impairment of existing water rights not authorized.** Nothing in this chapter authorizes the involuntary impairment of any existing water rights. [1991 c 347 § 11.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.080 Trust water rights—Acquisition, donation, exercise, and transfer—Appropriation required for expenditure of funds.** (1) (a) The state may acquire all or portions of existing surface water or groundwater rights, by purchase, gift, or other appropriate means other than by condemnation, from any person or entity or combination of persons or entities. Once acquired, such rights are trust water rights. A water right acquired by the state



that is expressly conditioned to limit its use to instream purposes shall be administered as a trust water right in compliance with that condition.

(b) If the holder of a right to surface water or groundwater chooses to donate all or a portion of the person's water right to the trust water system to assist in providing instream flows or to preserve surface water or groundwater resources on a temporary or permanent basis, the department shall accept the donation on such terms as the person may prescribe as long as the donation satisfies the requirements of subsection (4) of this section and the other applicable requirements of this chapter and the terms prescribed are relevant and material to protecting any interest in the water right retained by the donor. Once accepted, such rights are trust water rights within the conditions prescribed by the donor.

(2) The department may enter into leases, contracts, or such other arrangements with other persons or entities as appropriate, to ensure that trust water rights acquired in accordance with this chapter may be exercised to the fullest possible extent.

(3) Trust water rights may be acquired by the state on a temporary or permanent basis.

(4) Except as provided in subsections (10), (11), and (12) of this section, a water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section shall not exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the donation nor may the total of any portion of the water right remaining with the donor plus the donated portion of the water right exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the donation. A water right holder who believes his or her water right has been impaired by a trust water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section may request that the department review the impairment claim. If the department determines that a trust water right resulting from a donation under subsection (1)(b) of this section is impairing existing water rights in violation of RCW 90.42.070, the trust water right shall be altered by the department to eliminate the impairment. Any decision of the department to alter or not to alter a trust water right donated under subsection (1)(b) of this section is appealable to the pollution control hearings board under RCW 43.21B.230. A donated water right's status as a trust water right under this subsection is not evidence of the validity or quantity of the water right.

(5) The provisions of RCW 90.03.380 and 90.03.390 do not apply to donations for instream flows described in subsection (1)(b) of this section, but do apply to other transfers of water rights under this section except that the consumptive quantity of a trust water right acquired by the state and held or authorized for use by the department is equal to the consumptive quantity of the right prior to transfer into the trust water rights program.

(6) No funds may be expended for the purchase of water rights by the state pursuant to this section unless specifically appropriated for this purpose by the legislature.

(7) Any water right conveyed to the trust water right system as a gift that is expressly conditioned to limit its use to instream purposes shall be managed by the department for public purposes to ensure that it qualifies as a gift that is deductible for federal income taxation purposes for the person or entity conveying the water right.

(8) Except as provided in subsections (10) and (11) of this section, if the department acquires a trust water right by lease, the

amount of the trust water right shall not exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the acquisition was made nor may the total of any portion of the water right remaining with the original water right holder plus the portion of the water right leased by the department exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the five years before the acquisition. A water right holder who believes his or her water right has been impaired by a trust water right leased under this subsection may request that the department review the impairment claim. If the department determines that a trust water right resulting from the leasing of that trust water right leased under this subsection is impairing existing water rights in violation of RCW 90.42.070, the trust water right shall be altered by the department to eliminate the impairment. Any decision of the department to alter or not to alter a trust water right leased under this subsection is appealable to the pollution control hearings board under RCW 43.21B.230. The department's leasing of a trust water right under this subsection is not evidence of the validity or quantity of the water right.

(9) For a water right donated to or acquired by the trust water rights program on a temporary basis, the full quantity of water diverted or withdrawn to exercise the right before the donation or acquisition shall be placed in the trust water rights program and shall revert to the donor or person from whom it was acquired when the trust period ends. For a trust water right acquired by the state and held or authorized for use by the department, the consumptive quantity of the right when it reverts to the donor or person from whom it was acquired is equal to the consumptive quantity of the right prior to transfer into the trust water rights program.

(10) For water rights donated or leased under subsection (4) or (8) of this section where nonuse of the water right is excused under RCW 90.14.140(1):

(a) The department shall calculate the amount of water eligible to be acquired by looking at the extent to which the right was exercised during the most recent five-year period preceding the date where nonuse of the water right was excused under RCW 90.14.140(1); and

(b) The total of the donated or leased portion of the water right and the portion of the water right remaining with the water right holder shall not exceed the extent to which the water right was exercised during the most recent five-year period preceding the date nonuse of the water right was excused under RCW 90.14.140(1).

(11) For water rights donated or leased under subsection (4) or (8) of this section where nonuse of the water right is exempt under RCW 90.14.140(2) (a) or (d):

(a) The amount of water eligible to be acquired shall be based on historical beneficial use; and

(b) The total of the donated or leased portion of the water right and the portion of the water right the water right holder continues to use shall not exceed the historical beneficial use of that right during the duration of the trust.

(12) Upon a request made by a water right holder to the department on or before June 30, 2021, a water right banked pursuant to \*RCW 90.92.070, as that section existed on April 15, 2021, must be accepted by the department as a temporary trust water right donation for a period of up to two years, in the same quantity that the water right was banked pursuant to \*RCW 90.92.070. [2021 c 110 § 1; 2009 c

283 § 5; 2002 c 329 § 9; 2001 c 237 § 31; 1993 c 98 § 4; 1991 c 347 § 12.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 90.92.070 expired June 30, 2021, pursuant to 2009 c 183 § 20 and 2019 c 78 § 4.

**Effective date—2021 c 110:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 21, 2021]." [2021 c 110 § 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** See note following RCW 90.42.100.

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.090 Jurisdictional authorities not altered.** It is the intent of the legislature that jurisdictional authorities that exist in law not be expanded, diminished, or altered in any manner whatsoever by this chapter. [1991 c 347 § 13.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.100 Water banking.** (1) The department is hereby authorized to use the trust water rights program for water banking purposes statewide.

(2) Water banking may be used for one or more of the following purposes:

(a) To authorize the use of trust water rights to mitigate for water resource impacts, future water supply needs, or any beneficial use under chapter 90.03, 90.44, or 90.54 RCW, consistent with any terms and conditions established by the transferor, except that within the Yakima river basin return flows from water rights authorized in whole or in part for any purpose shall remain available as part of the Yakima basin's total water supply available and to satisfy existing rights for other downstream uses and users;

(b) To document transfers of water rights to and from the trust water rights program; and

(c) To provide a source of water rights the department can make available to third parties on a temporary or permanent basis for any beneficial use under chapter 90.03, 90.44, or 90.54 RCW.

(3) The department shall not use water banking to:

(a) Cause detriment or injury to existing rights;

(b) Issue temporary water rights or portions thereof for new potable uses requiring an adequate and reliable water supply under RCW 19.27.097;

(c) Administer federal project water rights, including federal storage rights; or

(d) Allow carryover of stored water in the Yakima basin from one water year to another water year if it would negatively impact the total water supply available.

(4) The department shall provide electronic notice and opportunity for comment to affected local governments and affected federally recognized tribal governments prior to initiating use of the trust water rights program for water banking purposes for the first time in each water resource inventory area.

(5) Nothing in this section may be interpreted or administered in a manner that precludes the use of the department's existing authority to process trust water rights applications under this chapter or to process water right applications under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW.

(6) For purposes of this section and RCW 90.42.135, "total water supply available" shall be defined as provided in the 1945 consent decree between the United States and water users in the Yakima river basin, and consistent with later interpretation by state and federal courts. [2009 c 283 § 2; 2003 c 144 § 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** "The legislature finds that many watershed groups and programs, including but not limited to watershed planning units operating under chapter 90.82 RCW, have proposed or considered using the state trust water rights program for water banking purposes to meet vital instream and out-of-stream needs within a watershed or region. The legislature also finds that water banking can: Provide critical tools to make water supplies available when and where needed during times of drought; improve streamflows and preserve instream values during fish critical periods; reduce water transaction costs, time, and risk to purchasers; facilitate fair and efficient reallocation of water from one beneficial use to another; provide water supplies to offset impacts related to future development and the issuance of new water rights; and facilitate water agreements that protect upstream community values while retaining flexibility to meet critical downstream water needs in times of scarcity. The legislature therefore declares that the intent of this act is to provide clear authority for water banking throughout the state and to improve the effectiveness of the state trust water rights program." [2009 c 283 § 1.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.110 Water banking—Application to transfer water rights.** (1) The department, with the consent of the water right holder, may identify trust water rights for administration for water banking purposes, including trust water rights established before May 7, 2003.

(2) An application to transfer a water right to the trust water [rights] program shall be reviewed under RCW 90.03.380 at the time the water right is transferred to the trust water [rights] program for administration for water banking purposes, and notice of the application shall be published by the applicant as provided under RCW 90.03.280. The application must indicate the reach or reaches of the stream where the trust water right will be established before the transfer of the water right or portion thereof from the trust water [rights] program, and identify reasonably foreseeable future temporary or permanent beneficial uses for which the water right or portion thereof may be used by a third party upon transfer from the trust water right[s] program. In the event the future place of use, period of use, or other elements of the water right are not specifically

identified at the time of the transfer into the trust water [rights] program, another review under RCW 90.03.380 will be necessary at the time of a proposed transfer from the trust water [rights] program. [2003 c 144 § 3.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.120 Water banking—Transfer of water rights—**

**Requirements—Appeals.** (1) The department shall transfer a water right or portion thereof being administered for water banking purposes from the trust water [rights] program to a third party upon occurrence of all of the following:

(a) The department receives a request for transfer of a water right or portion thereof currently administered by the department for water banking purposes;

(b) The request is consistent with any previous review under RCW 90.03.380 of the water right and future temporary or permanent beneficial uses;

(c) The request is consistent with any condition, limitation, or agreement affecting the water right, including but not limited to any trust water right transfer agreement executed at the time the water right was transferred to the trust water rights program; and

(d) The request is accompanied by and is consistent with an assignment of interest or portion thereof from a person or entity retaining an interest in the trust water right or portion thereof to the party requesting transfer of the water right or portion thereof.

(2) The priority date of the water right or portion thereof transferred by the department from the trust water [rights] program for water banking purposes shall be the priority date of the underlying water right.

(3) The department shall issue documentation for that water right or portion thereof to the new water right holder based on the requirements applicable to the transfer of other water rights from the trust water rights program. Such documentation shall include a description of the property to which the water right will be appurtenant after the water right or portion thereof is transferred from the trust water [rights] program to a third party.

(4) The department's decision on the transfer of a water right or portion thereof from the trust water [rights] program for water banking purposes may be appealed to the pollution control hearings board under RCW 43.21B.230, or to a superior court conducting a general adjudication under RCW 90.03.210. [2003 c 144 § 4.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.130 Water banking—Input from affected entities.** The department shall seek input from agricultural organizations, federal agencies, tribal governments, local governments, watershed groups, conservation groups, and developers on water banking, including water banking procedures and identification of areas in Washington where water banking could assist in providing water supplies for instream and out-of-stream uses. [2016 c 215 § 1; 2014 c 76 § 9; 2003 c 144 § 5.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.135 Limitations of act—2003 c 144.** Nothing in chapter 144, Laws of 2003 shall:

(1) Cause detriment or injury to existing rights or to the operation of the federal Yakima project to provide water for irrigation purposes, existing water supply contracts, or existing water rights;

(2) Diminish in any way existing rights or the total water supply available for irrigation and other purposes in the Yakima basin;

(3) Affect or modify the authority of a court conducting a general adjudication pursuant to RCW 90.03.210; or

(4) Affect or modify the rights of any person or entity under a water rights adjudication or under any order of the court conducting a water rights adjudication. [2003 c 144 § 6.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.138 Construction—2003 c 144.** Nothing in chapter 144, Laws of 2003 may be construed to:

(1) Affect or modify any treaty or other federal rights of an Indian tribe, or the rights of any federal agency or other person or entity arising under state or federal law;

(2) Affect or modify the rights or jurisdictions of the United States, the state of Washington, the Yakama Nation, or other person or entity over waters of any river or stream or over any groundwater resource;

(3) Alter, amend, repeal, interpret, modify, or be in conflict with any interstate compact made by the states;

(4) Alter, establish, or impair the respective rights of states, the United States, the Yakama Nation, or any other person or entity with respect to any water or water-related right;

(5) Alter, diminish, or abridge the rights and obligations of any federal, state, or local agency, the Yakama Nation, or other person or entity;

(6) Affect or modify the rights of the Yakama Indian Nation or its successors in interest to, and management and regulation of, those water resources arising or used, within the external boundaries of the Yakama Indian Reservation;

(7) Affect or modify the settlement agreement between the United States and the state of Washington filed in Yakima county superior court with regard to federal reserved water rights other than those rights reserved by the United States for the benefit of the Yakama Indian Nation and its members; or

(8) Affect or modify the rights of any federal, state, or local agency, the Yakama Nation, or any other person or entity, public or private, with respect to any unresolved and unsettled claims in any water right adjudications, or court decisions, including *State v. Acquavella*, or constitute evidence in any such proceeding in which any water or water-related right is adjudicated. [2003 c 144 § 7.]

**Effective date—2003 c 144:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.42.150 Recovery of department's costs associated with water service contracts with federal agencies.** Costs incurred by the department associated with water service contracts with federal agencies may be recovered by the department from persons withdrawing water or credits for water associated with water banking purposes as a condition of the exercise of a water right supplied from a federal water project. [2009 c 283 § 6.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** See note following RCW 90.42.100.

**RCW 90.42.160 Adoption of rules.** The department may adopt rules as necessary to implement this chapter. [2009 c 283 § 8.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 283:** See note following RCW 90.42.100.

**RCW 90.42.170 Water banking—Department must maintain information on its website.** (1) (a) The department must maintain information on its website regarding water banking, including information on water banks and related programs in various areas of the state.

(b) The information maintained on the department's website under this subsection must include a schedule or table for each water bank that shows:

- (i) The amount charged for mitigation, including any fees;
- (ii) If applicable, the priority date of the water rights made available for mitigation;
- (iii) The amount of water made available for mitigation;
- (iv) If applicable, any geographic areas in the state where the department may issue permits or other approvals to use the water rights associated with the water bank as mitigation;
- (v) The processes utilized by the water bank to obtain approval from the department, or any other applicable governmental agency, to use the water rights as mitigation for new water uses; and
- (vi) The nature of the ownership interest of the water right available to be conveyed to the landowner and whether the ownership interest will be recorded on the title.

(2) The department must update the schedule or table required under this section on a quarterly basis, using information provided to the department by the operator of each water bank. Any person operating a water bank in Washington must provide the information required under this section to the department upon request. [2016 c 215 § 2.]

**Chapter 90.44 RCW**  
**REGULATION OF PUBLIC GROUNDWATERS**

**Sections**

- 90.44.020 Purpose of chapter.
- 90.44.030 Chapter not to affect surface water rights.
- 90.44.035 Definitions.
- 90.44.040 Public groundwaters subject to appropriation.
- 90.44.050 Permit to withdraw.
- 90.44.052 Whitman county clustered residential developments pilot project—Exemption from permit requirements.
- 90.44.055 Applications for water right or amendment—Consideration of water impoundment or other resource management technique.
- 90.44.060 Laws governing withdrawal.
- 90.44.062 Use of reclaimed water by wastewater treatment facility—Permit requirements inapplicable.
- 90.44.070 Limitations on granting permit.
- 90.44.080 Certificate—Showing required.
- 90.44.090 Certificate of vested rights.
- 90.44.100 Amendment to permit or certificate—Replacement or new additional wells—Exemption for small irrigation impoundments.
- 90.44.105 Amendment to permit or certificate—Consolidation of rights for exempt wells.
- 90.44.110 Waste of water prohibited—Exceptions.
- 90.44.120 Penalty for waste or unauthorized use of water.
- 90.44.130 Priorities as between appropriators—Department in charge of groundwater withdrawals—Establishment and modification of groundwater areas and depth zones—Declarations by claimant of artificially stored water.
- 90.44.180 Hearing to adjust supply to current needs.
- 90.44.200 Water supervisors—Duties—Compensation.
- 90.44.220 Petition to conduct an adjudication to determine rights to water.
- 90.44.230 Effect of findings and judgment.
- 90.44.250 Investigations—Reports of appropriators.
- 90.44.400 Groundwater management areas—Purpose—Standards—Identification—Designation.
- 90.44.410 Requirements for groundwater management programs—Review of programs.
- 90.44.420 Groundwater management programs—Consideration by department of ecology—Public hearing—Findings—Adoption of regulations, ordinances, and programs.
- 90.44.430 Groundwater management programs—Guidance to local governments and certain departments.
- 90.44.440 Existing rights not affected.
- 90.44.445 Acreage expansion program—Authorization—Certification.
- 90.44.450 Metering or measuring groundwater withdrawals—Reports.
- 90.44.460 Reservoir permits.
- 90.44.500 Civil penalties.
- 90.44.510 Superseding water right permit or certificate—Water delivered from federal Columbia Basin project.



- 90.44.530 Applications to appropriate groundwater under a cost-reimbursement agreement.
- 90.44.540 Expedited processing of applications—Notification—Fees.
- 90.44.550 Odessa groundwater subarea—Nonuse of a water right—Notice to the department—Conditions.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**Chapter 90.44 RCW**  
**REGULATION OF PUBLIC GROUNDWATERS**

**Sections**

- 90.44.020 Purpose of chapter.
- 90.44.030 Chapter not to affect surface water rights.
- 90.44.035 Definitions.
- 90.44.040 Public groundwaters subject to appropriation.
- 90.44.050 Permit to withdraw.
- 90.44.052 Whitman county clustered residential developments pilot project—Exemption from permit requirements.
- 90.44.055 Applications for water right or amendment—Consideration of water impoundment or other resource management technique.
- 90.44.060 Laws governing withdrawal.
- 90.44.062 Use of reclaimed water by wastewater treatment facility—Permit requirements inapplicable.
- 90.44.070 Limitations on granting permit.
- 90.44.080 Certificate—Showing required.
- 90.44.090 Certificate of vested rights.
- 90.44.100 Amendment to permit or certificate—Replacement or new additional wells—Exemption for small irrigation impoundments.
- 90.44.105 Amendment to permit or certificate—Consolidation of rights for exempt wells.
- 90.44.110 Waste of water prohibited—Exceptions.
- 90.44.120 Penalty for waste or unauthorized use of water.
- 90.44.130 Priorities as between appropriators—Department in charge of groundwater withdrawals—Establishment and modification of groundwater areas and depth zones—Declarations by claimant of artificially stored water.
- 90.44.180 Hearing to adjust supply to current needs.
- 90.44.200 Water supervisors—Duties—Compensation.
- 90.44.220 Petition to conduct an adjudication to determine rights to water.
- 90.44.230 Effect of findings and judgment.
- 90.44.250 Investigations—Reports of appropriators.
- 90.44.400 Groundwater management areas—Purpose—Standards—Identification—Designation.
- 90.44.410 Requirements for groundwater management programs—Review of programs.
- 90.44.420 Groundwater management programs—Consideration by department of ecology—Public hearing—Findings—Adoption of regulations, ordinances, and programs.
- 90.44.430 Groundwater management programs—Guidance to local governments and certain departments.
- 90.44.440 Existing rights not affected.
- 90.44.445 Acreage expansion program—Authorization—Certification.
- 90.44.450 Metering or measuring groundwater withdrawals—Reports.
- 90.44.460 Reservoir permits.
- 90.44.500 Civil penalties.
- 90.44.510 Superseding water right permit or certificate—Water delivered from federal Columbia Basin project.

- 90.44.530 Applications to appropriate groundwater under a cost-reimbursement agreement.
- 90.44.540 Expedited processing of applications—Notification—Fees.
- 90.44.550 Odessa groundwater subarea—Nonuse of a water right—Notice to the department—Conditions.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**RCW 90.44.020 Purpose of chapter.** This chapter regulating and controlling groundwaters of the state of Washington shall be supplemental to chapter 90.03 RCW, which regulates the surface waters of the state, and is enacted for the purpose of extending the application of such surface water statutes to the appropriation and beneficial use of groundwaters within the state. [1945 c 263 § 1; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-1.]

**RCW 90.44.030 Chapter not to affect surface water rights.** The rights to appropriate the surface waters of the state and the rights acquired by the appropriation and use of surface waters shall not be affected or impaired by any of the provisions of this supplementary chapter and, to the extent that any underground water is part of or tributary to the source of any surface stream or lake, or that the withdrawal of groundwater may affect the flow of any spring, water course, lake, or other body of surface water, the right of an appropriator and owner of surface water shall be superior to any subsequent right hereby authorized to be acquired in or to groundwater. [1945 c 263 § 2; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-2.]

**RCW 90.44.035 Definitions.** For purposes of this chapter:

- (1) "Department" means the department of ecology;
- (2) "Director" means the director of ecology;
- (3) "Groundwaters" means all waters that exist beneath the land surface or beneath the bed of any stream, lake or reservoir, or other body of surface water within the boundaries of this state, whatever may be the geological formation or structure in which such water stands or flows, percolates or otherwise moves. There is a recognized distinction between natural groundwater and artificially stored groundwater;
- (4) "Natural groundwater" means water that exists in underground storage owing wholly to natural processes;
- (5) "Artificially stored groundwater" means water that is made available in underground storage artificially, either intentionally, or incidentally to irrigation and that otherwise would have been dissipated by natural processes; and
- (6) "Underground artificial storage and recovery project" means any project in which it is intended to artificially store water in the ground through injection, surface spreading and infiltration, or other department-approved method, and to make subsequent use of the stored water. However, (a) this subsection does not apply to irrigation return flow, or to operational and seepage losses that occur during the irrigation of land, or to water that is artificially stored due to the construction, operation, or maintenance of an irrigation district project, or to projects involving water reclaimed in accordance with

chapter 90.46 RCW; and (b) RCW 90.44.130 applies to those instances of claimed artificial recharge occurring due to the construction, operation, or maintenance of an irrigation district project or operational and seepage losses that occur during the irrigation of land, as well as other forms of claimed artificial recharge already existing at the time a groundwater subarea is established. [2000 c 98 § 2; 1987 c 109 § 107; 1973 c 94 § 2; 1945 c 263 § 3; RRS § 7400-3. Formerly RCW 90.44.010.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Purpose—1973 c 94:** "It is the purpose of this 1973 amendatory act to state as well as reaffirm the intent of the legislature that "groundwaters," as defined in chapter 263, Laws of 1945, means all waters within the state existing beneath the land surface, and to remove any possible ambiguity which may exist as a result of the dissenting opinion in *State v. Ponten*, 77 Wn.2d 463 (1969), or otherwise, with regard to the meaning of "groundwaters" in the present wording of RCW 90.44.035. The definition set forth in section 2 of this 1973 amendatory act accords with the interpretation given by all of the various administrative agencies having responsibility for administration of the act since its enactment in 1945." [1973 c 94 § 1.] This applies to the amendment to RCW 90.44.035 by 1973 c 94 § 2.

**RCW 90.44.040 Public groundwaters subject to appropriation.**

Subject to existing rights, all natural groundwaters of the state as defined in RCW 90.44.035, also all artificial groundwaters that have been abandoned or forfeited, are hereby declared to be public groundwaters and to belong to the public and to be subject to appropriation for beneficial use under the terms of this chapter and not otherwise. [1945 c 263 § 4; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-4.]

**RCW 90.44.050 Permit to withdraw.** After June 6, 1945, no withdrawal of public groundwaters of the state shall be begun, nor shall any well or other works for such withdrawal be constructed, unless an application to appropriate such waters has been made to the department and a permit has been granted by it as herein provided: EXCEPT, HOWEVER, That any withdrawal of public groundwaters for stock-watering purposes, or for the watering of a lawn or of a noncommercial garden not exceeding one-half acre in area, or for single or group domestic uses in an amount not exceeding five thousand gallons a day, or as provided in RCW 90.44.052, or for an industrial purpose in an amount not exceeding five thousand gallons a day, is and shall be exempt from the provisions of this section, but, to the extent that it is regularly used beneficially, shall be entitled to a right equal to that established by a permit issued under the provisions of this chapter: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the department from time to time may require the person or agency making any such small withdrawal to furnish information as to the means for and the quantity of that withdrawal: PROVIDED, FURTHER, That at the option of the party making withdrawals of groundwaters of the state not exceeding five thousand gallons per day, applications under this section or declarations under RCW 90.44.090 may be filed and permits and certificates obtained in

the same manner and under the same requirements as is in this chapter provided in the case of withdrawals in excess of five thousand gallons a day. [2003 c 307 § 1; 1987 c 109 § 108; 1947 c 122 § 1; 1945 c 263 § 5; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7400-5.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.052 Whitman county clustered residential developments pilot project—Exemption from permit requirements.** (1) On a pilot project basis, the use of water for domestic use in clustered residential developments is exempt as described in subsection (2) of this section from the permit requirements of RCW 90.44.050 in Whitman county. The department must review the use of water under this section and its impact on water resources in the county and maintain information regarding the pilot project on its website.

(2) For the pilot project, the domestic use of water for a clustered residential development is exempt from the permit requirements of RCW 90.44.050 for an amount of water that is not more than one thousand two hundred gallons a day per residence for a residential development that has an overall density equal to or less than one residence per ten acres and a minimum of six homes.

(3) No new right to use water may be established for a clustered development under this section where the first residential use of water for the development begins after December 31, 2015. [2014 c 76 § 10; 2003 c 307 § 2.]

**RCW 90.44.055 Applications for water right or amendment—Consideration of water impoundment or other resource management technique.** The department shall, when evaluating an application for a water right or an amendment filed pursuant to RCW 90.44.050 or 90.44.100 that includes provision for any water impoundment or other resource management technique, take into consideration the benefits and costs, including environmental effects, of any water impoundment or other resource management technique that is included as a component of the application. The department's consideration shall extend to any increased water supply that results from the impoundment or other resource management technique, including but not limited to any recharge of groundwater that may occur, as a means of making water available or otherwise offsetting the impact of the withdrawal of groundwater proposed in the application for the water right or amendment in the same water resource inventory area. Provision for an impoundment or other resource management technique in an application shall be made solely at the discretion of the applicant and shall not be made by the department as a condition for approving an application that does not include such provision.

This section does not lessen, enlarge, or modify the rights of any riparian owner, or any existing water right acquired by appropriation or otherwise. [1997 c 360 § 3; 1996 c 306 § 2.]

**Findings—Purpose—1997 c 360:** See note following RCW 90.03.255.

**RCW 90.44.060 Laws governing withdrawal.** Applications for permits for appropriation of underground water shall be made in the same form and manner provided in RCW 90.03.250 through 90.03.340, as amended, the provisions of which sections are hereby extended to govern and to apply to groundwater, or groundwater right certificates and to all permits that shall be issued pursuant to such applications, and the rights to the withdrawal of groundwater acquired thereby shall be governed by RCW 90.03.250 through 90.03.340, inclusive: PROVIDED, That each application to withdraw public groundwater by means of a well or wells shall set forth the following additional information: (1) the name and post office address of the applicant; (2) the name and post office address of the owner of the land on which such well or wells or works will be located; (3) the location of the proposed well or wells or other works for the proposed withdrawal; (4) the groundwater area, sub-area, or zone from which withdrawal is proposed, provided the department has designated such area, sub-area, or zone in accord with RCW 90.44.130; (5) the amount of water proposed to be withdrawn, in gallons a minute and in acre feet a year, or millions of gallons a year; (6) the depth and type of construction proposed for the well or wells or other works: AND PROVIDED FURTHER, That any permit issued pursuant to an application for constructing a well or wells to withdraw public groundwater may specify an approved type and manner of construction for the purposes of preventing waste of said public waters and of conserving their head. [1987 c 109 § 109; 1945 c 263 § 6; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-6.]

~~**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.062 Use of reclaimed water by wastewater treatment facility—Permit requirements inapplicable.** The permit requirements of RCW 90.44.060 do not apply to the use of reclaimed water by the owner of a wastewater treatment facility under the provisions of RCW 90.46.120 and do not apply to the use of agricultural industrial process water as provided under RCW 90.46.150. [2001 c 69 § 7; 1997 c 444 § 3.]

~~**Severability—1997 c 444:**~~ See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**RCW 90.44.070 Limitations on granting permit.** No permit shall be granted for the development or withdrawal of public groundwaters beyond the capacity of the underground bed or formation in the given basin, district, or locality to yield such water within a reasonable or feasible pumping lift in case of pumping developments, or within a reasonable or feasible reduction of pressure in the case of artesian developments. The department shall have the power to determine whether the granting of any such permit will injure or damage any vested or existing right or rights under prior permits and may in addition to the records of the department, require further evidence, proof, and testimony before granting or denying any such permits. [1987 c 109 § 110; 1945 c 263 § 7; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-7.]

~~**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.080 Certificate—Showing required.** Upon a showing to the department that construction has been completed in compliance with the terms of any permit issued under the provisions of this chapter, it shall be the duty of the department to issue to the permittee a certificate of groundwater right stating that the appropriation has been perfected under such permit: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That such showing shall include the following information: (1) the location of each well or other means of withdrawal constructed under the permit, both with respect to official land surveys and in terms of distance and direction to any preexisting well or wells or works constructed under an earlier permit or approved declaration of a vested right, provided the distance to such preexisting well or works is not more than a quarter of a mile; (2) the depth and diameter of each well or the depth and general specifications of any other works constructed under the terms of the permit; (3) the thickness in feet and the physical character of each bed, stratum, or formation penetrated by each well; (4) the length and position, in feet below the land surface, and the commercial specifications of all casing, also of each screen or perforated zone in the casing of each well constructed; (5) the tested capacity of each well in gallons a minute, as determined by measuring the discharge of the pump or pumps after continuous operation for at least four hours or, in the case of a flowing well, by measuring the natural flow at the land surface; (6) for each nonflowing well, the depth to the static groundwater level as measured in feet below the land surface immediately before the well-capacity test herein provided, also the draw-down of the water level, in feet, at the end of said well-capacity test; (7) for each flowing well, the shut-in pressure measured in feet above the land surface or in pounds per square inch at the land surface; and (8) such additional factual information as reasonably may be required by the department to establish compliance with the terms of the permit and with the provisions of this chapter.

The well driller or other constructor of works for the withdrawal of public groundwaters shall be obligated to furnish the permittee a certified record of the factual information necessary to show compliance with the provisions of this section. [1987 c 109 § 111; 1945 c 263 § 8; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-8.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.090 Certificate of vested rights.** Any person, firm or corporation claiming a vested right to withdraw public groundwaters of the state by virtue of prior beneficial use of such water shall, within three years after June 6, 1945, be entitled to receive from the department a certificate of groundwater right to that effect: PROVIDED, That the issuance by the department of any such certificate of vested right shall be contingent on a declaration by the claimant in a form prescribed by the department, which declaration shall set forth: (1) the beneficial use for which such withdrawal has been made; (2) the date or approximate date of the earliest beneficial use of the water so withdrawn, and the continuity of such beneficial use; (3) the amount of water claimed; (4) if the beneficial use has been for irrigation, the description of the land to which such water has been applied and the name of the owner thereof; and (5) so far as it may be

available, descriptive information concerning each well or other works for the withdrawal of public groundwater, as required of original permittees under the provisions of RCW 90.44.080: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That in case of failure to comply with the provisions of this section within the three years allotted, the claimant may apply to the department for a reasonable extension of time, which shall not exceed two additional years and which shall be granted only upon a showing of good cause for such failure.

Each such declaration shall be certified, either on the basis of the personal knowledge of the declarant or on the basis of information and belief. With respect to each such declaration there shall be publication, and findings in the same manner as provided in RCW 90.44.060 in the case of an original application to appropriate water. If the department's findings sustain the declaration, the department shall approve said declaration, which then shall be recorded at length with the department and may also be recorded in the office of the county auditor of the county within which the claimed withdrawal and beneficial use of public groundwater have been made. When duly approved and recorded as herein provided, each such declaration or copies thereof shall have the same force and effect as an original permit granted under the provisions of RCW 90.44.060, with a priority as of the date of the earliest beneficial use of the water.

Declarations heretofore filed with the department in substantial compliance with the provisions of this section shall have the same force and effect as if filed after June 6, 1945.

The same fees shall be collected by the department in the case of applications for the issuance of certificates of vested rights, as are required to be collected in the case of application for permits for withdrawal of groundwaters and for the issuance of certificates of groundwater withdrawal rights under this chapter. [1987 c 109 § 112; 1947 c 122 § 2; 1945 c 263 § 9; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7400-9.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.100 Amendment to permit or certificate—Replacement or new additional wells—Exemption for small irrigation impoundments.**

(1) After an application to, and upon the issuance by the department of an amendment to the appropriate permit or certificate of groundwater right, the holder of a valid right to withdraw public groundwaters may, without losing the holder's priority of right, construct wells or other means of withdrawal at a new location in substitution for or in addition to those at the original location, or the holder may change the manner or the place of use of the water.

(2) An amendment to construct replacement or a new additional well or wells at a location outside of the location of the original well or wells or to change the manner or place of use of the water shall be issued only after publication of notice of the application and findings as prescribed in the case of an original application. Such amendment shall be issued by the department only on the conditions that: (a) The additional or replacement well or wells shall tap the same body of public groundwater as the original well or wells; (b) where a replacement well or wells is approved, the use of the original well or wells shall be discontinued and the original well or wells shall be properly decommissioned as required under chapter



18.104 RCW; (c) where an additional well or wells is constructed, the original well or wells may continue to be used, but the combined total withdrawal from the original and additional well or wells shall not enlarge the right conveyed by the original permit or certificate; and (d) other existing rights shall not be impaired. The department may specify an approved manner of construction and shall require a showing of compliance with the terms of the amendment, as provided in RCW 90.44.080 in the case of an original permit.

(3) The construction of a replacement or new additional well or wells at the location of the original well or wells shall be allowed without application to the department for an amendment. However, the following apply to such a replacement or new additional well: (a) The well shall tap the same body of public groundwater as the original well or wells; (b) if a replacement well is constructed, the use of the original well or wells shall be discontinued and the original well or wells shall be properly decommissioned as required under chapter 18.104 RCW; (c) if a new additional well is constructed, the original well or wells may continue to be used, but the combined total withdrawal from the original and additional well or wells shall not enlarge the right conveyed by the original water use permit or certificate; (d) the construction and use of the well shall not interfere with or impair water rights with an earlier date of priority than the water right or rights for the original well or wells; (e) the replacement or additional well shall be located no closer than the original well to a well it might interfere with; (f) the department may specify an approved manner of construction of the well; and (g) the department shall require a showing of compliance with the conditions of this subsection (3).

(4) As used in this section, the "location of the original well or wells" is the area described as the point of withdrawal in the original public notice published for the application for the water right for the well.

(5) The development and use of a small irrigation impoundment, as defined in RCW 90.03.370(8), does not constitute a change or amendment for the purposes of this section. The exemption expressly provided by this subsection shall not be construed as requiring an amendment of any existing water right to enable the holder of the right to store water governed by the right. [2003 c 329 § 3; (2009 c 183 § 16 expired June 30, 2021); 1997 c 316 § 2; 1987 c 109 § 113; 1945 c 263 § 10; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-10.]

**Expiration date—2019 c 78; 2009 c 183:** See note following RCW 90.03.380.

**Intent—1997 c 316:** "The legislature intends that the holder of a valid permit or certificate of groundwater right be permitted by the department of ecology to amend a valid permit or certificate to allow full and complete development of the valid right by the construction of replacement or additional wells at the original location or new locations." [1997 c 316 § 1.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.105 Amendment to permit or certificate—Consolidation of rights for exempt wells.** Upon the issuance by the department of an amendment to the appropriate permit or certificate of groundwater right, the holder of a valid right to withdraw public groundwaters may consolidate that right with a groundwater right exempt from the permit requirement under RCW 90.44.050, without affecting the priority of either of the water rights being consolidated. Such a consolidation amendment shall be issued only after publication of a notice of the application, a comment period, and a determination made by the department, in lieu of meeting the conditions required for an amendment under RCW 90.44.100, that: (1) The exempt well taps the same body of public groundwater as the well to which the water right of the exempt well is to be consolidated; (2) use of the exempt well shall be discontinued upon approval of the consolidation amendment to the permit or certificate; (3) legally enforceable agreements have been entered to prohibit the construction of another exempt well to serve the area previously served by the exempt well to be discontinued, and such agreements are binding upon subsequent owners of the land through appropriate binding limitations on the title to the land; (4) the exempt well or wells the use of which is to be discontinued will be properly decommissioned in accordance with chapter 18.104 RCW and the rules of the department; and (5) other existing rights, including ground and surface water rights and minimum streamflows adopted by rule, shall not be impaired. The notice shall be published by the applicant in a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties in which the wells for the rights to be consolidated are located once a week for two consecutive weeks. The applicant shall provide evidence of the publication of the notice to the department. The comment period shall be for thirty days beginning on the date the second notice is published.

The amount of the water to be added to the holder's permit or certificate upon discontinuance of the exempt well shall be the average withdrawal from the well, in gallons per day, for the most recent five-year period preceding the date of the application, except that the amount shall not be less than eight hundred gallons per day for each residential connection or such alternative minimum amount as may be established by the department in consultation with the department of health, and shall not exceed five thousand gallons per day. The department shall presume that an amount identified by the applicant as being the average withdrawal from the well during the most recent five-year period is accurate if the applicant establishes that the amount identified for the use or uses of water from the exempt well is consistent with the average amount of water used for similar use or uses in the general area in which the exempt well is located. The department shall develop, in consultation with the department of health, a schedule of average household and small-area landscaping water usages in various regions of the state to aid the department and applicants in identifying average amounts used for these purposes. The presumption does not apply if the department finds credible evidence of nonuse of the well during the required period or credible evidence that the use of water from the exempt well or the intensity of the use of the land supported by water from the exempt well is substantially different than such uses in the general area in which the exempt well is located. The department shall also accord a presumption in favor of approval of such consolidation if the requirements of this subsection are met and the discontinuance of the

exempt well is consistent with an adopted coordinated water system plan under chapter 70A.100 RCW, an adopted comprehensive land use plan under chapter 36.70A RCW, or other comprehensive watershed management plan applicable to the area containing an objective of decreasing the number of existing and newly developed small groundwater withdrawal wells. The department shall provide a priority to reviewing and deciding upon applications subject to this subsection, and shall make its decision within sixty days of the end of the comment period following publication of the notice by the applicant or within sixty days of the date on which compliance with the state environmental policy act, chapter 43.21C RCW, is completed, whichever is later. The applicant and the department may by prior mutual agreement extend the time for making a decision. [2021 c 65 § 102; 1997 c 446 § 1.]

**Explanatory statement—2021 c 65:** See note following RCW 53.54.030.

**RCW 90.44.110 Waste of water prohibited—Exceptions.** No public groundwaters that have been withdrawn shall be wasted without economical beneficial use. The department shall require all wells producing waters which contaminate other waters to be plugged or capped. The department shall also require all flowing wells to be so capped or equipped with valves that the flow of water can be completely stopped when the wells are not in use under the terms of their respective permits or approved declarations of vested rights. Likewise, the department shall also require both flowing and nonflowing wells to be so constructed and maintained as to prevent the waste of public groundwaters through leaky casings, pipes, fittings, valves, or pumps—either above or below the land surface: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That the withdrawal of reasonable quantities of public groundwater in connection with the construction, development, testing, or repair of a well shall not be construed as waste; also, that the inadvertent loss of such water owing to breakage of a pump, valve, pipe, or fitting shall not be construed as waste if reasonable diligence is shown by the permittee in effecting the necessary repair.

In the issuance of an original permit, or of an amendment to an original permit or certificate of vested right to withdraw and appropriate public groundwaters under the provisions of this chapter, the department may, as in his or her judgment is necessary, specify for the proposed well or wells or other works a manner of construction adequate to accomplish the provisions of this section. [2013 c 23 § 611; 1987 c 109 § 114; 1949 c 63 § 1; 1945 c 263 § 11; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 7400-11.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.120 Penalty for waste or unauthorized use of water.** The unauthorized use of groundwater to which another person is entitled, or the wilful or negligent waste of groundwater, or the failure, when required by the department, to cap flowing wells or equip the same with valves, fittings, or casings to prevent waste of groundwaters, or to cap or plug wells producing waters which

contaminate other waters, shall be a misdemeanor. [1987 c 109 § 115; 1949 c 63 § 2; 1947 c 122 § 3; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 7400-11A.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.130 Priorities as between appropriators—Department in charge of groundwater withdrawals—Establishment and modification of groundwater areas and depth zones—Declarations by claimant of artificially stored water.** As between appropriators of public groundwater, the prior appropriator shall as against subsequent appropriators from the same groundwater body be entitled to the preferred use of such groundwater to the extent of his or her appropriation and beneficial use, and shall enjoy the right to have any withdrawals by a subsequent appropriator of groundwater limited to an amount that will maintain and provide a safe sustaining yield in the amount of the prior appropriation. The department shall have jurisdiction over the withdrawals of groundwater and shall administer the groundwater rights under the principle just set forth, and it shall have the jurisdiction to limit withdrawals by appropriators of groundwater so as to enforce the maintenance of a safe sustaining yield from the groundwater body. For this purpose, the department shall have authority and it shall be its duty from time to time, as adequate factual data become available, to designate groundwater areas or subareas, to designate separate depth zones within any such area or subarea, or to modify the boundaries of such existing area, or subarea, or zones to the end that the withdrawals therefrom may be administratively controlled as prescribed in RCW 90.44.180 in order that overdraft of public groundwaters may be prevented so far as is feasible. Each such area or zone shall, as nearly as known facts permit, be so designated as to enclose a single and distinct body of public groundwater. Each such subarea may be so designated as to enclose all or any part of a distinct body of public groundwater, as the department deems will most effectively accomplish the purposes of this chapter.

Designation of, or modification of the boundaries of such a groundwater area, subarea, or zone may be proposed by the department on its own motion or by petition to the department signed by at least fifty or one-fourth, whichever is the lesser number, of the users of groundwater in a proposed groundwater area, subarea, or zone. Before any proposed groundwater area, subarea, or zone shall be designated, or before the boundaries or any existing groundwater area, subarea, or zone shall be modified the department shall publish a notice setting forth: (1) In terms of the appropriate legal subdivisions a description of all lands enclosed within the proposed area, subarea, or zone, or within the area, subarea, or zone whose boundaries are proposed to be modified; (2) the object of the proposed designation or modification of boundaries; and (3) the day and hour, and the place where written objections may be submitted and heard. Such notice shall be published in three consecutive weekly issues of a newspaper of general circulation in the county or counties containing all or the greater portion of the lands involved, and the newspaper of publication shall be selected by the department. Publication as just prescribed shall be construed as sufficient notice to the landowners and water users concerned.

Objections having been heard as herein provided, the department shall make and file in its office written findings of fact with respect to the proposed designation or modification and, if the findings are in the affirmative, shall also enter a written order designating the groundwater area, or subarea, or zone or modifying the boundaries of the existing area, subarea, or zone. Such findings and order shall also be published substantially in the manner herein prescribed for notice of hearing, and when so published shall be final and conclusive unless an appeal therefrom is taken within the period and in the manner prescribed by RCW 43.21B.310. Publication of such findings and order shall give force and effect to the remaining provisions of this section and to the provisions of RCW 90.44.180, with respect to the particular area, subarea, or zone.

Priorities of right to withdraw public groundwater shall be established separately for each groundwater area, subarea, or zone and, as between such rights, the first in time shall be the superior in right. The priority of the right acquired under a certificate of groundwater right shall be the date of filing of the original application for a withdrawal with the department, or the date or approximate date of the earliest beneficial use of water as set forth in a certificate of a vested groundwater right, under the provisions of RCW 90.44.090.

Within ninety days after the designation of a groundwater area, subarea, or zone as herein provided, any person, firm, or corporation then claiming to be the owner of artificially stored groundwater within such area, subarea, or zone shall file a certified declaration to that effect with the department on a form prescribed by the department. Such declaration shall cover: (1) The location and description of the works by whose operation such artificial groundwater storage is purported to have been created, and the name or names of the owner or owners thereof; (2) a description of the lands purported to be underlain by such artificially stored groundwater, and the name or names of the owner or owners thereof; (3) the amount of such water claimed; (4) the date or approximate date of the earliest artificial storage; (5) evidence competent to show that the water claimed is in fact water that would have been dissipated naturally except for artificial improvements by the claimant; and (6) such additional factual information as reasonably may be required by the department. If any of the purported artificially stored groundwater has been or then is being withdrawn, the claimant also shall file (1) the declarations which this chapter requires of claimants to a vested right to withdraw public groundwaters, and (2) evidence competent to show that none of the water withdrawn under those declarations is in fact public groundwater from the area, subarea, or zone concerned: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That in case of failure to file a declaration within the ninety-day period herein provided, the claimant may apply to the department for a reasonable extension of time, which shall not exceed two additional years and which shall be granted only upon a showing of good cause for such failure.

Following publication of the declaration and findings—as in the case of an original application, permit, or certificate of right to appropriate public groundwaters—the department shall accept or reject such declaration or declarations with respect to ownership or withdrawal of artificially stored groundwater. Acceptance of such declaration or declarations by the department shall convey to the declarant no right to withdraw public groundwaters from the particular

area, subarea, or zone, nor to impair existing or subsequent rights to such public waters.

Any person, firm, or corporation hereafter claiming to be the owner of groundwater within a designated groundwater area, subarea, or zone by virtue of its artificial storage subsequent to such designation shall, within three years following the earliest artificial storage file a declaration of claim with the department, as herein prescribed for claims based on artificial storage prior to such designation: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That in case of such failure the claimant may apply to the department for a reasonable extension of time, which shall not exceed two additional years and which shall be granted upon a showing of good cause for such failure.

Any person, firm, or corporation hereafter withdrawing groundwater claimed to be owned by virtue of artificial storage subsequent to designation of the relevant groundwater area, subarea, or zone shall, within ninety days following the earliest such withdrawal, file with the department the declarations required by this chapter with respect to withdrawals of public groundwater. [2013 c 23 § 612; 1987 c 109 § 116; 1947 c 122 § 4; 1945 c 263 § 12; Rem. Supp. 1947 § 7400-12. Formerly RCW 90.44.130 through 90.44.170.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.180 Hearing to adjust supply to current needs.** At any time the department may hold a hearing on its own motion, and shall hold a hearing upon petition of at least fifty or one-fourth, whichever is the lesser number, of the holders of valid rights to withdraw public groundwaters from any designated groundwater area, sub-area, or zone, to determine whether the water supply in such area, sub-area, or zone is adequate for the current needs of all such holders. Notice of any such hearing, and the findings and order resulting therefrom shall be published in the manner prescribed in RCW 90.44.130 with respect to the designation or modification of a groundwater area, or sub-area, or zone.

If such hearing finds that the total available supply is inadequate for the current needs of all holders of valid rights to withdraw public groundwaters from the particular groundwater area, sub-area, or zone, the department shall order the aggregate withdrawal from such area, sub-area, or zone decreased so that it shall not exceed such available supply. Such decrease shall conform to the priority of the pertinent valid rights and shall prevail for the term of shortage in the available supply. Except that by mutual agreement among the respective holders and with the department, the ordered decrease in aggregate withdrawal may be accomplished by the waiving of all or some specified part of a senior right or rights in favor of a junior right or rights: PROVIDED, That such waiving of a right or rights by agreement shall not modify the relative priorities of such right or rights as recorded in the department. [1987 c 109 § 117; 1945 c 263 § 13; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-13.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.200 Water supervisors—Duties—Compensation.** The department, as in its judgment is deemed necessary and advisable, may appoint one or more groundwater supervisors for each designated groundwater area, sub-area, or zone, or may appoint one or more groundwater supervisors-at-large. Within their respective jurisdictions and under the direction of the department, such supervisor and supervisors-at-large shall supervise the withdrawal of public groundwaters and the carrying out of orders issued by the department under the provisions of this chapter.

The duties, compensation, and authority of such supervisors or supervisors-at-large shall be those prescribed for water masters under the terms of RCW 90.03.060 and 90.03.070. [1987 c 109 § 118; 1945 c 263 § 15; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-15.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Water master's power of arrest: RCW 90.03.090.*

**RCW 90.44.220 Petition to conduct an adjudication to determine rights to water.** Upon the filing of a petition with the department by a planning unit or by one or more persons claiming a right to any waters within the state or when, after investigation, in the judgment of the department, the public interest will be served by a determination of the rights thereto, the department shall file a petition to conduct an adjudication with the superior court of the county for the determination of the rights of appropriators of any particular groundwater body and all the provisions of RCW 90.03.110 through 90.03.240 and 90.03.620 through 90.03.645, shall govern and apply to the adjudication and determination of such groundwater body and to the ownership thereof. Hereafter, in any proceedings for the adjudication and determination of water rights—either rights to the use of surface water or to the use of groundwater, or both—pursuant to chapter 90.03 RCW, all appropriators of groundwater or of surface water in the particular basin or area may be included as parties to such adjudication, as set forth in chapter 90.03 RCW. [2009 c 332 § 17; 1987 c 109 § 119; 1945 c 263 § 17; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-17.]

**Application—2009 c 332:** See note following RCW 90.03.110.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Additional powers and duties enumerated—Payment from reclamation account: RCW 89.16.055.*

*Application of RCW sections to specific proceedings: RCW 90.14.200.*

*Determination of water rights*

*scope: RCW 90.03.245.*

*state to bear its expenses incurred in and on appeal: RCW 90.03.243.*

**RCW 90.44.230 Effect of findings and judgment.** In any determination of the right to withdrawal of groundwater under RCW 90.44.220, the department's findings and the court's findings and judgment shall determine the priority of right and the quantity of water to which each appropriator who is a party to the proceedings shall be entitled, shall determine the level below which the groundwater body shall not be drawn down by appropriators, or shall reserve jurisdiction for the determination of a safe sustaining water yield as necessary from time to time to preserve the rights of the several appropriators and to prevent depletion of the groundwater body. [1987 c 109 § 120; 1945 c 263 § 18; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-18.]

~~**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.250 Investigations—Reports of appropriators.** The department is hereby authorized to make such investigations as may be necessary to determine the location, extent, depth, volume, and flow of all groundwaters within the state and in making such examination, hereby is authorized and directed to cooperate with the federal government, with any county or municipal corporation, or any person, firm, association or corporation, and upon such terms as may seem appropriate to it.

In connection with such investigation, the department from time to time may require reports from each groundwater appropriator as to the amount of public groundwater being withdrawn and as to the manner and extent of the beneficial use. Such reports shall be in a form prescribed by the department. [1987 c 109 § 121; 1945 c 263 § 19; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 7400-19. Formerly RCW 90.44.210.]

~~**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.44.400 Groundwater management areas—Purpose—Standards—Identification—Designation.** (1) This legislation is enacted for the purpose of identifying groundwater management procedures that are consistent with both local needs and state water resource policies and management objectives; including the protection of water quality, assurance of quantity, and efficient management of water resources to meet future needs.

In recognition of existing water rights and the need to manage groundwater aquifers for future use, the department of ecology shall, by rule, establish standards, criteria, and a process for the designation of specific groundwater areas or sub-areas, or separate depth zones within such area or sub-area, and provide for either the department of ecology, local governments, or groundwater users of the area to initiate development of a groundwater management program for each area or sub-area, consistent with state and local government objectives, policies, and authorities. The department shall develop and adopt these rules by January 1, 1986.

(2) The department of ecology, in cooperation with other state agencies, local government, and user groups, shall identify probable groundwater management areas or sub-areas. The department shall also prepare a general schedule for the development of groundwater



management programs that recognizes the available local or state agency staff and financial resources to carry out the intent of RCW 90.44.400 through 90.44.420. The department shall also provide the option for locally initiated studies and for local government to assume the lead agency role in developing the groundwater management program and in implementing the provisions of RCW 90.44.400 through 90.44.420. The criteria to guide identification of the groundwater areas or sub-areas shall include but not be limited to, the following:

(a) Aquifer systems that are declining due to restricted recharge or over-utilization;

(b) Aquifer systems in which overappropriation may have occurred and adjudication of water rights has not yet been completed;

(c) Aquifer systems currently being considered for water supply reservation under chapter 90.54 RCW for future beneficial uses;

(d) Aquifers identified as the primary source of supply for public water supply systems;

(e) Aquifers designated as a sole source aquifer by the federal environmental protection agency; and

(f) Geographical areas where land use may result in contamination or degradation of the groundwater quality.

(3) In developing the groundwater management programs, priority shall be given to areas or sub-areas where water quality is imminently threatened. [1985 c 453 § 1.]

**RCW 90.44.410 Requirements for groundwater management programs—  
Review of programs.** (1) The groundwater area or sub-area management programs shall include:

(a) A description of the specific groundwater area or sub-areas, or separate depth zones within any such area or sub-area, and the relationship of this zone or area to the land use management responsibilities of county government;

(b) A management program based on long-term monitoring and resource management objectives for the area or sub-area;

(c) Identification of water resources and the allocation of the resources to meet state and local needs;

(d) Projection of water supply needs for existing and future identified user groups and beneficial uses;

(e) Identification of water resource management policies and/or practices that may impact the recharge of the designated area or policies that may affect the safe yield and quantity of water available for future appropriation;

(f) Identification of land use and other activities that may impact the quality and efficient use of the groundwater, including domestic, industrial, solid, and other waste disposal, underground storage facilities, or stormwater management practices;

(g) The design of the program necessary to manage the resource to assure long-term benefits to the citizens of the state;

(h) Identification of water quality objectives for the aquifer system which recognize existing and future uses of the aquifer and that are in accordance with department of ecology and department of social and health services drinking and surface water quality standards;

(i) Long-term policies and construction practices necessary to protect existing water rights and subsequent facilities installed in

accordance with the groundwater area or sub-area management programs and/or other water right procedures;

(j) Annual withdrawal rates and safe yield guidelines which are directed by the long-term management programs that recognize annual variations in aquifer recharge;

(k) A description of conditions and potential conflicts and identification of a program to resolve conflicts with existing water rights;

(l) Alternative management programs to meet future needs and existing conditions, including water conservation plans; and

(m) A process for the periodic review of the groundwater management program and monitoring of the implementation of the program.

(2) The groundwater area or sub-area management programs shall be submitted for review in accordance with the state environmental policy act. [1988 c 186 § 1; 1985 c 453 § 2.]

**Effective date—1988 c 186 § 1:** "Section 1 of this act shall take effect June 30, 1998." [1988 c 186 § 2.]

**RCW 90.44.420 Groundwater management programs—Consideration by department of ecology—Public hearing—Findings—Adoption of regulations, ordinances, and programs.** The department of ecology shall consider the groundwater area or sub-area management plan for adoption in accordance with this chapter and chapter 90.54 RCW.

Upon completion of the groundwater area or sub-area management program, the department of ecology shall hold a public hearing within the designated groundwater management area for the purpose of taking public testimony on the proposed program. Following the public hearing, the department of ecology and affected local governments shall (1) prepare findings which either provide for the subsequent adoption of the program as proposed or identify the revisions necessary to ensure that the program is consistent with the intent of this chapter, and (2) adopt regulations, ordinances, and/or programs for implementing those provisions of the groundwater management program which are within their respective jurisdictional authorities. [1985 c 453 § 3.]

**RCW 90.44.430 Groundwater management programs—Guidance to local governments and certain departments.** The department of ecology, the department of social and health services, and affected local governments shall be guided by the adopted program when reviewing and considering approval of all studies, plans, and facilities that may utilize or impact the implementation of the program. [1985 c 453 § 4.]

**RCW 90.44.440 Existing rights not affected.** RCW 90.44.400 through 90.44.430 shall not affect any water rights existing as of May 21, 1985. [1985 c 453 § 5.]

**RCW 90.44.445 Acreage expansion program—Authorization—Certification.** In any acreage expansion program adopted by the

department as an element of a groundwater management program, the authorization for a water right certificate holder to participate in the program shall be on an annual basis for the first two years. After the two-year period, the department may authorize participation for ten-year periods. The department may authorize participation for ten-year periods for certificate holders who have already participated in an acreage expansion program for two years. The department may require annual certification that the certificate holder has complied with all requirements of the program. The department may terminate the authority of a certificate holder to participate in the program for one calendar year if the certificate holder fails to comply with the requirements of the program. [1993 c 99 § 1.]

**RCW 90.44.450 Metering or measuring groundwater withdrawals—Reports.** The department of ecology may require withdrawals of groundwater to be metered, or measured by other approved methods, as a condition for a new water right permit. The department may also require, as a condition for such permits, reports regarding such withdrawals as to the amount of water being withdrawn. These reports shall be in a form prescribed by the department. [1989 c 348 § 7.]

**Severability—1989 c 348:** See note following RCW 90.54.020.

**Rights not impaired—1989 c 348:** See RCW 90.54.920.

**RCW 90.44.460 Reservoir permits.** The legislature recognizes the importance of sound water management. In an effort to promote new and innovative methods of water storage, the legislature authorizes the department of ecology to issue reservoir permits that enable an entity to artificially store and recover water in any underground geological formation, which qualifies as a reservoir under RCW 90.03.370. [2000 c 98 § 1.]

**RCW 90.44.500 Civil penalties.** See RCW 90.03.600.

**RCW 90.44.510 Superseding water right permit or certificate—Water delivered from federal Columbia Basin project.** The department shall issue a superseding water right permit or certificate for a groundwater right where the source of water is an aquifer for which the department adopts rules establishing a groundwater management subarea and water from the federal Columbia Basin project is delivered for use by a person who holds such a groundwater right. The superseding water right permit or certificate shall designate that portion of the groundwater right that is replaced by water from the federal Columbia Basin project as a standby or reserve right that may be used when water delivered by the federal project is curtailed or otherwise not available. The period of curtailment or unavailability shall be deemed a low flow period under RCW 90.14.140(2)(b). The total number of acres irrigated by the person under the groundwater right and through the use of water delivered from the federal project must not exceed the quantity of water authorized by the federal bureau of reclamation and number of acres irrigated under the person's water

right permit or certificate for the use of water from the aquifer.  
[2011 c 72 § 1; 2004 c 195 § 3.]

**RCW 90.44.530 Applications to appropriate groundwater under a cost-reimbursement agreement.** Applications to appropriate groundwater under a cost-reimbursement agreement must be processed in accordance with RCW 90.03.265 when an applicant requests the assignment of a cost-reimbursement consultant as provided in RCW 43.21A.690. [2010 c 285 § 11.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.44.540 Expedited processing of applications—Notification—Fees.** (1) The department may expedite processing of applications within the same source of water on its own volition when there is interest from a sufficient number of applicants or upon receipt of written requests from at least ten percent of the applicants within the same source of water.

(2) If the conditions of subsection (1) of this section have been met and the department determines that the public interest is best served by expediting applications within a water source, the department must notify in writing all persons who have pending applications on file for a new appropriation, change, transfer, or amendment of a water right from that water source. A water source may include surface water only, groundwater only, or surface and groundwater together if the department determines that they are hydraulically connected. The notice must be posted on the department's website and published in a newspaper of general circulation in the area where affected properties are located. The notice must also be made individually by way of mail to:

- (a) Inform those applicants that expedited processing of applications within the described water source is being initiated;
- (b) Provide to individual applicants the criteria under which the applications will be examined and determined;
- (c) Provide to individual applicants the estimated cost for having an application processed on an expedited basis;
- (d) Provide an estimate of how long the expedited process will take before an application is approved or denied; and
- (e) Provide at least sixty days for the applicants to respond in writing regarding the applicant's decision to participate in expedited processing of their applications.

(3) In addition to the application fees provided in RCW 90.03.470, the department must recover the full cost of processing all the applications from applicants who elect to participate within the water source through expedited processing fees. The department must calculate an expedited processing fee based primarily on the proportionate quantity of water requested by each applicant and may adjust the fee if it appears that an application will require a disproportionately greater amount of time and effort to process due to its complexity. Any application fees that were paid by the applicant under RCW 90.03.470 must be credited against the applicant's share of the cost of processing applications under the provisions of this section.

(4) The expedited processing fee must be collected by the department prior to the expedited processing of an application. Revenue collected from these fees must be deposited into the water rights processing account created in RCW 90.03.650. An applicant who has stated in writing that he or she wants his or her application processed using the expedited procedures in this section must transmit the processing fee within sixty days of the written request. Failure to do so will result in the applicant not being included in expedited processing for that water source.

(5) If an applicant elects not to participate in expedited processing, the application remains on file with the department, the applicant retains his or her priority date, and the application may be processed through regular processing, priority processing, expedited processing, coordinated cost-reimbursement processing, cost-reimbursement processing, or through conservancy board processing as authorized under chapter 90.80 RCW. Such an application may not be processed through expedited processing within twelve months after the department's issuance of decisions on participating applications at the conclusion of expedited processing unless the applicant agrees to pay the full proportionate share that would otherwise have been paid during such processing. Any proceeds collected from an applicant under this delayed entry into expedited processing shall be used to reimburse the other applicants who participated in the previous expedited processing of applications, provided sufficient proceeds remain to fully cover the department's cost of processing the delayed entry application and the department's estimated administrative costs to reimburse the previously expedited applicants. [2010 c 285 § 12.]

**Intent—2010 c 285:** See note following RCW 90.03.265.

**RCW 90.44.550 Odessa groundwater subarea—Nonuse of a water right—Notice to the department—Conditions.** (1) In order to encourage more efficient use of water, where the source of water is an aquifer within the Odessa groundwater subarea as defined in chapter 173-128A WAC:

(a) Any period of nonuse of a right to withdraw groundwater from the aquifer is deemed to be involuntary due to a drought or low flow period under RCW 90.14.140(2)(b); and

(b) Such unused water is deemed a standby or reserve water supply that may again be used after the period of nonuse, as long as: (i) Reductions in water use are a result of conservation practices, irrigation or water use efficiencies, long or short-term changes in the types or rotations of crops grown, economic hardship, pumping or system infrastructure costs, unavailability or unsuitability of water, or willing and documented participation in cooperative efforts to reduce aquifer depletion and optimize available water resources; (ii) withdrawal or diversion facilities are maintained in good operating condition; and (iii) the department has not issued a superseding water right permit or certificate to designate a portion of the groundwater right replaced by federal Columbia basin project water as a standby or reserve right under RCW 90.44.510.

(2) (a) A water right holder choosing to not exercise a water right in accordance with the provisions of this section must provide notice to the department in writing within 180 days of such a choice.

The notice must include the name of the water right holder and the number of the permit, certificate, or claim.

(b) When a water right holder chooses to discontinue nonuse under the provisions of this section, notice of such action must be provided to the department in writing. Notice is not required under this subsection (2)(b) for seasonal fluctuations in use if the right is not fully exercised as reflected in the notice provided under (a) of this subsection.

(c) A water right holder who submitted notice under RCW 90.44.520(2)(a) as it existed on June 30, 2021, is deemed to have provided notice under (a) of this subsection.

(3) The provisions of this section relating to the nonuse of all or a portion of a water right are in addition to any other provisions relating to such nonuse under existing law.

(4) If water from the federal Columbia basin project has been delivered to a place of use authorized under a right to withdraw groundwater from the aquifer, the provisions of RCW 90.44.510 apply and supersede the provisions of this section.

(5) Portions of rights protected under this section may not be transferred outside Odessa subarea boundaries as defined in WAC 173-128A-040. Transfers within Odessa subarea boundaries remain subject to the provisions of RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.390, 90.44.100, and WAC 173-130A-200. [2022 c 60 § 2.]

**Finding—2022 c 60:** "In 2006, the legislature approved chapter 168, Laws of 2006 (Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6151) in order to encourage the efficient use of water in the Odessa subarea. Chapter 168, Laws of 2006 (Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill No. 6151) expired in July of 2021. The legislature finds that this program was effective and is necessary." [2022 c 60 § 1.]

**Chapter 90.46 RCW  
RECLAIMED WATER USE**

**Sections**

- 90.46.005 Findings—Coordination of efforts—Development of facilities encouraged.
- 90.46.010 Definitions.
- 90.46.015 Rules—Coordination with department of health— Consultation with advisory committee.
- 90.46.020 Interim standards for pilot projects for use of reclaimed water.
- 90.46.030 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water—Reclaimed water permits—Fee structure for permits—Formal agreements between the departments of health and ecology.
- 90.46.040 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for land applications of reclaimed water.
- 90.46.042 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for direct recharge.
- 90.46.044 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for discharge to wetlands.
- 90.46.050 Advisory committee—Development of standards, procedures, and guidelines.
- 90.46.070 Exemption from standards, procedures, and guidelines.
- 90.46.072 Conflict resolution—Reclaimed water projects and chapter 372-32 WAC.
- 90.46.080 Use of reclaimed water for surface percolation— Establishment of discharge limit for contaminants.
- 90.46.090 Use of reclaimed water for discharge into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands—Standards for discharge.
- 90.46.100 Discharge of reclaimed water for streamflow augmentation.
- 90.46.110 Reclaimed water demonstration program—Demonstration projects.
- 90.46.120 Use of water from wastewater treatment facility— Consideration in regional water supply plan or potable water supply plans—Consideration in reviewing provisions for water supplies for short plat, short subdivision, or subdivision—Report to the legislature.
- 90.46.130 Impairment of water rights downstream from freshwater discharge points.
- 90.46.140 Greywater reuse—Standards, procedures, and guidelines— Rules.
- 90.46.150 Agricultural industrial process water—Permit—Use— Referral to department of health.
- 90.46.160 Industrial reuse water—Permit.
- 90.46.200 Authority of the departments of ecology and health—Lead agency—Duties.
- 90.46.210 Lead agency—Authority to bring legal proceeding.
- 90.46.220 Permit.
- 90.46.230 Right to enter and inspect property related to the purpose of the permit—Administrative search warrant.
- 90.46.240 Plans, reports, specifications, and proposed methods of operation and maintenance to be submitted to departments.
- 90.46.250 Violation of chapter—Notification—Immediate action.

90.46.260 Penalty.  
90.46.270 Violations—Civil penalty—Procedure.  
90.46.280 Application of administrative procedure act to chapter.  
90.46.290 On-site nonpotable water systems—Risk-based water quality  
standards—Adoption of rules.



**Chapter 90.46 RCW**  
**RECLAIMED WATER USE**

**Sections**

- 90.46.005 Findings—Coordination of efforts—Development of facilities encouraged.
- 90.46.010 Definitions.
- 90.46.015 Rules—Coordination with department of health— Consultation with advisory committee.
- 90.46.020 Interim standards for pilot projects for use of reclaimed water.
- 90.46.030 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water—Reclaimed water permits—Fee structure for permits—Formal agreements between the departments of health and ecology.
- 90.46.040 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for land applications of reclaimed water.
- 90.46.042 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for direct recharge.
- 90.46.044 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for discharge to wetlands.
- 90.46.050 Advisory committee—Development of standards, procedures, and guidelines.
- 90.46.070 Exemption from standards, procedures, and guidelines.
- 90.46.072 Conflict resolution—Reclaimed water projects and chapter 372-32 WAC.
- 90.46.080 Use of reclaimed water for surface percolation— Establishment of discharge limit for contaminants.
- 90.46.090 Use of reclaimed water for discharge into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands—Standards for discharge.
- 90.46.100 Discharge of reclaimed water for streamflow augmentation.
- 90.46.110 Reclaimed water demonstration program—Demonstration projects.
- 90.46.120 Use of water from wastewater treatment facility— Consideration in regional water supply plan or potable water supply plans—Consideration in reviewing provisions for water supplies for short plat, short subdivision, or subdivision—Report to the legislature.
- 90.46.130 Impairment of water rights downstream from freshwater discharge points.
- 90.46.140 Greywater reuse—Standards, procedures, and guidelines— Rules.
- 90.46.150 Agricultural industrial process water—Permit—Use— Referral to department of health.
- 90.46.160 Industrial reuse water—Permit.
- 90.46.200 Authority of the departments of ecology and health—Lead agency—Duties.
- 90.46.210 Lead agency—Authority to bring legal proceeding.
- 90.46.220 Permit.
- 90.46.230 Right to enter and inspect property related to the purpose of the permit—Administrative search warrant.
- 90.46.240 Plans, reports, specifications, and proposed methods of operation and maintenance to be submitted to departments.
- 90.46.250 Violation of chapter—Notification—Immediate action.

- 90.46.260 Penalty.
- 90.46.270 Violations—Civil penalty—Procedure.
- 90.46.280 Application of administrative procedure act to chapter.
- 90.46.290 On-site nonpotable water systems—Risk-based water quality standards—Adoption of rules.

**RCW 90.46.005 Findings—Coordination of efforts—Development of facilities encouraged.** The legislature finds that by encouraging the use of reclaimed water while assuring the health and safety of all Washington citizens and the protection of its environment, the state of Washington will continue to use water in the best interests of present and future generations.

To facilitate the immediate use of reclaimed water for uses approved by the departments of ecology and health, the state shall expand both direct financial support and financial incentives for capital investments in water reuse and reclaimed water to effectuate the goals of this chapter. The legislature further directs the department of health and the department of ecology to coordinate efforts towards developing an efficient and streamlined process for creating and implementing processes for the use of reclaimed water.

It is hereby declared that the people of the state of Washington have a primary interest in the development of facilities to provide reclaimed water to replace potable water in nonpotable applications, to supplement existing surface and ground water supplies, and to assist in meeting the future water requirements of the state.

The legislature further finds and declares that the utilization of reclaimed water by local communities for domestic, agricultural, industrial, recreational, and fish and wildlife habitat creation and enhancement purposes, including wetland enhancement, will contribute to the peace, health, safety, and welfare of the people of the state of Washington. To the extent reclaimed water is appropriate for beneficial uses, it should be so used to preserve potable water for drinking purposes, contribute to the restoration and protection of instream flows that are crucial to preservation of the state's salmonid fishery resources, contribute to the restoration of Puget Sound by reducing wastewater discharge, provide a drought resistant source of water supply for nonpotable needs, or be a source of supply integrated into state, regional, and local strategies to respond to population growth and global warming. Use of reclaimed water constitutes the development of new basic water supplies needed for future generations and local and regional water management planning should consider coordination of infrastructure, development, storage, water reclamation and reuse, and source exchange as strategies to meet water demands associated with population growth and impacts of global warming.

The legislature further finds and declares that the use of reclaimed water is not inconsistent with the policy of antidegradation of state waters announced in other state statutes, including the water pollution control act, chapter 90.48 RCW and the water resources act, chapter 90.54 RCW.

The legislature finds that other states, including California, Florida, and Arizona, have successfully used reclaimed water to supplement existing water supplies without threatening existing resources or public health.

It is the intent of the legislature that the department of ecology and the department of health undertake the necessary steps to encourage the development of water reclamation facilities so that reclaimed water may be made available to help meet the growing water requirements of the state.

The legislature further finds and declares that reclaimed water facilities are water pollution control facilities as defined in chapter 70A.135 RCW and are eligible for financial assistance as provided in chapter 70A.135 RCW. The legislature finds that funding demonstration projects will ensure the future use of reclaimed water. The demonstration projects in RCW 90.46.110 are varied in nature and will provide the experience necessary to test different facets of the standards and refine a variety of technologies so that water purveyors can begin to use reclaimed water technology in a more cost-effective manner. This is especially critical in smaller cities and communities where the feasibility for such projects is great, but there are scarce resources to develop the necessary facilities.

The legislature further finds that the agricultural processing industry can play a critical and beneficial role in promoting the efficient use of water by having the opportunity to develop and reuse agricultural industrial process water from food processing. [2020 c 20 § 1495; 2007 c 445 § 2; 2001 c 69 § 1; 1997 c 355 § 1; 1995 c 342 § 1; 1992 c 204 § 1.]

**Findings—Intent—2007 c 445:** "(1) Since the 1992 enactment of the reclaimed water act, the value of reclaimed water as a new source of supply has received increasing recognition across the state and across the nation. New information on the matters in this section has increased awareness of the need to better manage, protect, and conserve water resources and to use reclaimed water in that process. The legislature now finds the following:

(a) Global warming and climate change. Global warming has reduced the volume of glaciers in the North Cascade mountains to between eighteen to thirty-two percent since 1983, and up to seventy-five percent of the glaciers are at risk of disappearing under projected temperatures for this century. Mountain snow pack has declined at virtually every measurement location in the Pacific Northwest, reducing the proportion of annual river flow to Puget Sound during summer months by eighteen percent since 1948. Global warming has also shifted peak streamflows earlier in the year in watersheds covering much of Washington state, including the Columbia river basin, jeopardizing the state's salmon fisheries. The state's recent report on the economic impacts of climate change indicate that water resources will be one of the areas most affected, and that many utilities may need to invest major resources in new supply and conservation measures. Developing and implementing adaptation strategies, such as water conservation that includes the use of reclaimed water, can extend existing water supply systems to help address the global warming impacts. In particular, because reclaimed water uses existing sources of supply and fairly constant base flows of wastewater, it has year-round dependability, without regard to any given year's climate variability. This is particularly important during summer months, when outdoor demands peak and streamflows are critical for fish.

(b) Puget Sound. The governor has initiated a Puget Sound partnership, with a request for an initial strategy to address high

priority problems. In December, the partnership delivered a strategy that includes expanded use of reclaimed water both in order to improve the Puget Sound's water quality by reducing wastewater discharges and by replacing current sources of supply for nonpotable uses that detrimentally affect streamflows and habitat.

(c) Salmon recovery. The federal fisheries services recently approved a salmon recovery plan for the Puget Sound, which was developed across multiple watersheds by numerous local governments, tribal governments, and other parties to achieve sustainable populations of salmon and other species. That plan includes an adaptive management component where continued efforts will be made to address issues, including problems with instream flows, identified as a limiting factor in virtually all the watersheds, through strategies that will be developed by regional and watershed implementation groups. A potentially significant strategy may be the substitution of reclaimed water for nonpotable uses where it will benefit streams and habitat.

(d) Water quality. Increasingly stringent federal standards for water quality are forcing a number of communities to develop strategies for wastewater treatment that, in addition to providing higher treatment levels, will reduce the quantity of discharges. For many of those communities, facilities to produce reclaimed water will be a necessary approach to achieve both water quality and water supply objectives.

(e) Watershed plans. Under the watershed planning act of 1997, approximately two-thirds of the watersheds in the state have used a bottom-up approach to developing collaborative plans for meeting future water supply needs. Many of those plans include the use of reclaimed water for meeting those needs.

(f) Columbia river water management. Pursuant to legislation and funding provided in 2006, federal, state, and local governments and agencies, along with tribal governments, user groups, environmental organizations, and others are developing a comprehensive strategy for the mainstem Columbia that will ensure supplies for future growth while protecting streamflows and fish habitat. The strategy will include multiple tools that may include the potential development of new storage, conservation measures, and water use efficiency. One pathway toward conservation and efficiency is likely to be identification and implementation of reclaimed water opportunities.

(g) Development schedule. The time frame required to plan, design, construct, and begin use of reclaimed water can be extensive due to the public information and acceptance efforts required in addition to planning, design, and environmental assessment required for infrastructure projects. This extended time frame necessitates the initiation of reclaimed water projects as soon as possible.

(2) It is therefore the intent of the legislature to:

(a) Effectuate and reinvigorate the original intent behind the reclaimed water act to expand the use of reclaimed water for nonpotable uses throughout the state;

(b) Restate and emphasize the use of reclaimed water as a matter of water resource management policy;

(c) Address current barriers to the use of reclaimed water, where changes in state law will resolve such issues;

(d) Develop information from the state agencies responsible for promoting the use of reclaimed water and address regulatory, financial, planning, and other barriers to the expanded use of

reclaimed water, relying on state agency expertise and experience with reclaimed water;

(e) Facilitate achieving state, regional, and local objectives through use of reclaimed water for water supply purposes in high priority areas of the state, and in regional and local watershed and water planning;

(f) Provide planning tools to local governments to incorporate reclaimed water and related water conservation into land use plans, consistent with water planning;

(g) Expand the scope of work of the advisory committee established under chapter 279, Laws of 2006 to identify other reclaimed water issues that should be addressed; and

(h) Provide initial funding, and evaluate options for providing additional direct state funding, for reclaimed water projects." [2007 c 445 § 1.]

**Construction—1995 c 342:** "This act shall not be construed as affecting any existing right acquired or liability or obligation incurred under the sections amended or repealed in this act or under any rule or order adopted under those sections, nor as affecting any proceeding instituted under those sections." [1995 c 342 § 10.]

**Effective date—1995 c 342:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [May 11, 1995]." [1995 c 342 § 11.]

**RCW 90.46.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Agricultural industrial process water" means water that has been used for the purpose of agricultural processing and has been adequately and reliably treated, so that as a result of that treatment, it is suitable for other agricultural water use.

(2) "Agricultural processing" means the processing of crops or milk to produce a product primarily for wholesale or retail sale for human or animal consumption, including but not limited to potato, fruit, vegetable, and grain processing.

(3) "Agricultural water use" means the use of water for irrigation and other uses related to the production of agricultural products. These uses include, but are not limited to, construction, operation, and maintenance of agricultural facilities and livestock operations at farms, ranches, dairies, and nurseries. Examples of these uses include, but are not limited to, dust control, temperature control, and fire control.

(4) "Constructed beneficial use wetlands" means those wetlands intentionally constructed on nonwetland sites to produce or create natural wetland functions and values.

(5) "Constructed treatment wetlands" means wetland-like impoundments intentionally constructed on nonwetland sites and managed for the primary purpose of further treatment or retention of reclaimed water as distinct from creating natural wetland functions and values.

(6) "Direct groundwater recharge" means the controlled subsurface addition of water directly into groundwater for the purpose of replenishing groundwater.

(7) "Domestic wastewater" means wastewater from greywater, toilet, or urinal sources.

(8) "Greywater or gray water" means domestic type flows from bathtubs, showers, bathroom sinks, washing machines, dishwashers, and kitchen or utility sinks. Gray water does not include flow from a toilet or urinal.

(9) "Industrial reuse water" means water that has been used for the purpose of industrial processing and has been adequately and reliably treated so that, as a result of that treatment, it is suitable for other uses.

(10) "Land application" means use of reclaimed water as permitted under this chapter for the purpose of irrigation or watering of landscape vegetation.

(11) "Lead agency" means either the department of health or the department of ecology that has been designated by rule as the agency that will coordinate, review, issue, and enforce a reclaimed water permit issued under this chapter.

(12) "Nonlead agency" means either the department of health or the department of ecology, whichever is not the lead agency for purposes of this chapter.

(13) "Person" means any state, individual, public or private corporation, political subdivision, governmental subdivision, governmental agency, municipality, copartnership, association, firm, trust estate, or any other legal entity whatever.

(14) "Planned groundwater recharge project" means any reclaimed water project designed for the purpose of recharging groundwater.

(15) "Reclaimed water" means water derived in any part from wastewater with a domestic wastewater component that has been adequately and reliably treated, so that it can be used for beneficial purposes. Reclaimed water is not considered a wastewater.

(16) "State drinking water contaminant criteria" means the contaminant criteria found in the drinking water quality standards adopted by the state board of health pursuant to chapter 43.20 RCW and the department of health pursuant to chapter 70A.125 RCW.

(17) "Streamflow or surface water augmentation" means the intentional use of reclaimed water for rivers and streams of the state or other surface water bodies, for the purpose of increasing volumes.

(18) "Surface percolation" means the controlled application of water to the ground surface or to unsaturated soil for the purpose of replenishing groundwater.

(19) "User" means any person who uses reclaimed water.

(20) "Wastewater" means water-carried wastes from residences, buildings, industrial and commercial establishments, or other places, together with such groundwater infiltration and inflow as may be present.

(21) "Wetland or wetlands" means areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted to life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Wetlands regulated under this chapter shall be delineated in accordance with the manual adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.58.380. [2020 c 20 § 1496; 2009 c 456 § 1; 2006 c 279 § 4; 2002 c 329 § 3; 2001 c 69 § 2; 1997 c 444 § 5; 1995 c 342 § 2; 1992 c 204 § 2.]

**Alphabetization—2009 c 456:** "The code reviser shall alphabetize and renumber the definitions in RCW 90.46.010." [2009 c 456 § 19.]

**Alphabetization—2006 c 279:** "The code reviser shall alphabetize and renumber the definitions in RCW 90.46.010." [2006 c 279 § 12.]

**Severability—1997 c 444:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1997 c 444 § 11.]

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.015 Rules—Coordination with department of health—Consultation with advisory committee.** (1) The department of ecology shall, in coordination with the department of health, adopt rules for reclaimed water use consistent with this chapter. The rules must address all aspects of reclaimed water use, including commercial and industrial uses, land applications, direct groundwater recharge, wetland discharge, surface percolation, constructed wetlands, and streamflow or surface water augmentation. The department of health shall, in coordination with the department of ecology, adopt rules for greywater reuse. The rules must also designate whether the department of ecology or the department of health will be the lead agency responsible for a particular aspect of reclaimed water use. In developing the rules, the departments of health and ecology shall amend or rescind any existing rules on reclaimed water in conflict with the new rules.

(2) All rules required to be adopted pursuant to this section must be completed no later than December 31, 2010, except that the department of ecology shall adopt rules for reclaimed water use no earlier than June 30, 2013.

(3) The department of ecology must consult with the advisory committee created under RCW 90.46.050 in all aspects of rule development required under this section. [2011 c 353 § 11; 2009 c 456 § 2; 2006 c 279 § 1.]

**Intent—2011 c 353:** See note following RCW 36.70A.130.

**RCW 90.46.020 Interim standards for pilot projects for use of reclaimed water.** (1) The department of ecology shall, in coordination with the department of health, develop interim standards for pilot projects under subsection (3) of this section on or before July 1, 1992, for the use of reclaimed water in land applications.

(2) The department of health shall, in coordination with the department of ecology, develop interim standards for pilot projects under subsection (3) of this section on or before November 15, 1992, for the use of reclaimed water in commercial and industrial activities.

(3) The department of ecology and the department of health shall assist interested parties in the development of pilot projects to aid in achieving the purposes of this chapter. [1992 c 204 § 3.]

**RCW 90.46.030 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water—Reclaimed water permits—Fee structure for permits—Formal agreements between the departments of health and ecology.**

(1) (a) The department of health shall, in coordination with the department of ecology, adopt a single set of standards, procedures, and guidelines on or before August 1, 1993, for the industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water.

(b) Standards adopted under this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to the industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water.

(2) Unless the department of ecology adopts rules pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 that relate to the industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water specifying otherwise, the department of health may issue a reclaimed water permit for industrial and commercial uses of reclaimed water to the generator of reclaimed water who may then distribute the water, subject to provisions in the permit governing the location, rate, water quality, and purposes of use. Permits issued after the adoption of rules under RCW 90.46.015 must be consistent with the adopted rules.

(3) The department of health in consultation with the advisory committee established in RCW 90.46.050, shall develop recommendations for a fee structure for permits issued under subsection (2) of this section. Fees shall be established in amounts to fully recover, and not exceed, expenses incurred by the department of health in processing permit applications and modifications, monitoring and evaluating compliance with permits, and conducting inspections and supporting the reasonable overhead expenses that are directly related to these activities. Permit fees may not be used for research or enforcement activities. The department of health shall not issue permits under this section until a fee structure has been established.

(4) A permit under this section for use of reclaimed water may be issued only to:

(a) A municipal, quasi-municipal, or other governmental entity;

(b) A private utility as defined in RCW 36.94.010; or

(c) The holder of a waste discharge permit issued under chapter 90.48 RCW.

(5) The authority and duties created in this section are in addition to any authority and duties already provided in law with regard to sewage and wastewater collection, treatment, and disposal for the protection of health and safety of the state's waters. Nothing in this section limits the powers of the state or any political subdivision to exercise such authority.

(6) Unless the department of ecology adopts rules pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 that relate to the industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water specifying otherwise, the department of health may implement the requirements of this section through the department of ecology by execution of a formal agreement between the departments. Upon execution of such an agreement, the department of ecology may issue reclaimed water permits for industrial and commercial uses of reclaimed water by issuance of permits under chapter 90.48 RCW, and may establish and collect fees as required for permits issued under chapter 90.48 RCW.

(7) Unless the department of ecology adopts rules pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 that relate to the industrial and commercial use of reclaimed water specifying otherwise, and before deciding whether to



issue a permit under this section to a private utility, the department of health may require information that is reasonable and necessary to determine whether the private utility has the financial and other resources to ensure the reliability, continuity, and supervision of the reclaimed water facility. [2006 c 279 § 5; 2005 c 59 § 1; 2002 c 329 § 4; 1992 c 204 § 4.]

**RCW 90.46.040 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for land applications of reclaimed water.** (1) The department of ecology shall, in coordination with the department of health, adopt a single set of standards, procedures, and guidelines, on or before August 1, 1993, for land applications of reclaimed water.

(2) Standards adopted under this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to the land application of reclaimed water. [2009 c 456 § 3; 2006 c 279 § 6; 2005 c 59 § 2; 1992 c 204 § 5.]

**RCW 90.46.042 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for direct recharge.** (1) The department of ecology shall, in consultation with the department of health, adopt a single set of standards, procedures, and guidelines, on or before December 31, 1996, for direct recharge using reclaimed water. The standards shall address both water quality considerations and avoidance of property damage from excessive recharge.

(2) Standards adopted under this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to direct recharge using reclaimed water. [2006 c 279 § 7; 1995 c 342 § 6.]

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.044 Standards, procedures, and guidelines for discharge to wetlands.** (1) The department of ecology shall, in consultation with the department of health, adopt a single set of standards, procedures, and guidelines, on or before June 30, 1996, for discharge of reclaimed water to wetlands.

(2) Standards adopted under this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to discharge of reclaimed water to wetlands. [2006 c 279 § 8; 1995 c 342 § 7.]

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.050 Advisory committee—Development of standards, procedures, and guidelines.** The department of ecology shall, before July 1, 2006, form an advisory committee, in coordination with the department of health and the department of agriculture, which will provide technical assistance in the development of standards, procedures, and guidelines required by this chapter. The advisory committee shall be composed of a broad range of interested individuals

representing the various stakeholders that utilize or are potentially impacted by the use of reclaimed water. The advisory committee must also contain individuals with technical expertise and knowledge of new advancements in technology. [2006 c 279 § 2; 1995 c 342 § 9; 1992 c 204 § 6.]

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.070 Exemption from standards, procedures, and guidelines.** Any person lawfully using reclaimed water before April 2, 1992, may continue to do so and is not required to comply with the standards, procedures, and guidelines under chapter 90.46 RCW before July 1, 1995. [1992 c 204 § 8.]

**RCW 90.46.072 Conflict resolution—Reclaimed water projects and chapter 372-32 WAC.** On or before December 31, 1995, the department of ecology and department of health shall, in consultation with local interested parties, jointly review and, if required, propose amendments to chapter 372-32 WAC to resolve conflicts between the development of reclaimed water projects in the Puget Sound region and chapter 372-32 RCW [WAC]. [1995 c 342 § 8.]

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.080 Use of reclaimed water for surface percolation—Establishment of discharge limit for contaminants.** (1) Except as otherwise provided in this section, reclaimed water may be beneficially used for surface percolation provided the reclaimed water meets the state drinking water contaminant criteria as measured in groundwater beneath or down gradient of the recharge project site, and has been incorporated into a sewer or water comprehensive plan, as applicable, adopted by the applicable local government and approved by the department of health or department of ecology as applicable.

(2) If the state drinking water contaminant criteria do not contain a standard for a constituent or contaminant, the department of ecology shall establish a discharge limit consistent with the goals of this chapter, except as otherwise provided in this section.

(3) Except as otherwise provided in this section, reclaimed water that does not meet the state drinking water contaminant criteria may be beneficially used for surface percolation where the department of ecology, in consultation with the department of health, has specifically authorized such use at such lower standard.

(4) The provisions of this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to surface percolation. [2009 c 456 § 4; 2006 c 279 § 9; 1997 c 444 § 6; 1995 c 342 § 3.]

**Severability—1997 c 444:** See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.090 Use of reclaimed water for discharge into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands—Standards for discharge.**

(1) Reclaimed water may be beneficially used for discharge into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands provided the reclaimed water meets the class A or B reclaimed water standards as defined in the reclamation criteria, and the discharge is incorporated into a sewer or water comprehensive plan, as applicable, adopted by the applicable local government and approved by the department of health or department of ecology as applicable.

(2) Reclaimed water that does not meet the class A or B reclaimed water standards may be beneficially used for discharge into constructed treatment wetlands where the department of ecology, in consultation with the department of health, has specifically authorized such use at such lower standards.

(3) (a) The department of ecology and the department of health must develop appropriate standards for discharging reclaimed water into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands. These standards must be considered as part of the approval process under subsections (1) and (2) of this section.

(b) Standards adopted under this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to discharge into constructed beneficial use wetlands and constructed treatment wetlands. [2006 c 279 § 10; 1997 c 444 § 7; 1995 c 342 § 4.]

**Severability—1997 c 444:** See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.100 Discharge of reclaimed water for streamflow augmentation.** (1) Reclaimed water intended for beneficial reuse may be discharged for streamflow augmentation provided the reclaimed water meets the requirements of the federal water pollution control act, chapter 90.48 RCW, and is incorporated into a sewer or water comprehensive plan, as applicable, adopted by the applicable local government and approved by the department of health or department of ecology as applicable.

(2) Standards adopted under this section are superseded by any rules adopted by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 90.46.015 as they relate to discharge of reclaimed water for streamflow augmentation. [2006 c 279 § 11; 1995 c 342 § 5.]

**Construction—Effective date—1995 c 342:** See notes following RCW 90.46.005.

**RCW 90.46.110 Reclaimed water demonstration program—Demonstration projects.** (1) The department of ecology shall establish and administer a reclaimed water demonstration program for the purposes of funding and monitoring the progress of five demonstration projects. The department shall work in cooperation with the department of health.

(2) The five demonstration projects will be:

(a) The city of Ephrata, to use class A reclaimed water for surface spreading that will recharge the groundwater and reduce the nitrate concentrations that currently exceed drinking water standards in domestic wells;

(b) Lincoln county, for a study of the use of reclaimed water to transport twenty-two million gallons a day from Spokane to water sources that will rehydrate and restore long depleted streambeds;

(c) The city of Royal City to replace an interim emergency sprayfield by using one hundred percent of its discharge as class A reclaimed water to enhance local wetlands and lakes in the winter, and potentially irrigate a golf course;

(d) The city of Sequim to implement a tertiary treatment system and reuse one hundred percent of the city's wastewater to reopen an existing shellfish closure area to benefit state and tribal resources, improve streamflows in the Dungeness river, and provide a sustainable water supply for irrigation purposes;

(e) The city of Yelm to use one hundred percent of its wastewater to provide alternative water supply for irrigation and industrial uses in order to offset increased demand for water supply, to protect the Nisqually river chum salmon runs, and to develop experimental artificial wetlands to test low cost treatment options.

(3) By September 30, 1997, the department of ecology shall enter into a grant agreement with the demonstration project jurisdictions that includes reporting requirements, timelines, and a fund disbursement schedule based on the agreed project milestones.

(4) Upon completion of the projects, the department of ecology shall report to the appropriate committees of the legislature on the results of the program.

(5) Demonstration projects which will discharge or otherwise deliver reclaimed water to federal reclamation project facilities or irrigation district facilities shall meet the requirements of the facilities' operating entity for such discharges or deliveries.

(6) No irrigation district, its directors, officers, employees, or agents operating and maintaining irrigation works for any purpose authorized by law, including the production of food for human consumption and other agricultural and domestic purposes, is liable for damages to persons or property arising from the implementation of the demonstration projects in this section. [1997 c 355 § 2.]

**RCW 90.46.120 Use of water from wastewater treatment facility—Consideration in regional water supply plan or potable water supply plans—Consideration in reviewing provisions for water supplies for short plat, short subdivision, or subdivision—Report to the legislature.** (1) The owner of a wastewater treatment facility that is reclaiming water with a permit issued under this chapter has the exclusive right to any reclaimed water generated by the wastewater treatment facility. Use, distribution, storage, and the recovery from storage of reclaimed water permitted under this chapter is exempt from the permit requirements of RCW 90.03.250 and 90.44.060, provided that a permit for recovery of reclaimed water from aquifer storage shall be reviewed under the standards established under RCW 90.03.370(2) for aquifer storage and recovery projects. Revenues derived from the reclaimed water facility shall be used only to offset the cost of operation of the wastewater utility fund or other applicable source of systemwide funding.

(2) If the proposed use of reclaimed water is to augment or replace potable water supplies or to create the potential for the development of an additional new potable water supply, then regional water supply plans, or any other potable water supply plans prepared by multiple water purveyors, must consider the proposed use of the reclaimed water as they are developed or updated.

(a) Regional water supply plans include those adopted under state board of health laws (chapter 43.20 RCW), the public water system coordination act of 1977 (chapter 70A.100 RCW), groundwater protection laws (chapter 90.44 RCW), and the watershed planning act (chapter 90.82 RCW).

(b) The requirement to consider the use of reclaimed water does not change the plan approval process established under these statutes.

(c) When regional water supply plans are being developed, the owners of wastewater treatment facilities that produce or propose to produce reclaimed water for use within the planning area must be included in the planning process.

(3) When reclaimed water is available or is proposed for use under a water supply or wastewater plan developed under chapter 43.20, 70A.100, 90.44, 90.48, or 90.82 RCW these plans must be coordinated to ensure that opportunities for reclaimed water are evaluated. The requirements of this subsection (3) do not apply to water system plans developed under chapter 43.20 RCW for utilities serving less than one thousand service connections.

(4) The provisions of any plan for reclaimed water, developed under the authorities in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, should be included by a city, town, or county in reviewing provisions for water supplies in a proposed short plat, short subdivision, or subdivision under chapter 58.17 RCW, where reclaimed water supplies may be proposed for nonpotable purposes in the short plat, short subdivision, or subdivision.

(5) By November 30, 2009, the department of ecology shall review comments from the reclaimed water advisory committee under RCW 90.46.050 and the reclaimed water and water rights advisory committee under the direction of the department of ecology and submit a recommendation to the legislature on the impairment requirements and standards for reclaimed water. The department of ecology shall also provide a report to the legislature that describes the opinions of the stakeholders on the impairment requirements and standards for reclaimed water. [2020 c 20 § 1497; 2009 c 456 § 5; 2007 c 445 § 3; 2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 13; 1997 c 444 § 1.]

**Findings—Intent—2007 c 445:** See note following RCW 90.46.005.

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**Severability—1997 c 444:** See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**RCW 90.46.130 Impairment of water rights downstream from freshwater discharge points.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, facilities that reclaim water under this chapter shall not impair any existing water right downstream from any freshwater discharge points of such facilities unless compensation or

mitigation for such impairment is agreed to by the holder of the affected water right.

(2) Agricultural water use of agricultural industrial process water and use of industrial reuse water under this chapter shall not impair existing water rights within the water source that is the source of supply for the agricultural processing plant or the industrial processing and, if the water source is surface water, the existing water rights are downstream from the agricultural processing plant's discharge points existing on July 22, 2001, or from the industrial processing's discharge points existing on June 13, 2002. [2002 c 329 § 5; 2001 c 69 § 4; 1997 c 444 § 4.]

**Severability—1997 c 444:** See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**RCW 90.46.140 Greywater reuse—Standards, procedures, and guidelines—Rules.** (1) The department of health shall develop standards, procedures, and guidelines for the reuse of greywater, consistent with RCW 43.20.230(2), by January 1, 1998.

(2) Standards, procedures, and guidelines developed by the department of health for reuse of greywater shall encourage the application of this technology for conserving water resources, or reducing the wastewater load, on domestic wastewater facilities, individual on-site sewage treatment and disposal systems, or community on-site sewage treatment and disposal systems.

(3) The department of health and local health officers may permit the reuse of greywater according to rules adopted by the department of health. [1997 c 444 § 8.]

**Severability—1997 c 444:** See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**RCW 90.46.150 Agricultural industrial process water—Permit—Use—Referral to department of health.** The permit to apply agricultural industrial process water to agricultural water use shall be the permit issued under chapter 90.48 RCW to the owner of the agricultural processing plant who may then distribute the water through methods including, but not limited to, irrigation systems, subject to provisions in the permit governing the location, rate, water quality, and purpose. In cases where the department of ecology determines that a significant risk to public health exists, in land application of the water, the department must refer the application to the department of health for review and consultation.

The owner of the agricultural processing plant who obtains a permit under this section has the exclusive right to the use of any agricultural industrial process water generated from the plant and to the distribution of such water through facilities including irrigation systems. Use and distribution of the water by the owner is exempt from the permit requirements of RCW 90.03.250, 90.03.380, 90.44.060, and 90.44.100.

Nothing in chapter 69, Laws of 2001 shall be construed to affect any right to reuse agricultural industrial discharge water in existence on or before July 22, 2001. [2001 c 69 § 3.]

**RCW 90.46.160 Industrial reuse water—Permit.** (1) The permit to use industrial reuse water shall be the permit issued under chapter 90.48 RCW to the owner of the plant that is the source of the industrial process water, who may then distribute the water according to provisions in the permit governing the location, rate, water quality, and purpose. In cases where the department of ecology determines that a proposed use may pose a significant risk to public health, the department shall refer the permit application to the department of health for review and consultation.

(2) The owner of the industrial plant who obtains a permit under this section has the exclusive right to the use of any industrial reuse water generated from the plant and to the distribution of such water. Use and distribution of the water by the owner is exempt from the permit requirements of RCW 90.03.250, 90.03.380, 90.44.060, and 90.44.100.

(3) Nothing in this section affects any right to reuse industrial process water in existence on or before June 13, 2002. [2002 c 329 § 6.]

**RCW 90.46.200 Authority of the departments of ecology and health—Lead agency—Duties.** (1) The department of ecology and the department of health shall have authority to carry out all the provisions of this chapter including, but not limited to, permitting and enforcement. Only the department of ecology or the department of health may act as a lead agency for purposes of this chapter and will be established as such by rule. Enforcement of a permit issued under this chapter shall be at the sole discretion of the lead agency that issued the permit.

(2) All permit applications shall be referred to the nonlead agency for review and consultation. The nonlead agency may choose to limit the scope of its review.

(3) The authority and duties created in this chapter are in addition to any authority and duties already provided in law. Nothing in this chapter limits the powers of the state or any political subdivision to exercise such authority. [2009 c 456 § 7.]

**RCW 90.46.210 Lead agency—Authority to bring legal proceeding.** The lead agency, with the assistance of the attorney general, is authorized to bring any appropriate action at law or in equity, including action for injunctive relief, as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. The lead agency may bring the action in the superior court of the county in which the violation occurred or in the superior court of Thurston county. The court may award reasonable attorneys' fees for the cost of the attorney general's office in representing the lead agency. [2009 c 456 § 8.]

**RCW 90.46.220 Permit.** (1) Any person proposing to generate any type of reclaimed water for a use regulated under this chapter shall obtain a permit from the lead agency prior to distribution or use of that water. The permittee may then distribute and use the water, subject to the provisions in the permit. The permit must include provisions that protect human health and the environment. At a minimum, the permit must:

- (a) Assure adequate and reliable treatment; and
  - (b) Govern the water quality, location, rate, and purpose of use.
- (2) A permit under this chapter may be issued only to:
- (a) A municipal, quasi-municipal, or other governmental entity;
  - (b) A private utility as defined in RCW 36.94.010;
  - (c) The holder of a waste disposal permit issued under chapter 90.48 RCW; or
  - (d) The owner of an agricultural processing facility that is generating agricultural industrial process water for agricultural use, or the owner of an industrial facility that is generating industrial process water for reuse.
- (3) Before deciding whether to issue a permit under this section to a private utility, the lead agency may require information that is reasonable and necessary to determine whether the private utility has the financial and other resources to ensure the reliability, continuity, and supervision of the reclaimed water facility.
- (4) Permits shall be issued for a fixed term specified by the rules adopted under RCW 90.46.015. A permittee shall apply for permit renewal prior to the end of the term. The rules adopted under RCW 90.46.015 shall specify the process of renewal, modification, change of ownership, suspension, and termination.
- (5) The lead agency may deny an application for a permit or modify, suspend, or revoke a permit for good cause, including but not limited to, any case in which it finds that the permit was obtained by fraud or misrepresentation, or there is or has been a failure, refusal, or inability to comply with the requirements of this chapter or the rules adopted under this chapter.
- (6) The lead agency shall provide for adequate public notice and opportunity for review and comment on all initial permit applications and renewal applications. Methods for providing notice may include electronic mail, posting on the lead agency's internet site, publication in a local newspaper, press releases, mailings, or other means of notification the lead agency determines appropriate. The lead agency shall also publicize notice of final permitting decisions.
- (7) Any person aggrieved by a permitting decision has the right to an adjudicative proceeding. An adjudicative proceeding conducted under this subsection is governed by chapter 34.05 RCW. For any permit decision for which the department of ecology is the lead agency under this chapter, any appeal shall be in accordance with chapter 43.21B RCW. For any permit decision for which department of health is the lead agency under this chapter, any application for an adjudicative proceeding must be in writing, state the basis for contesting the action, include a copy of the decision, be served on and received by the department of health within twenty-eight days of receipt of notice of the final decision, and be served in a manner that shows proof of receipt.
- (8) Permit requirements for the distribution and use of greywater will be established in rules adopted by the department of health under RCW 90.46.015. [2009 c 456 § 9.]

**RCW 90.46.230 Right to enter and inspect property related to the purpose of the permit—Administrative search warrant.** (1) (a) Except as otherwise provided in (b) of this subsection, the lead agency or its designee shall have the right to enter and inspect any property related to the purpose of the permit, public or private, at reasonable



times with prior notification in order to determine compliance with laws and rules administered by the lead agency. During such inspections, the lead agency shall have free and unimpeded access to all data, facilities, and property involved in the generation, distribution, and use of reclaimed water.

(b) The lead agency or its designee need not give prior notification to enter property under (a) of this subsection if the purpose of the entry is to ensure compliance by the permittee with a prior order of the lead agency or if the lead agency or its designee has reasonable cause to believe there is a violation of the law that poses a serious threat to public health and safety or the environment.

(2) The lead agency or its designee may apply for an administrative search warrant to a court of competent jurisdiction and an administrative search warrant may issue where:

(a) The lead agency has attempted an inspection under this chapter and access has been actually or constructively denied; or

(b) There is reasonable cause to believe that a violation of this chapter or rules adopted under this chapter is occurring or has occurred. [2009 c 456 § 10.]

**RCW 90.46.240 Plans, reports, specifications, and proposed methods of operation and maintenance to be submitted to departments.**

All required feasibility studies, planning documents, engineering reports, and plans and specifications for the construction of new reclaimed water, agricultural industrial process water, and industrial reuse water facilities, including generation, distribution, and use facilities, or for improvements or extensions to existing facilities, and the proposed method of future operation and maintenance of said facility or facilities, shall be submitted to and be approved by the lead agency, before construction thereof may begin. No approval shall be given until the lead agency is satisfied that the plans, reports, and specifications and the methods of operation and maintenance submitted are adequate to protect the quality of the water for the intended use as provided for in this chapter and are adequate to protect public health and safety as necessary. [2009 c 456 § 11.]

**RCW 90.46.250 Violation of chapter—Notification—Immediate action.**

(1) When, in the opinion of the lead agency, a person violates or creates a substantial potential to violate this chapter, the lead agency shall notify the person of its determination by registered mail. The determination shall not constitute an appealable order or directive. Within thirty days from the receipt of notice of such determination, the person shall file with the lead agency a full report stating what steps have been and are being taken to comply with the determination of the lead agency. After the full report is filed or after the thirty days have elapsed, the lead agency may issue the order or directive as it deems appropriate under the circumstances, shall notify the person by registered mail, and shall inform the person of the process for requesting an adjudicative hearing.

(2) When it appears to the lead agency that water quality conditions or other conditions exist which require immediate action to protect human health and safety or the environment, the lead agency may issue a written order to the person or persons responsible without first issuing a notice of determination pursuant to subsection (1) of

this section. An order or directive issued pursuant to this subsection shall be served by registered mail or personally upon any person to whom it is directed, and shall inform the person or persons responsible of the process for requesting an adjudicative hearing. [2009 c 456 § 12.]

**RCW 90.46.260 Penalty.** Any person found guilty of willfully violating any of the provisions of this chapter, or any final written orders or directive of the lead agency or a court in pursuance thereof, is guilty of a gross misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of up to ten thousand dollars and costs of prosecution, or by imprisonment in the county jail for up to three hundred sixty-four days, or both, in the discretion of the court. Each day upon which a willful violation of the provisions of this chapter occurs may be deemed a separate and additional violation. [2011 c 96 § 60; 2009 c 456 § 13.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 c 96:** See note following RCW 9A.20.021.

**RCW 90.46.270 Violations—Civil penalty—Procedure.** (1) Except as provided in RCW 43.05.060 through 43.05.080, 43.05.100, 43.05.110, and 43.05.150, any person who:

(a) Generates any reclaimed water for a use regulated under this chapter and distributes or uses that water without a permit;

(b) Violates the terms or conditions of a permit issued under this chapter; or

(c) Violates rules or orders adopted or issued pursuant to this chapter,

shall incur, in addition to any other penalty as provided by law, a penalty in an amount of up to ten thousand dollars per day for every violation. Each violation shall be a separate and distinct offense, and in case of a continuing violation, every day's continuance shall be a separate and distinct violation. Every act of commission or omission which procures, aids, or abets in the violation shall be considered a violation under the provisions of this section and subject to the penalty herein provided for. The penalty amount shall be set in consideration of the previous history of the violator and the severity of the violation's impact on public health, the environment, or both, in addition to other relevant factors.

(2) A penalty imposed by a final administrative order is due upon service of the final administrative order. A person who fails to pay a penalty assessed by a final administrative order within thirty days of service of the final administrative order shall pay, in addition to the amount of the penalty, interest at the rate of one percent of the unpaid balance of the assessed penalty for each month or part of a month that the penalty remains unpaid, commencing within the month in which the notice of penalty was served, and reasonable attorneys' fees as are incurred if civil enforcement of the final administrative order is required to collect penalty.

(3) A person who institutes proceedings for judicial review of a final administrative order assessing a civil penalty under this chapter shall place the full amount of the penalty in an interest bearing account in the registry of the reviewing court. At the conclusion of the proceeding the court shall, as appropriate, enter a

judgment on behalf of the lead agency and order that the judgment be satisfied to the extent possible from moneys paid into the registry of the court or shall enter a judgment in favor of the person appealing the penalty assessment and order return of the moneys paid into the registry of the court together with accrued interest to the person appealing. The judgment may award reasonable attorneys' fees for the cost of the attorney general's office in representing the lead agency.

(4) If no appeal is taken from a final administrative order assessing a civil penalty under this chapter, the lead agency may file a certified copy of the final administrative order with the clerk of the superior court in which the person resides, or in Thurston county, and the clerk shall enter judgment in the name of the lead agency and in the amount of the penalty assessed in the final administrative order.

(5) When the penalty herein provided for is imposed by the department of ecology, it shall be imposed pursuant to the procedures set forth in RCW 43.21B.300. All penalties imposed by the department of ecology pursuant to RCW 43.21B.300 shall be deposited into the state treasury and credited to the general fund.

(6) When the penalty is imposed by the department of health, it shall be imposed pursuant to the procedures set forth in RCW 43.70.095. All receipts from penalties shall be deposited into the health reclaimed water account. The department of health shall use revenue derived from penalties only to provide training and technical assistance to reclaimed water system owners and operators. [2009 c 456 § 14.]

**RCW 90.46.280 Application of administrative procedure act to chapter.** The provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act, apply to all rule-making and adjudicative proceedings authorized by or arising under the provisions of this chapter. [2009 c 456 § 15.]

**RCW 90.46.290 On-site nonpotable water systems—Risk-based water quality standards—Adoption of rules.** (1) (a) By July 1, 2022, the department of health, in consultation with the Washington state building code council and the Washington state association of plumbers and pipefitters who participate in the development of the Uniform Plumbing Code under chapter 19.27 RCW, shall adopt rules for:

(i) Risk-based water quality standards for the on-site treatment and reuse of nonpotable alternative water sources for nonpotable end uses in multifamily residential, commercial, and mixed-use buildings, and district-scale projects, including a mix of multifamily residential, commercial, and mixed-use buildings; and

(ii) Construction standards to adopt the risk-based framework water quality standards.

(b) The department of health must ensure that rules adopted under this subsection take effect by December 31, 2022.

(2) At a minimum, the rules required under subsection (1) of this section must address the following:

(a) Risk-based log reduction targets for the removal of pathogens, such as enteric viruses, parasitic protozoa, and enteric bacteria for alternative water sources, including wastewater from all domestic fixtures, gray water, rainwater, and stormwater for

nonpotable end uses such as toilet and urinal supply water, clothes washing, irrigation, and dust suppression;

(b) Treatment and performance requirements;

(c) Water quality monitoring requirements;

(d) Reporting requirements for the treatment, performance, and water quality monitoring results;

(e) Notification and public information requirements;

(f) Cross-connection controls;

(g) Permitting;

(h) Any conflicts the rules adopted in this section have with the department of ecology's municipal stormwater general permit and guidance manuals on stormwater for eastern and western Washington. Any calculations of the amount of water that a property owner or permit holder must make to address runoff from impervious surfaces must reduce the amount of rainwater considered to be stormwater when it is captured to be used for alternative nonpotable end uses in buildings and projects; and

(i) The need for a water right impairment review through the department of ecology.

(3) (a) An on-site treated nonpotable water system in operation before January 1, 2022, must comply with the rules established pursuant to subsection (1) of this section by January 1, 2024.

(b) If a permitting local jurisdiction finds that the permittee is unable to come into compliance with the rules adopted under subsection (1) of this section because the engineering, repair, or replacement of the system is cost prohibitive, the local jurisdiction may grant the permittee a waiver of compliance with the rules.

(4) The department of health may consult or contract with other public or private entities including, but not limited to, the state building code council and the department of ecology for advice on state building code language, water rights, water quality, and other technical matters relating to adoption of the risk-based water quality standards pursuant to subsection (1) of this section.

(5) For the purposes of this section, "local jurisdiction" includes a county, city, or town. [2021 c 156 § 1.]

**Chapter 90.48 RCW**  
**WATER POLLUTION CONTROL**

**Sections**

- 90.48.010 Policy enunciated.
- 90.48.020 Definitions.
- 90.48.030 Jurisdiction of department.
- 90.48.035 Rule-making authority.
- 90.48.037 Authority of department to bring enforcement actions.
- 90.48.039 Hazardous substance remedial actions—Procedural requirements not applicable.
- 90.48.045 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.
- 90.48.080 Discharge of polluting matter in waters prohibited.
- 90.48.090 Right of entry—Special inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations.
- 90.48.095 Authority of department to compel attendance and testimony of witnesses, production of books and papers—Contempt proceedings to enforce—Fees.
- 90.48.100 Request for assistance.
- 90.48.110 Plans and proposed methods of operation and maintenance of sewerage or disposal systems to be submitted to department—Exceptions—Time limitations.
- 90.48.112 Plan evaluation—Consideration of reclaimed water.
- 90.48.120 Notice of department's determination that violation has or will occur—Report to department of compliance with determination—Order or directive to be issued—Notice.
- 90.48.140 Penalty.
- 90.48.142 Violations—Liability in damages for injury or death of fish, animals, vegetation—Action to recover.
- 90.48.144 Violations—Civil penalty—Procedure.
- 90.48.150 Construction of chapter.
- 90.48.153 Cooperation with federal government—Federal funds.
- 90.48.156 Cooperation with other states and provinces—Interstate and state-provincial projects.
- 90.48.158 Grants to public bodies authorized.
- 90.48.160 Waste disposal permit—Required—Exemptions.
- 90.48.162 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations.
- 90.48.165 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Cities, towns or municipal corporations may be granted authority to issue permits—Revocation—Termination of permits.
- 90.48.170 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Application—Notice as to new operation or increase in volume—Investigation—Notice to other state departments.
- 90.48.180 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Issuance—Conditions—Duration.
- 90.48.190 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Termination—Grounds.

- 90.48.195 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Modification or additional conditions may be ordered.
- 90.48.200 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Nonaction upon application—Temporary permit—Duration.
- 90.48.215 Upland finfish facilities—Waste discharge standards—Waste disposal permit.
- 90.48.220 Marine finfish rearing facilities—Waste discharge standards—Discharge permit applications—Exemption.
- 90.48.225 Issuance of national pollutant discharge elimination system permits associated with nonnative marine finfish aquaculture.
- 90.48.230 Application of administrative procedure law to rule making and adjudicative proceedings.
- 90.48.240 Water pollution orders for conditions requiring immediate action—Appeal.
- 90.48.250 Agreements or contracts to monitor waters and effluent discharge.
- 90.48.260 Federal clean water act—Department designated as state agency, authority—Delegation of authority—Powers, duties, and functions.
- 90.48.261 Exercise of powers under RCW 90.48.260—Aquatic resource mitigation.
- 90.48.262 Implementation of RCW 90.48.260—Permits for energy facilities—Rules and procedures.
- 90.48.264 Federal clean water act—Rules for on-site sewage disposal systems adjacent to marine waters.
- 90.48.270 Sewage drainage basins—Authority of department to delineate and establish.
- 90.48.280 Sewage drainage basins—Comprehensive plans for sewage drainage basins.
- 90.48.285 Contracts with municipal or public corporations and political subdivisions to finance water pollution control projects—Requisites—Priorities.
- 90.48.290 Grants to municipal or public corporations or political subdivisions to aid water pollution control projects—Limitations.
- 90.48.310 Application of barley straw to waters of the state.
- 90.48.364 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Definitions.
- 90.48.366 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Compensation schedule.
- 90.48.367 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Assessment of compensation.
- 90.48.368 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Preassessment screening.
- 90.48.386 Department of natural resources leases.
- 90.48.390 Coastal protection fund—Established—Moneys credited to—Use.
- 90.48.400 Coastal protection fund—Disbursal of moneys from.
- 90.48.420 Water quality standards affected by forest practices—Department of ecology solely responsible for water quality standards—Forest practices rules—Adoption—Examination—Enforcement procedures.

- 90.48.422 Water quality standards—Compliance methods—Department authority.
- 90.48.425 Forest practices act and regulations relating to water quality protection to be utilized to satisfy federal water pollution act.
- 90.48.430 Watershed restoration projects—Approval process—Waiver of public review.
- 90.48.445 Aquatic noxious weed control—Water quality permits—Definition.
- 90.48.447 Aquatic plant management program—Commercial herbicide information—Experimental application of herbicides—Appropriation for study.
- 90.48.448 Eurasian water milfoil—Pesticide 2,4-D application.
- 90.48.450 Discharges from agricultural activity—Consideration to be given as to whether enforcement action would contribute to conversion of land to nonagricultural use—Minimize the possibility.
- 90.48.455 Discharge of chlorinated organics—Engineering reports by pulp and paper mills—Permits limiting discharge.
- 90.48.465 Water discharge fees—Report to the legislature.
- 90.48.467 Report to the legislature—Required information.
- 90.48.480 Reduction of sewer overflows—Plans—Compliance schedule.
- 90.48.490 Sewage treatment facilities—Plans to upgrade or construct.
- 90.48.495 Water conservation measures to be considered in sewer plans.
- 90.48.520 Review of operations before issuance or renewal of wastewater discharge permits—Incorporation of permit conditions.
- 90.48.530 Construction projects involving fill material—Leaching test.
- 90.48.531 Leaching tests—Identification—Report to the legislature.
- 90.48.540 Use attainability analysis of water within federal reclamation project boundaries—Rules.
- 90.48.545 Stormwater technical resource center—Duties—Advisory committee—Report to legislative committees.
- 90.48.570 Water quality data—Findings—Intent.
- 90.48.575 Water quality data—Definitions.
- 90.48.580 Water quality data—Credible data, information, literature.
- 90.48.585 Water quality data—When credible.
- 90.48.590 Water quality data—Falsified data—Penalty.
- 90.48.595 On-site sewage disposal system repair and replacement—Loan and grant programs.
- 90.48.605 Amending state water quality standards—Compliance schedules in excess of ten years authorized.
- 90.48.615 Motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining—Prohibited acts.
- 90.48.906 Short title—1971 ex.s. c 180.

*County water and sewerage systems, approval of the department of social and health services and the department of ecology: RCW 36.94.100.*

*Domestic waste treatment plants—Certification and regulation of operators: Chapter 70A.212 RCW.*

*Environmental certification programs—Fees—Rules—Liability: RCW 43.21A.175.*

*Oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and response: Chapter 90.56 RCW.*

*Oil tankers on Puget Sound, restrictions, etc.: RCW 88.16.170 through 88.16.190.*

*Shellfish, sanitary control: RCW 69.30.130.*

*Washington clean air act: Chapter 70A.15 RCW.*

*Water-sewer district powers as to mutual systems, approval of exercise by pollution control commission: RCW 57.08.065.*

*Water pollution control facilities, tax exemptions and credits: Chapter 82.34 RCW.*

*Water resources act of 1971: Chapter 90.54 RCW.*



**Chapter 90.48 RCW**  
**WATER POLLUTION CONTROL**

**Sections**

- 90.48.010 Policy enunciated.
- 90.48.020 Definitions.
- 90.48.030 Jurisdiction of department.
- 90.48.035 Rule-making authority.
- 90.48.037 Authority of department to bring enforcement actions.
- 90.48.039 Hazardous substance remedial actions—Procedural requirements not applicable.
- 90.48.045 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.
- 90.48.080 Discharge of polluting matter in waters prohibited.
- 90.48.090 Right of entry—Special inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations.
- 90.48.095 Authority of department to compel attendance and testimony of witnesses, production of books and papers—Contempt proceedings to enforce—Fees.
- 90.48.100 Request for assistance.
- 90.48.110 Plans and proposed methods of operation and maintenance of sewerage or disposal systems to be submitted to department—Exceptions—Time limitations.
- 90.48.112 Plan evaluation—Consideration of reclaimed water.
- 90.48.120 Notice of department's determination that violation has or will occur—Report to department of compliance with determination—Order or directive to be issued—Notice.
- 90.48.140 Penalty.
- 90.48.142 Violations—Liability in damages for injury or death of fish, animals, vegetation—Action to recover.
- 90.48.144 Violations—Civil penalty—Procedure.
- 90.48.150 Construction of chapter.
- 90.48.153 Cooperation with federal government—Federal funds.
- 90.48.156 Cooperation with other states and provinces—Interstate and state-provincial projects.
- 90.48.158 Grants to public bodies authorized.
- 90.48.160 Waste disposal permit—Required—Exemptions.
- 90.48.162 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations.
- 90.48.165 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Cities, towns or municipal corporations may be granted authority to issue permits—Revocation—Termination of permits.
- 90.48.170 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Application—Notice as to new operation or increase in volume—Investigation—Notice to other state departments.
- 90.48.180 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Issuance—Conditions—Duration.
- 90.48.190 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Termination—Grounds.

- 90.48.195 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Modification or additional conditions may be ordered.
- 90.48.200 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Nonaction upon application—Temporary permit—Duration.
- 90.48.215 Upland finfish facilities—Waste discharge standards—Waste disposal permit.
- 90.48.220 Marine finfish rearing facilities—Waste discharge standards—Discharge permit applications—Exemption.
- 90.48.225 Issuance of national pollutant discharge elimination system permits associated with nonnative marine finfish aquaculture.
- 90.48.230 Application of administrative procedure law to rule making and adjudicative proceedings.
- 90.48.240 Water pollution orders for conditions requiring immediate action—Appeal.
- 90.48.250 Agreements or contracts to monitor waters and effluent discharge.
- 90.48.260 Federal clean water act—Department designated as state agency, authority—Delegation of authority—Powers, duties, and functions.
- 90.48.261 Exercise of powers under RCW 90.48.260—Aquatic resource mitigation.
- 90.48.262 Implementation of RCW 90.48.260—Permits for energy facilities—Rules and procedures.
- 90.48.264 Federal clean water act—Rules for on-site sewage disposal systems adjacent to marine waters.
- 90.48.270 Sewage drainage basins—Authority of department to delineate and establish.
- 90.48.280 Sewage drainage basins—Comprehensive plans for sewage drainage basins.
- 90.48.285 Contracts with municipal or public corporations and political subdivisions to finance water pollution control projects—Requisites—Priorities.
- 90.48.290 Grants to municipal or public corporations or political subdivisions to aid water pollution control projects—Limitations.
- 90.48.310 Application of barley straw to waters of the state.
- 90.48.364 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Definitions.
- 90.48.366 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Compensation schedule.
- 90.48.367 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Assessment of compensation.
- 90.48.368 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Preassessment screening.
- 90.48.386 Department of natural resources leases.
- 90.48.390 Coastal protection fund—Established—Moneys credited to—Use.
- 90.48.400 Coastal protection fund—Disbursal of moneys from.
- 90.48.420 Water quality standards affected by forest practices—Department of ecology solely responsible for water quality standards—Forest practices rules—Adoption—Examination—Enforcement procedures.

- 90.48.422 Water quality standards—Compliance methods—Department authority.
- 90.48.425 Forest practices act and regulations relating to water quality protection to be utilized to satisfy federal water pollution act.
- 90.48.430 Watershed restoration projects—Approval process—Waiver of public review.
- 90.48.445 Aquatic noxious weed control—Water quality permits—Definition.
- 90.48.447 Aquatic plant management program—Commercial herbicide information—Experimental application of herbicides—Appropriation for study.
- 90.48.448 Eurasian water milfoil—Pesticide 2,4-D application.
- 90.48.450 Discharges from agricultural activity—Consideration to be given as to whether enforcement action would contribute to conversion of land to nonagricultural use—Minimize the possibility.
- 90.48.455 Discharge of chlorinated organics—Engineering reports by pulp and paper mills—Permits limiting discharge.
- 90.48.465 Water discharge fees—Report to the legislature.
- 90.48.467 Report to the legislature—Required information.
- 90.48.480 Reduction of sewer overflows—Plans—Compliance schedule.
- 90.48.490 Sewage treatment facilities—Plans to upgrade or construct.
- 90.48.495 Water conservation measures to be considered in sewer plans.
- 90.48.520 Review of operations before issuance or renewal of wastewater discharge permits—Incorporation of permit conditions.
- 90.48.530 Construction projects involving fill material—Leaching test.
- 90.48.531 Leaching tests—Identification—Report to the legislature.
- 90.48.540 Use attainability analysis of water within federal reclamation project boundaries—Rules.
- 90.48.545 Stormwater technical resource center—Duties—Advisory committee—Report to legislative committees.
- 90.48.570 Water quality data—Findings—Intent.
- 90.48.575 Water quality data—Definitions.
- 90.48.580 Water quality data—Credible data, information, literature.
- 90.48.585 Water quality data—When credible.
- 90.48.590 Water quality data—Falsified data—Penalty.
- 90.48.595 On-site sewage disposal system repair and replacement—Loan and grant programs.
- 90.48.605 Amending state water quality standards—Compliance schedules in excess of ten years authorized.
- 90.48.615 Motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining—Prohibited acts.
- 90.48.906 Short title—1971 ex.s. c 180.

*County water and sewerage systems, approval of the department of social and health services and the department of ecology: RCW 36.94.100.*

*Domestic waste treatment plants—Certification and regulation of operators: Chapter 70A.212 RCW.*

*Environmental certification programs—Fees—Rules—Liability: RCW 43.21A.175.*

*Oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and response: Chapter 90.56 RCW.*

*Oil tankers on Puget Sound, restrictions, etc.: RCW 88.16.170 through 88.16.190.*

*Shellfish, sanitary control: RCW 69.30.130.*

*Washington clean air act: Chapter 70A.15 RCW.*

*Water-sewer district powers as to mutual systems, approval of exercise by pollution control commission: RCW 57.08.065.*

*Water pollution control facilities, tax exemptions and credits: Chapter 82.34 RCW.*

*Water resources act of 1971: Chapter 90.54 RCW.*

**RCW 90.48.010 Policy enunciated.** It is declared to be the public policy of the state of Washington to maintain the highest possible standards to insure the purity of all waters of the state consistent with public health and public enjoyment thereof, the propagation and protection of wild life, birds, game, fish and other aquatic life, and the industrial development of the state, and to that end require the use of all known available and reasonable methods by industries and others to prevent and control the pollution of the waters of the state of Washington. Consistent with this policy, the state of Washington will exercise its powers, as fully and as effectively as possible, to retain and secure high quality for all waters of the state. The state of Washington in recognition of the federal government's interest in the quality of the navigable waters of the United States, of which certain portions thereof are within the jurisdictional limits of this state, proclaims a public policy of working cooperatively with the federal government in a joint effort to extinguish the sources of water quality degradation, while at the same time preserving and vigorously exercising state powers to insure that present and future standards of water quality within the state shall be determined by the citizenry, through and by the efforts of state government, of the state of Washington. [1973 c 155 § 1; 1945 c 216 § 1; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964a.]

**RCW 90.48.020 Definitions.** Whenever the word "person" is used in this chapter, it shall be construed to include any political subdivision, government agency, municipality, industry, public or private corporation, copartnership, association, firm, individual or any other entity whatsoever.

Wherever the words "waters of the state" shall be used in this chapter, they shall be construed to include lakes, rivers, ponds,

streams, inland waters, underground waters, salt waters and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington.

Whenever the word "pollution" is used in this chapter, it shall be construed to mean such contamination, or other alteration of the physical, chemical or biological properties, of any waters of the state, including change in temperature, taste, color, turbidity, or odor of the waters, or such discharge of any liquid, gaseous, solid, radioactive, or other substance into any waters of the state as will or is likely to create a nuisance or render such waters harmful, detrimental or injurious to the public health, safety or welfare, or to domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, or other legitimate beneficial uses, or to livestock, wild animals, birds, fish or other aquatic life.

Wherever the word "department" is used in this chapter it shall mean the department of ecology.

Whenever the word "director" is used in this chapter it shall mean the director of ecology.

Whenever the words "aquatic noxious weed" are used in this chapter, they have the meaning prescribed under RCW 17.26.020.

Whenever the words "general sewer plan" are used in this chapter they shall be construed to include all sewerage general plans, sewer general comprehensive plans, plans for a system of sewerage, and other plans for sewer systems adopted by a local government entity including but not limited to cities, towns, public utility districts, and water-sewer districts. [2002 c 161 § 4; 1995 c 255 § 7; 1987 c 109 § 122; 1967 c 13 § 1; 1945 c 216 § 2; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964b.]

**Effective date—1995 c 255:** See RCW 17.26.901.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.030 Jurisdiction of department.** The department shall have the jurisdiction to control and prevent the pollution of streams, lakes, rivers, ponds, inland waters, salt waters, water courses, and other surface and underground waters of the state of Washington. [1987 c 109 § 123; 1945 c 216 § 10; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964j. FORMER PART OF SECTION: 1945 c 216 § 11; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964k, now codified as RCW 90.48.035.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.035 Rule-making authority.** The department shall have the authority to, and shall promulgate, amend, or rescind such rules and regulations as it shall deem necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter, including but not limited to rules and regulations relating to standards of quality for waters of the state and for substances discharged therein in order to maintain the highest possible standards of all waters of the state in accordance with the public policy as declared in RCW 90.48.010. [1987 c 109 § 124; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 11; 1967 c 13 § 6; 1945 c 216 § 11; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964k. Formerly RCW 90.48.030, part.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.037 Authority of department to bring enforcement actions.** The department, with the assistance of the attorney general, is authorized to bring any appropriate action at law or in equity, including action for injunctive relief, in the name of the people of the state of Washington as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW. [1991 c 200 § 1102; 1987 c 109 § 125; 1967 c 13 § 7.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.039 Hazardous substance remedial actions—Procedural requirements not applicable.** The procedural requirements of this chapter shall not apply to any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70A.305 RCW, or to the department of ecology when it conducts a remedial action under chapter 70A.305 RCW. The department of ecology shall ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70A.305 RCW, or during the department-conducted remedial action, through the procedures developed by the department pursuant to RCW 70A.305.090. [2020 c 20 § 1498; 1994 c 257 § 19.]

**Severability—1994 c 257:** See note following RCW 36.70A.270.

**RCW 90.48.045 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any legal requirement under this chapter, including any standard, limitation, rule, or order is superseded and replaced in accordance with the terms and provisions of an environmental excellence program agreement, entered into under chapter 43.21K RCW. [1997 c 381 § 26.]

**Purpose—1997 c 381:** See RCW 43.21K.005.

**RCW 90.48.080 Discharge of polluting matter in waters prohibited.** It shall be unlawful for any person to throw, drain, run, or otherwise discharge into any of the waters of this state, or to cause, permit or suffer to be thrown, run, drained, allowed to seep or otherwise discharged into such waters any organic or inorganic matter that shall cause or tend to cause pollution of such waters according to the determination of the department, as provided for in this chapter. [1987 c 109 § 126; 1967 c 13 § 8; 1945 c 216 § 14; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964n.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.090 Right of entry—Special inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations.** The department or its duly appointed agent shall have the right to enter at all reasonable times in or upon any property, public or private, for the purpose of inspecting and investigating conditions relating to the pollution of or the possible pollution of any of the waters of this state.

The department shall have special inspection requirements for metals mining and milling operations regulated under chapter 232, Laws of 1994. The department shall inspect these mining and milling operations at least quarterly in order to ensure compliance with the intent and any permit issued pursuant to this chapter. The department shall conduct additional inspections as needed during the construction phase of these mining operations in order to ensure compliance with this chapter. [1994 c 232 § 21; 1987 c 109 § 127; 1945 c 216 § 15; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964o.]

**Effective date—1994 c 232 §§ 6-8 and 18-22:** See RCW 78.56.902.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.095 Authority of department to compel attendance and testimony of witnesses, production of books and papers—Contempt proceedings to enforce—Fees.** In carrying out the purposes of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW the department shall, in conjunction with either the adoption of rules, consideration of an application for a waste discharge permit or the termination or modification of such permit, or proceedings in adjudicative hearings, have the authority to issue process and subpoena witnesses effective throughout the state on its own behalf or that of an interested party, compel their attendance, administer oaths, take the testimony of any person under oath and, in connection therewith require the production for examination of any books or papers relating to the matter under consideration by the department. In case of disobedience on the part of any person to comply with any subpoena issued by the department, or on the refusal of any witness to testify to any matters regarding which he or she may be lawfully interrogated, it shall be the duty of the superior court of any county, or of the judge thereof, on application of the department, to compel obedience by proceedings for contempt, as in the case of disobedience of the requirements of a subpoena issued from such court or a refusal to testify therein. In connection with the authority granted under this section no witness or other person shall be required to divulge trade secrets or secret processes. Persons responding to a subpoena as provided herein shall be entitled to fees as are witnesses in superior court. [2013 c 23 § 613; 1991 c 200 § 1103; 1987 c 109 § 128; 1967 c 13 § 9.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.100 Request for assistance.** The department shall have the right to request and receive the assistance of any educational

institution or state agency when it is deemed necessary by the department to carry out the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW. [1991 c 200 § 1104; 1987 c 109 § 129; 1945 c 216 § 16; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964p.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.110 Plans and proposed methods of operation and maintenance of sewerage or disposal systems to be submitted to department—Exceptions—Time limitations.** (1) Except under subsection (2) of this section, all engineering reports, plans, and specifications for the construction of new sewerage systems, sewage treatment or disposal plants or systems, or for improvements or extensions to existing sewerage systems or sewage treatment or disposal plants, and the proposed method of future operation and maintenance of said facility or facilities, shall be submitted to and be approved by the department, before construction thereof may begin. No approval shall be given until the department is satisfied that said plans and specifications and the methods of operation and maintenance submitted are adequate to protect the quality of the state's waters as provided for in this chapter. Approval under this chapter is not required for large on-site sewage systems permitted by the department of health under chapter 70A.115 RCW or for on-site sewage systems regulated by local health jurisdictions under rules of the state board of health.

(2) To promote efficiency in service delivery and intergovernmental cooperation in protecting the quality of the state's waters, the department may delegate the authority for review and approval of engineering reports, plans, and specifications for the construction of new sewerage systems, sewage treatment or disposal plants or systems, or for improvements or extensions to existing sewerage system or sewage treatment or disposal plants, and the proposed method of future operations and maintenance of said facility or facilities and industrial pretreatment systems, to local units of government requesting such delegation and meeting criteria established by the department.

(3) For any new or revised general sewer plan submitted for review under this section, the department shall review and either approve, conditionally approve, reject, or request amendments within ninety days of the receipt of the submission of the plan. The department may extend this ninety-day time limitation for new submittals by up to an additional ninety days if insufficient time exists to adequately review the general sewer plan. For rejections of plans or extensions of the timeline, the department shall provide in writing to the local government entity the reason for such action. In addition, the governing body of the local government entity and the department may mutually agree to an extension of the deadlines contained in this section. [2020 c 20 § 1499; 2007 c 343 § 13; 2002 c 161 § 5; 1994 c 118 § 1; 1987 c 109 § 130; 1967 c 13 § 10; 1945 c 216 § 17; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964q.]



~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.112 Plan evaluation—Consideration of reclaimed water.**  
The evaluation of any plans submitted under RCW 90.48.110 must include consideration of opportunities for the use of reclaimed water as defined in RCW 90.46.010. Wastewater plans submitted under RCW 90.48.110 must include a statement describing how applicable reclamation and reuse elements will be coordinated as required under RCW 90.46.120(2). [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 12; 1997 c 444 § 9.]

~~Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:~~ See note following RCW 90.03.015.

~~Severability—1997 c 444:~~ See note following RCW 90.46.010.

**RCW 90.48.120 Notice of department's determination that violation has or will occur—Report to department of compliance with determination—Order or directive to be issued—Notice.** (1) Whenever, in the opinion of the department, any person shall violate or creates a substantial potential to violate the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW, or fails to control the polluting content of waste discharged or to be discharged into any waters of the state, the department shall notify such person of its determination by registered mail. Such determination shall not constitute an order or directive under RCW 43.21B.310. Within thirty days from the receipt of notice of such determination, such person shall file with the department a full report stating what steps have been and are being taken to control such waste or pollution or to otherwise comply with the determination of the department. Whereupon the department shall issue such order or directive as it deems appropriate under the circumstances, and shall notify such person thereof by registered mail.

(2) Whenever the department deems immediate action is necessary to accomplish the purposes of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW, it may issue such order or directive, as appropriate under the circumstances, without first issuing a notice or determination pursuant to subsection (1) of this section. An order or directive issued pursuant to this subsection shall be served by registered mail or personally upon any person to whom it is directed. [1992 c 73 § 25; 1987 c 109 § 131; 1985 c 316 § 3; 1973 c 155 § 2; 1967 c 13 § 11; 1945 c 216 § 18; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964r.]

~~Effective dates—1992 c 73:~~ See RCW 82.23B.902.

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.140 Penalty.** Any person found guilty of willfully violating any of the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW, or any final written orders or directive of the department or a court in pursuance thereof is guilty of a gross misdemeanor, and upon conviction thereof shall be punished by a fine of up to ten thousand dollars and costs of prosecution, or by imprisonment in the county

jail for up to three hundred sixty-four days, or by both such fine and imprisonment in the discretion of the court. Each day upon which a willful violation of the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW occurs may be deemed a separate and additional violation. [2011 c 96 § 61; 2003 c 53 § 419; 1992 c 73 § 26; 1973 c 155 § 8; 1945 c 216 § 20; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964t.]

**Findings—Intent—2011 c 96:** See note following RCW 9A.20.021.

**Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53:** See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**RCW 90.48.142 Violations—Liability in damages for injury or death of fish, animals, vegetation—Action to recover.** (1) Any person who:

- (a) (i) Violates any of the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW;
  - (ii) Fails to perform any duty imposed by this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW;
  - (iii) Violates an order or other determination of the department or the director made pursuant to the provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW;
  - (iv) Violates the conditions of a waste discharge permit issued pursuant to RCW 90.48.160; or
  - (v) Otherwise causes a reduction in the quality of the state's waters below the standards set by the department or, if no standards have been set, causes significant degradation of water quality, thereby damaging the same; and
- (b) Causes the death of, or injury to, fish, animals, vegetation, or other resources of the state; shall be liable to pay the state and affected counties and cities damages in an amount determined pursuant to RCW 90.48.367.
- (2) No action shall be authorized under this section against any person operating in compliance with the conditions of a waste discharge permit issued pursuant to RCW 90.48.160. [1991 c 200 § 810; 1989 c 262 § 2; 1988 c 36 § 69; 1987 c 109 § 132; 1985 c 316 § 6; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 12; 1967 ex.s. c 139 § 13.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Findings—1989 c 262:** "The legislature finds that there is confusion regarding the measure of damages authorized under RCW 90.48.142. The intent of this act is to clarify existing law on the measure of damages authorized under RCW 90.48.142, not to change the law." [1989 c 262 § 1.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Severability—1967 ex.s. c 139:** See RCW 82.34.900.

**RCW 90.48.144 Violations—Civil penalty—Procedure.** Except as provided in RCW 43.05.060 through 43.05.080 and 43.05.150, every person who:

(1) Violates the terms or conditions of a waste discharge permit issued pursuant to RCW 90.48.180 or 90.48.260 through 90.48.262, or

(2) Conducts a commercial or industrial operation or other point source discharge operation without a waste discharge permit as required by RCW 90.48.160 or 90.48.260 through 90.48.262, or

(3) Violates the provisions of RCW 90.48.080, or other sections of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW or rules or orders adopted or issued pursuant to either of those chapters, shall incur, in addition to any other penalty as provided by law, a penalty in an amount of up to ten thousand dollars a day for every such violation. Each and every such violation shall be a separate and distinct offense, and in case of a continuing violation, every day's continuance shall be and be deemed to be a separate and distinct violation. Every act of commission or omission which procures, aids or abets in the violation shall be considered a violation under the provisions of this section and subject to the penalty herein provided for. The penalty amount shall be set in consideration of the previous history of the violator and the severity of the violation's impact on public health and/or the environment in addition to other relevant factors. The penalty herein provided for shall be imposed pursuant to the procedures set forth in RCW 43.21B.300. [1995 c 403 § 636; 1992 c 73 § 27; 1987 c 109 § 17; 1985 c 316 § 2; 1973 c 155 § 9; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 13; 1967 ex.s. c 139 § 14.]

**Findings—Short title—Intent—1995 c 403:** See note following RCW 34.05.328.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Severability—1967 ex.s. c 139:** See RCW 82.34.900.

**RCW 90.48.150 Construction of chapter.** This chapter shall not be construed as repealing any of the laws governing the pollution of the waters of the state, but shall be held and construed as ancillary to and supplementing the same and an addition to the laws now in force, except as the same may be in direct conflict herewith. [1945 c 216 § 21; Rem. Supp. 1945 § 10964u.]

**RCW 90.48.153 Cooperation with federal government—Federal funds.** The department is authorized to cooperate with the federal government and to accept grants of federal funds for carrying out the purposes of this chapter. The department is empowered to make any application or report required by an agency of the federal government as an incident to receiving such grants. [1987 c 109 § 133; 1949 c 58 § 1; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 10964pp. Formerly RCW 90.48.040.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.156 Cooperation with other states and provinces—  
Interstate and state-provincial projects.** The department is authorized to cooperate with appropriate agencies of neighboring states and neighboring provinces, to enter into contracts, and make contributions toward interstate and state-provincial projects to carry out the purposes of this chapter and chapter 90.56 RCW. [1991 c 200 § 1105; 1987 c 109 § 134; 1949 c 58 § 2; Rem. Supp. 1949 § 10964pp-1. Formerly RCW 90.48.050.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—  
1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.158 Grants to public bodies authorized.** The department of ecology is authorized to make and administer grants to any public bodies for the purpose of aiding in the construction and improvement of water pollution control facilities in conjunction with federal grants authorized pursuant to the Federal Water Pollution Control Act. [1987 c 109 § 154; 1967 c 106 § 2. Formerly RCW 90.50.020.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—  
1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.160 Waste disposal permit—Required—Exemptions.** Any person who conducts a commercial or industrial operation of any type which results in the disposal of solid or liquid waste material into the waters of the state, including commercial or industrial operators discharging solid or liquid waste material into sewerage systems operated by municipalities or public entities which discharge into public waters of the state, shall procure a permit from either the department or the \*thermal power plant site evaluation council as provided in RCW 90.48.262(2) before disposing of such waste material: PROVIDED, That this section shall not apply to any person discharging domestic sewage only into a sewerage system.

The department may, through the adoption of rules, eliminate the permit requirements for disposing of wastes into publicly operated sewerage systems for:

(1) Categories of or individual municipalities or public corporations operating sewerage systems; or

(2) Any category of waste disposer;

if the department determines such permit requirements are no longer necessary for the effective implementation of this chapter. The department may by rule eliminate the permit requirements for disposing of wastes by upland finfish rearing facilities unless a permit is required under the federal clean water act's national pollutant discharge elimination system. [1989 c 293 § 2; 1973 c 155 § 3; 1967 c 13 § 13; 1955 c 71 § 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The "thermal power plant site evaluation council" was redesignated the "energy facility site evaluation council" by 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108.

**RCW 90.48.162 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations.** Any county or any municipal or public corporation operating or proposing to operate a sewerage system, including any system which collects only domestic sewerage, which results in the disposal of waste material into the waters of the state shall procure a permit from the department of ecology before so disposing of such materials. This section is intended to extend the permit system of RCW 90.48.160 to counties and municipal or public corporations and the provisions of RCW 90.48.170 through 90.48.200 and 90.52.040 shall be applicable to the permit requirement imposed under this section. A permit under this chapter is not required for large on-site sewage systems permitted by the department of health under chapter 70A.115 RCW or for on-site sewage systems permitted by local health jurisdictions under rules of the state board of health. [2020 c 20 § 1500; 2007 c 343 § 12; 1972 ex.s. c 140 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.165 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Cities, towns or municipal corporations may be granted authority to issue permits—Revocation—Termination of permits.** Any city, town or municipal corporation operating a sewerage system including treatment facilities may be granted authority by the department to issue permits for the discharge of wastes to such system provided the department ascertains to its satisfaction that the sewerage system and the inspection and control program operated and conducted by the city, town or municipal corporation will protect the public interest in the quality of the state's waters as provided for in this chapter. Such authority may be granted by the department upon application by the city, town or municipal corporation and may be revoked by the department if it determines that such city, town, or municipal corporation is not, thereafter, operated and conducted in a manner to protect the public interest. Persons holding municipal permits to discharge into sewerage systems operated by a municipal corporation authorized by this section to issue such permits shall not be required to secure a waste discharge permit provided for in RCW 90.48.160 as to the wastes discharged into such sewerage systems. Authority granted by the department to cities, towns, or municipal corporations to issue permits under this section shall be in addition to any authority or power now or hereafter granted by law to cities, towns and municipal corporations for the regulation of discharges into sewerage systems operated by such cities, towns, or municipal corporations. Permits issued under this section shall automatically terminate if the authority to issue the same is revoked by the department. [1987 c 109 § 135; 1967 c 13 § 14.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.170 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Application—Notice as to new operation or increase in volume—Investigation—Notice to other state departments.** Applications for permits shall be made on forms prescribed by the department and shall contain the name and address of the applicant, a description of the applicant's operations, the

quantity and type of waste material sought to be disposed of, the proposed method of disposal, and any other relevant information deemed necessary by the department. Application for permits shall be made at least sixty days prior to commencement of any proposed discharge or permit expiration date, whichever is applicable. Upon receipt of a proper application relating to a new operation, or an operation previously under permit for which an increase in volume of wastes or change in character of effluent is requested over that previously authorized, the department shall instruct the applicant to publish notices thereof by such means and within such time as the department shall prescribe. The department shall require that the notice so prescribed shall be published twice in a newspaper of general circulation within the county in which the disposal of waste material is proposed to be made and in such other appropriate information media as the department may direct. Said notice shall include a statement that any person desiring to present his or her views to the department with regard to said application may do so in writing to the department, or any person interested in the department's action on an application for a permit, may submit his or her views or notify the department of his or her interest within thirty days of the last date of publication of notice. Such notification or submission of views to the department shall entitle said persons to a copy of the action taken on the application. Upon receipt by the department of an application, it shall immediately send notice thereof containing pertinent information to the director of fish and wildlife and to the secretary of social and health services. When an application complying with the provisions of this chapter and the rules and regulations of the department has been filed with the department, it shall be its duty to investigate the application, and determine whether the use of public waters for waste disposal as proposed will pollute the same in violation of the public policy of the state. [1994 c 264 § 91; 1988 c 36 § 70; 1987 c 109 § 136; 1967 c 13 § 15; 1955 c 71 § 2.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.180 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Issuance—Conditions—Duration.** The department shall issue a permit unless it finds that the disposal of waste material as proposed in the application will pollute the waters of the state in violation of the public policy declared in RCW 90.48.010. The department shall have authority to specify conditions necessary to avoid such pollution in each permit under which waste material may be disposed of by the permittee. Permits may be temporary or permanent but shall not be valid for more than five years from date of issuance. [1987 c 109 § 137; 1967 c 13 § 16; 1955 c 71 § 3.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.190 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Termination—Grounds.** A permit shall be subject to termination upon thirty days' notice in writing if the department finds:

- (1) That it was procured by misrepresentation of any material fact or by lack of full disclosure in the application;
- (2) That there has been a violation of the conditions thereof;
- (3) That a material change in quantity or type of waste disposal exists. [1987 c 109 § 138; 1967 c 13 § 17; 1955 c 71 § 4. (1987 3rd ex.s. c 2 § 43 repealed by 1989 c 2 § 24, effective March 1, 1989.)]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.195 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Modification or additional conditions may be ordered.** In the event that a material change in the condition of the state waters occurs the department may, by appropriate order, modify permit conditions or specify additional conditions in permits previously issued. [1987 c 109 § 139; 1967 c 13 § 18.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.200 Waste disposal permits required of counties, municipalities and public corporations—Nonaction upon application—Temporary permit—Duration.** In the event of failure of the department to act upon an application within sixty days after it has been filed the applicant shall be deemed to have received a temporary permit. Said permit shall authorize the applicant to discharge wastes into waters of the state as requested in its application only until such time as the department shall have taken action upon said application. [1987 c 109 § 140; 1967 c 13 § 19; 1955 c 71 § 5.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.215 Upland finfish facilities—Waste discharge standards—Waste disposal permit.** (1) The following definition shall apply to this section: "Upland finfish hatching and rearing facilities" means those facilities not located within waters of the state where finfish are hatched, fed, nurtured, held, maintained, or reared to reach the size of release or for market sale. This shall include fish hatcheries, rearing ponds, spawning channels, and other similarly constructed or fabricated public or private facilities.

(2) Not later than September 30, 1989, the department shall adopt standards pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW for waste discharges from upland finfish hatching and rearing facilities. In establishing these standards, the department shall incorporate, to the extent applicable, studies conducted by the United States environmental protection agency on finfish rearing facilities and other relevant information. The department shall also issue a general permit as authorized by the federal clean water act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq., or RCW 90.48.160 by September 30, 1989, for upland finfish hatching and rearing facilities. The department shall approve or deny applications for coverage under the general permit for upland finfish hatching and

rearing facilities within one hundred eighty days from the date of application, unless a longer time is required to satisfy public participation requirements in the permit process in accordance with applicable rules, or compliance with the requirements of the state environmental policy act under chapter 43.21C RCW. The department shall notify applicants for coverage by a general permit as soon as it determines that a proposed discharge meets or fails to comply with the standards or general permit conditions set forth pursuant to this section, or that a time period longer than one hundred eighty days is necessary to satisfy public participation requirements or the state environmental policy act. [1989 c 293 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.220 Marine finfish rearing facilities—Waste discharge standards—Discharge permit applications—Exemption.** (1) For the purposes of this section "marine finfish rearing facilities" means those private and public facilities located within the salt water of the state where finfish are fed, nurtured, held, maintained, or reared to reach the size of release or for market sale.

(2) Not later than October 31, 1994, the department shall adopt criteria under chapter 34.05 RCW for allowable sediment impacts from organic enrichment due to marine finfish rearing facilities.

(3) Not later than June 30, 1995, the department shall adopt standards under chapter 34.05 RCW for waste discharges from marine finfish rearing facilities. In establishing these standards, the department shall review and incorporate, to the extent possible, studies conducted by state and federal agencies on waste discharges from marine finfish rearing facilities, and any reports and other materials prepared by technical committees on waste discharges from marine finfish rearing facilities. The department shall approve or deny discharge permit applications for marine finfish rearing facilities within one hundred eighty days from the date of application, unless a longer time is required to satisfy public participation requirements in the permit process in accordance with applicable rules, or compliance with the requirements of the state environmental policy act under chapter 43.21C RCW. The department shall notify applicants as soon as it determines that a proposed discharge meets or fails to comply with the standards adopted pursuant to this section, or if a time period longer than one hundred eighty days is necessary to satisfy public participation requirements of the state environmental policy act.

(4) The department may adopt rules to exempt marine finfish rearing facilities not requiring national pollutant discharge elimination system permits under the federal water pollution control act from the discharge permit requirement. [1993 c 296 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.225 Issuance of national pollutant discharge elimination system permits associated with nonnative marine finfish aquaculture.** (1) The department may issue national pollutant discharge elimination system permits associated with nonnative marine finfish aquaculture only if these activities are performed under a lease of state-owned aquatic lands in effect on June 7, 2018. The department may not issue national pollutant discharge elimination system permits in connection with any of these activities or



operations after the expiration date of the relevant lease of state-owned aquatic lands in effect on June 7, 2018.

(2) For purposes of this section, "state-owned aquatic lands" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 79.105.060. [2018 c 179 § 4.]

**RCW 90.48.230 Application of administrative procedure law to rule making and adjudicative proceedings.** The provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW, the Administrative Procedure Act, apply to all rule making and adjudicative proceedings authorized by or arising under the provisions of this chapter. [1989 c 175 § 181; 1967 c 13 § 21.]

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**RCW 90.48.240 Water pollution orders for conditions requiring immediate action—Appeal.** Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter or chapter 90.56 RCW, whenever it appears to the director that water quality conditions exist which require immediate action to protect the public health or welfare, or that a person required by RCW 90.48.160 to obtain a waste discharge permit prior to discharge is discharging without the same, or that a person conducting an operation which is subject to a permit issued pursuant to RCW 90.48.160 conducts the same in violation of the terms of said permit, causing water quality conditions to exist which require immediate action to protect the public health or welfare, the director may issue a written order to the person or persons responsible without prior notice or hearing, directing and affording the person or persons responsible the alternative of either (1) immediately discontinuing or modifying the discharge into the waters of the state, or (2) appearing before the department at the time and place specified in said written order for the purpose of providing to the department information pertaining to the violations and conditions alleged in said written order. The responsible person or persons shall be afforded not less than twenty-four hours notice of such an information meeting. If following such a meeting the department determines that water quality conditions exist which require immediate action as described herein, the department may issue a written order requiring immediate discontinuance or modification of the discharge into the waters of the state. In the event an order is not immediately complied with the attorney general, upon request of the department, shall seek and obtain an order of the superior court of the county in which the violation took place directing compliance with the order of the department. Such an order is appealable pursuant to RCW 43.21B.310. [1991 c 200 § 1106; 1987 c 109 § 15; 1967 c 13 § 22.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.250 Agreements or contracts to monitor waters and effluent discharge.** The department is authorized to make agreements and enter into such contracts as are appropriate to carry out a program of monitoring the condition of the waters of the state and the

effluent discharged therein, including contracts to monitor effluent discharged into public waters when such monitoring is required by the terms of a waste discharge permit or as part of the approval of a sewerage system, if adequate compensation is provided to the department as a term of the contract. [1987 c 109 § 141; 1967 c 13 § 23.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.260 Federal clean water act—Department designated as state agency, authority—Delegation of authority—Powers, duties, and functions.** (1) The department of ecology is hereby designated as the state water pollution control agency for all purposes of the federal clean water act as it exists on February 4, 1987, and is hereby authorized to participate fully in the programs of the act as well as to take all action necessary to secure to the state the benefits and to meet the requirements of that act. With regard to the national estuary program established by section 320 of that act, the department shall exercise its responsibility jointly with the Puget Sound partnership, created in RCW 90.71.210. The department of ecology may delegate its authority under this chapter, including its national pollutant discharge elimination permit system authority and duties regarding animal feeding operations and concentrated animal feeding operations, to the department of agriculture through a memorandum of understanding. Until any such delegation receives federal approval, the department of agriculture's adoption or issuance of animal feeding operation and concentrated animal feeding operation rules, permits, programs, and directives pertaining to water quality shall be accomplished after reaching agreement with the director of the department of ecology. Adoption or issuance and implementation shall be accomplished so that compliance with such animal feeding operation and concentrated animal feeding operation rules, permits, programs, and directives will achieve compliance with all federal and state water pollution control laws. The powers granted herein include, among others, and notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter or otherwise, the following:

(a) Complete authority to establish and administer a comprehensive state point source waste discharge or pollution discharge elimination permit program which will enable the department to qualify for full participation in any national waste discharge or pollution discharge elimination permit system and will allow the department to be the sole agency issuing permits required by such national system operating in the state of Washington subject to the provisions of RCW 90.48.262(2). Program elements authorized herein may include, but are not limited to: (i) Effluent treatment and limitation requirements together with timing requirements related thereto; (ii) applicable receiving water quality standards requirements; (iii) requirements of standards of performance for new sources; (iv) pretreatment requirements; (v) termination and modification of permits for cause; (vi) requirements for public notices and opportunities for public hearings; (vii) appropriate relationships with the secretary of the army in the administration of his or her responsibilities which relate to anchorage and navigation, with the administrator of the environmental protection agency in the performance of his or her

duties, and with other governmental officials under the federal clean water act; (viii) requirements for inspection, monitoring, entry, and reporting; (ix) enforcement of the program through penalties, emergency powers, and criminal sanctions; (x) a continuing planning process; and (xi) user charges.

(b) The power to establish and administer state programs in a manner which will ensure the procurement of moneys, whether in the form of grants, loans, or otherwise; to assist in the construction, operation, and maintenance of various water pollution control facilities and works; and the administering of various state water pollution control management, regulatory, and enforcement programs.

(c) The power to develop and implement appropriate programs pertaining to continuing planning processes, area-wide waste treatment management plans, and basin planning.

(2) The governor shall have authority to perform those actions required of him or her by the federal clean water act.

(3) By July 31, 2012, the department shall:

(a) Reissue without modification and for a term of one year any national pollutant discharge elimination system municipal stormwater general permit applicable to western Washington municipalities first issued on January 17, 2007; and

(b) Issue an updated national pollutant discharge elimination system municipal stormwater general permit applicable to western Washington municipalities for any permit first issued on January 17, 2007. An updated permit issued under this subsection shall become effective beginning August 1, 2013.

(i) Provisions of the updated permit issued under (b) of this subsection relating to new requirements for low-impact development and review and revision of local development codes, rules, standards, or other enforceable documents to incorporate low-impact development principles must be implemented simultaneously. These requirements may go into effect no earlier than December 31, 2016, or the time of the scheduled update under \*RCW 36.70A.130(5), as existing on July 10, 2012, whichever is later.

(ii) Provisions of the updated permit issued under (b) of this subsection related to increased catch basin inspection and illicit discharge detection frequencies and application of new stormwater controls to projects smaller than one acre may go into effect no earlier than December 31, 2016, or the time of the scheduled update under \*RCW 36.70A.130(5), as existing on July 10, 2012, whichever is later.

(4) By July 31, 2012, the department shall:

(a) Reissue without modification and for a term of two years any national pollutant discharge elimination system municipal stormwater general permit applicable to eastern Washington municipalities first issued on January 17, 2007; and

(b) Issue an updated national pollutant discharge elimination system municipal stormwater general permit for any permit first issued on January 17, 2007, applicable to eastern Washington municipalities. An updated permit issued under this subsection becomes effective August 1, 2014. [2012 1st sp.s. c 1 § 313; 2011 c 353 § 12; 2007 c 341 § 55; 2003 c 325 § 7; 1988 c 220 § 1; 1983 c 270 § 1; 1979 ex.s. c 267 § 1; 1973 c 155 § 4; 1967 c 13 § 24.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 36.70A.130 was amended by 2020 c 113 § 1, changing subsection (5) to subsection (4).

**Finding—Intent—Limitation—Jurisdiction/authority of Indian tribe under act—2012 1st sp.s. c 1:** See notes following RCW 77.55.011.

**Authority of department of fish and wildlife under act—2012 1st sp.s. c 1:** See note following RCW 76.09.040.

**Intent—2011 c 353:** See note following RCW 36.70A.130.

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**Intent—Finding—2003 c 325:** See note following RCW 90.64.030.

**Severability—1983 c 270:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1983 c 270 § 5.]

**RCW 90.48.261 Exercise of powers under RCW 90.48.260—Aquatic resource mitigation.** When exercising its powers under RCW 90.48.260, the department shall, at the request of the project proponent, follow the guidance contained in RCW 90.74.005 through 90.74.030. [1997 c 424 § 7.]

**RCW 90.48.262 Implementation of RCW 90.48.260—Permits for energy facilities—Rules and procedures.** (1) The powers established under RCW 90.48.260 shall be implemented by the department through the adoption of rules in every appropriate situation. The permit program authorized under \*RCW 90.48.260(1) shall constitute a continuation of the established permit program of RCW 90.48.160 and other applicable sections within chapter 90.48 RCW. The appropriate modifications as authorized in \*\*this 1973 amendatory act are designed to avoid duplication and other wasteful practices and to insure that the state permit program contains all required elements of and is compatible with the requirements of any national permit system.

(2) Permits for energy facilities subject to chapter 80.50 RCW shall be issued by the energy facility site evaluation council: PROVIDED, That such permits shall become effective only if the governor approves an application for certification and executes a certification agreement pursuant to said chapter. The council shall have all powers necessary to establish and administer a point source discharge permit program pertaining to such plants, consistent with applicable receiving water quality standards established by the department, and to qualify for full participation in any national waste discharge or pollution discharge elimination permit system. The council and the department shall each adopt, by rules, procedures which will provide maximum coordination and avoid duplication between the two agencies with respect to permits in carrying out the requirements of \*\*this act including, but not limited to, monitoring and enforcement of certification agreements, and in qualifying for full participation in any such national system. [1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108 § 41; 1973 c 155 § 5.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 90.48.260 was amended by 2011 c 353 § 12, changing subsection (1) to subsection (1)(a).

\*\* (2) "This 1973 amendatory act" and "this act" apparently refer to 1973 c 155, which consists of this section, amendments to RCW 90.48.010, 90.48.120, 90.48.140, 90.48.144, 90.48.160, and 90.48.260, and the repeal of RCW 90.48.070.

**Severability—Effective date—1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 108:** See notes following RCW 43.21F.010.

**RCW 90.48.264 Federal clean water act—Rules for on-site sewage disposal systems adjacent to marine waters.** In implementing this chapter and in participating in programs under the federal clean water act, the department may consult with the department of social and health services concerning standards for repair of existing, failing on-site sewage disposal systems that are adjacent to marine waters. By January 1, 1989, the department of social and health services shall propose rules for adoption by the state board of health identifying the standards for repair of existing, failing on-site sewage disposal systems at single-family residences that were legally occupied prior to June 9, 1988, and that are adjacent to marine waters. The rules may specify the design, operation and maintenance standards for such repaired systems so as to ensure protection of the public health, attainment of state water quality standards and the protection of shellfish and other public resources. The rules shall also provide that any proposed discharge to marine water shall be considered only if on-site sewage disposal systems are not feasible and that such discharges shall meet the requirements of this chapter and department of ecology regulations. The state board of health shall adopt such proposed rules unless the board finds modification or rejection of them necessary to protect the public health. [1988 c 220 § 2.]

**RCW 90.48.270 Sewage drainage basins—Authority of department to delineate and establish.** The department shall have authority to delineate and establish sewage drainage basins in the state for the purpose of developing and/or adopting comprehensive plans for the control and abatement of water pollution within such basins. Basins may include, but are not limited to, rivers and their tributaries, streams, coastal waters, sounds, bays, lakes, and portions or combinations thereof, as well as the lands drained thereby. [1987 c 109 § 142; 1967 c 13 § 26.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

*Aquifer protection areas: Chapter 36.36 RCW.*

**RCW 90.48.280 Sewage drainage basins—Comprehensive plans for sewage drainage basins.** The department is authorized to prepare and/or adopt a comprehensive water pollution control and abatement plan and to make subsequent amendments thereto, for each basin established pursuant to RCW 90.48.270. Comprehensive plans for sewage

drainage basins may be prepared by any municipality and submitted to the department for adoption.

Prior to adopting a comprehensive plan for any basin or any subsequent amendment thereof the department shall hold a public hearing thereon. Notice of such hearing shall be given by registered mail, together with copies of the proposed plan, to each municipality, or other political subdivision, within the basin exercising a sewage disposal function, at least twenty days prior to the hearing date. Such hearing may be continued from time to time and, at the termination thereof, the department may reject the plan proposed or adopt it with such modifications as it shall deem proper.

Following adoption of a comprehensive plan for any basin, the department shall require compliance with such plan by any municipality or person operating or constructing a sewage collection, treatment or disposal system or plant, or any improvement to or extension of an existing sewage collection, treatment or disposal system or plant, within the basin. [1987 c 109 § 143; 1967 c 13 § 27.]

~~**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.48.285 Contracts with municipal or public corporations and political subdivisions to finance water pollution control projects—Requisites—Priorities.** The department is authorized to enter into contracts with any municipal or public corporation or political subdivision within the state for the purpose of assisting such agencies to finance the design and construction of water pollution control projects, whether procured through chapter 39.10 or 70A.140 RCW, or otherwise, that are necessary to prevent the discharge of untreated or inadequately treated sewage or other waste into the waters of the state, including but not limited to, systems for the control of storm or surface waters which will provide for the removal of waste or polluting materials in a manner conforming to the comprehensive plan of water pollution control and abatement proposed by the agencies and approved by the department. Any such contract may provide for:

The payment by the department to a municipal or public corporation or political subdivision on a monthly, quarterly, or annual basis of varying amounts of moneys as advances which shall be repayable by said municipal or public corporation, or political subdivision under conditions determined by the department.

Contracts made by the department shall be subject to the following limitations:

(1) No contract shall be made unless the department shall find that the project cannot be financed at reasonable cost or within statutory limitations by the borrower without the making of such contract.

(2) No contract shall be made with any public or municipal corporation or political subdivision to assist in the financing of any project located within a sewage drainage basin for which the department shall have previously adopted a comprehensive water pollution control and abatement plan unless the project is found by the department to conform with the basin comprehensive plan.

(3) The department shall determine the interest rate, not to exceed ten percent per annum, which such advances shall bear.

(4) The department shall provide such reasonable terms and conditions of repayment of advances as it may determine.

(5) The total outstanding amount which the department may at any time be obligated to pay under all outstanding contracts made pursuant to this section shall not exceed the moneys available for such payment.

(6) Municipal or public corporations or political subdivisions shall meet such qualifications and follow such procedures in applying for contract assistance as shall be established by the department.

In making such contracts the department shall give priority to projects which will provide relief from actual or potential public health hazards or water pollution conditions and which provide substantial capacity beyond present requirements to meet anticipated future demand. [2020 c 20 § 1501; 2005 c 469 § 4; 1987 c 109 § 144; 1980 c 32 § 13; 1969 ex.s. c 141 § 1.]

~~Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—~~  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

~~Severability—1969 ex.s. c 141:~~ "If any provision of this act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provisions to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1969 ex.s. c 141 § 2.]

**RCW 90.48.290 Grants to municipal or public corporations or political subdivisions to aid water pollution control projects—**  
**Limitations.** The department is authorized to make and administer grants within appropriations authorized by the legislature to any municipal or public corporation, or political subdivision within the state for the purpose of aiding in the construction of water pollution control projects necessary to prevent the discharge of untreated or inadequately treated sewage or other waste into the waters of the state including, but not limited to, projects for the control of storm or surface waters which will provide for the removal of waste or polluting materials therefrom.

Grants so made by the department shall be subject to the following limitations:

(1) No grant shall be made in an amount which exceeds the recipient's contribution to the estimated cost of the project: PROVIDED, That the following shall be considered a part of the recipient's contribution:

(a) Any grant received by the recipient from the federal government pursuant to section 8(f) of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act (33 U.S.C. 466) for the project;

(b) Any expenditure which is made by any municipal or public corporation, or political subdivision within the state as a part of a joint effort with the recipient to carry out the project and which has not been used as a matching contribution for another grant made pursuant to this chapter, [;] and

(c) Any expenditure for the project made by the recipient out of moneys advanced by the department from a revolving fund and repayable to said fund.

(2) No grant shall be made for any project which does not qualify for and receive a grant of federal funds under the provisions of the Federal Water Pollution Control Act as now or hereafter amended:

PROVIDED, That this restriction shall not apply to state grants made in any biennium over and above the amount of such grants required to match all federal funds allocated to the state for such biennium.

(3) No grant shall be made to any municipal or public corporation, or political subdivision for any project located within a drainage basin unless the department shall have previously adopted a comprehensive water pollution control and abatement plan and unless the project is found by the department to conform with such basin comprehensive plan: PROVIDED, That the requirement for a project to conform to a comprehensive water pollution control and abatement plan may be waived by the department for any grant application filed with the department prior to July 1, 1974, in those situations where the department finds the public interest would be served better by approval of any grant application made prior to adoption of such plan than by its denial.

(4) Recipients of grants shall meet such qualifications and follow such procedures in applying for grants as shall be established by the department.

(5) Grants may be made to reimburse recipients for expenditures made after July 1, 1967 for projects which meet the requirements of this section and were commenced after the recipient had filed a grant application with the department. [1987 c 109 § 145; 1969 ex.s. c 284 § 1; 1967 c 13 § 28.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—**  
**1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Severability—1969 ex.s. c 284:** "If any provision of this act, or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act, or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1969 ex.s. c 284 § 24.]

**RCW 90.48.310 Application of barley straw to waters of the state.** (1) Notwithstanding any other provisions of this chapter, the application of barley straw to waters of the state for the purposes of water clarification does not require a state waste discharge permit as long as the following provisions are met:

(a) The barley straw is applied at a rate of up to two hundred twenty-five pounds per acre of surface water;

(b) Whole bales or tightly packed straw are not used. Straw must be loosely packed in nylon or mesh bags;

(c) Bags of straw are placed where control is desired, such as around docks and swim areas, and around inlets to aid in aeration or mixing;

(d) The bags must be staked or anchored in place;

(e) Straw is placed in early spring, prior to the growth of algae; and

(f) Bags are removed four to six months after placement and must not be left in the water over winter.

(2) The placement of barley straw into waters of the state in any other instance is not authorized absent a permit.

(3) This section does not alter any permit requirement that may exist under chapter 77.55 RCW. [2007 c 30 § 1.]



**RCW 90.48.364 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—**

**Definitions.** For the purposes of this chapter, "technical feasibility" or "technically feasible" means that given available technology, a restoration or enhancement project can be successfully completed at a cost that is not disproportionate to the value of the resource before the injury. [1991 c 200 § 811.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 90.48.366 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—**

**Compensation schedule.** (1) The department, in consultation with the departments of fish and wildlife and natural resources, and the parks and recreation commission, shall adopt rules establishing a compensation schedule for the discharge of oil in violation of this chapter and chapter 90.56 RCW. The amount of compensation assessed under this schedule shall be:

(a) For spills totaling one thousand gallons or more in any one event, no less than three dollars per gallon of oil spilled and no greater than three hundred dollars per gallon of oil spilled; and

(b) For spills totaling less than one thousand gallons in any one event, no less than one dollar per gallon of oil spilled and no greater than one hundred dollars per gallon of oil spilled.

(2) Persistent oil recovered from the surface of the water within forty-eight hours of a discharge must be deducted from the total spill volume for purposes of determining the amount of compensation assessed under the compensation schedule.

(3) The compensation schedule adopted under this section shall reflect adequate compensation for unquantifiable damages or for damages not quantifiable at reasonable cost for any adverse environmental, recreational, aesthetic, or other effects caused by the spill and shall take into account:

(a) Characteristics of any oil spilled, such as toxicity, dispersibility, solubility, and persistence, that may affect the severity of the effects on the receiving environment, living organisms, and recreational and aesthetic resources;

(b) The sensitivity of the affected area as determined by such factors as:

(i) The location of the spill;

(ii) Habitat and living resource sensitivity;

(iii) Seasonal distribution or sensitivity of living resources;

(iv) Areas of recreational use or aesthetic importance;

(v) The proximity of the spill to important habitats for birds, aquatic mammals, fish, or to species listed as threatened or endangered under state or federal law;

(vi) Significant archaeological resources as determined by the department of archaeology and historic preservation; and

(vii) Other areas of special ecological or recreational importance, as determined by the department; and

(c) Actions taken by the party who spilled oil or any party liable for the spill that:

(i) Demonstrate a recognition and affirmative acceptance of responsibility for the spill, such as the immediate removal of oil and the amount of oil removed from the environment; or

(ii) Enhance or impede the detection of the spill, the determination of the quantity of oil spilled, or the extent of damage,

including the unauthorized removal of evidence such as injured fish or wildlife. [2011 c 122 § 9; 2007 c 347 § 1; 1994 sp.s. c 9 § 855; 1992 c 73 § 28; 1991 c 200 § 812; 1989 c 388 § 2.]

~~Severability—Headings and captions not law—Effective date—1994 sp.s. c 9:~~ See RCW 18.79.900 through 18.79.902.

~~Effective dates—1992 c 73:~~ See RCW 82.23B.902.

~~Effective dates—1991 c 200:~~ See RCW 90.56.901.

~~Intent—Application—Captions—Severability—1989 c 388:~~ See notes following RCW 90.56.010.

**RCW 90.48.367 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—Assessment of compensation.** (1) After a spill or other incident causing damages to the natural resources of the state, the department shall conduct a formal preassessment screening as provided in RCW 90.48.368.

(2) The department shall use the compensation schedule established under RCW 90.48.366 to determine the amount of damages if the preassessment screening committee determines that: (a) Restoration or enhancement of the injured resources is not technically feasible; (b) damages are not quantifiable at a reasonable cost; and (c) the restoration and enhancement projects or studies proposed by the liable parties are insufficient to adequately compensate the people of the state for damages.

(3) If the preassessment screening committee determines that the compensation schedule should not be used, compensation shall be assessed for the amount of money necessary to restore any damaged resource to its condition before the injury, to the extent technically feasible, and compensate for the lost value incurred during the period between injury and restoration.

(4) Restoration shall include the cost to restock such waters, replenish or replace such resources, and otherwise restore the stream, lake, or other waters of the state, including any estuary, ocean area, submerged lands, shoreline, bank, or other lands adjoining such waters to its condition before the injury, as such condition is determined by the department. The lost value of a damaged resource shall be equal to the sum of consumptive, nonconsumptive, and indirect use values, as well as lost taxation, leasing, and licensing revenues. Indirect use values may include existence, bequest, option, and aesthetic values. Damages shall be determined by generally accepted and cost-effective procedures, including, but not limited to, contingent valuation method studies.

(5) Compensation assessed under this section shall be recoverable in an action brought by the attorney general on behalf of the people of the state of Washington and affected counties and cities in the superior court of Thurston county or any county in which damages occurred. Moneys recovered by the attorney general under this section shall be deposited in the coastal protection fund established under RCW 90.48.390, and shall only be used for the purposes stated in RCW 90.48.400.

(6) Compensation assessed under this section shall preclude claims under this chapter by local governments for compensation for

damages to publicly owned resources resulting from the same incident.  
[1991 c 200 § 813; 1989 c 388 § 3.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Intent—Application—Captions—Severability—1989 c 388:** See notes following RCW 90.56.010.

**RCW 90.48.368 Discharge of oil into waters of the state—  
Preassessment screening.** (1) The department shall adopt rules establishing a formal process for preassessment screening of damages resulting from spills to the waters of the state causing the death of, or injury to, fish, animals, vegetation, or other resources of the state. The rules shall specify the conditions under which the department shall convene a preassessment screening committee. The preassessment screening process shall occur concurrently with reconnaissance activities. The committee shall use information obtained from reconnaissance activities as well as any other relevant resource and resource use information. For each incident, the committee shall determine whether a damage assessment investigation should be conducted, or, whether the compensation schedule authorized under RCW 90.48.366 and 90.48.367 should be used to assess damages. The committee may accept restoration or enhancement projects or studies proposed by the liable parties in lieu of some or all of: (a) The compensation schedule authorized under RCW 90.48.366 and 90.48.367; or (b) the claims from damage assessment studies authorized under RCW 90.48.142.

(2) A preassessment screening committee may consist of representatives of the departments of ecology, archaeology and historic preservation, fish and wildlife, health, and natural resources, and the parks and recreation commission, as well as other federal, state, and local agencies, and tribal and local governments whose presence would enhance the reconnaissance or damage assessment aspects of spill response. The department shall chair the committee and determine which representatives will be needed on a spill-by-spill basis.

(3) The committee shall consider the following factors when determining whether a damage assessment study authorized under RCW 90.48.367 should be conducted: (a) Whether evidence from reconnaissance investigations suggests that injury has occurred or is likely to occur to publicly owned resources; (b) the potential loss in services provided by resources injured or likely to be injured and the expected value of the potential loss; (c) whether a restoration project to return lost services is technically feasible; (d) the accuracy of damage quantification methods that could be used and the anticipated cost-effectiveness of applying each method; (e) the extent to which likely injury to resources can be verified with available quantification methods; and (f) whether the injury, once quantified, can be translated into monetary values with sufficient precision or accuracy.

(4) When a resource damage assessment is required for an oil spill in the waters of the state, as defined in RCW 90.56.010, the state trustee agency responsible for the resource and habitat damaged shall conduct the damage assessment and pursue all appropriate remedies with the responsible party.

(5) Oil spill damage assessment studies authorized under RCW 90.48.367 may only be conducted if the committee, after considering the factors enumerated in subsection (3) of this section, determines that the damages to be investigated are quantifiable at a reasonable cost and that proposed assessment studies are clearly linked to quantification of the damages incurred.

(6) As new information becomes available, the committee may reevaluate the scope of damage assessment using the factors listed in subsection (3) of this section and may reduce or expand the scope of damage assessment as appropriate.

(7) The preassessment screening process shall provide for the ongoing involvement of persons who may be liable for damages resulting from an oil spill. The department may negotiate with a potentially liable party to perform restoration and enhancement projects or studies which may substitute for all or part of the compensation authorized under RCW 90.48.366 and 90.48.367 or the damage assessment studies authorized under RCW 90.48.367.

(8) For the purposes of this section and RCW 90.48.367, the cost of a damage assessment shall be considered "reasonable" when the anticipated cost of the damage assessment is expected to be less than the anticipated damage that may have occurred or may occur. [2007 c 347 § 2; 1994 c 264 § 92; 1992 c 73 § 29; 1991 c 200 § 814; 1989 c 388 § 4.]

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Intent—Application—Captions—Severability—1989 c 388:** See notes following RCW 90.56.010.

**RCW 90.48.386 Department of natural resources leases.** After May 15, 1991, the department of natural resources shall include in its leases for onshore and offshore facilities the following provisions:

(1) Require those wishing to lease, sublease, or re-lease state-owned aquatic lands to comply with the provisions of this chapter;

(2) Require lessees and sublessees to operate according to the plan of operations and to keep the plan current in compliance with this chapter; and

(3) Include in its leases provisions that a violation by the lessee or sublessee of the provisions of this chapter may be grounds for termination of the lease. [1991 c 200 § 1101.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 90.48.390 Coastal protection fund—Established—Moneys credited to—Use.** The coastal protection fund is established to be used by the department as a revolving fund for carrying out the purposes of restoration of natural resources under this chapter and chapter 90.56 RCW. To this fund there shall be credited penalties, fees, damages, charges received pursuant to the provisions of this chapter and chapter 90.56 RCW, compensation for damages received under this chapter and chapter 90.56 RCW, and an amount equivalent to one

cent per gallon from each marine use refund claim under \*RCW 82.36.330.

Moneys in the fund not needed currently to meet the obligations of the department in the exercise of its powers, duties, and functions under RCW 90.48.142, 90.48.366, 90.48.367, and 90.48.368 shall be deposited with the state treasurer to the credit of the fund. During the 2007-2009 fiscal biennium, the coastal protection fund may also be used for a standby rescue tug at Neah Bay. During the 2011-2013 fiscal biennium, the legislature may transfer from the coastal protection fund to the state general fund such amounts as reflect excess fund balance derived from penalties, forfeits, and seizures. [2012 2nd sp.s. c 7 § 933; 2008 c 329 § 925; 1991 sp.s. c 13 § 84; 1991 c 200 § 815; 1989 c 388 § 7; 1989 c 262 § 3; 1971 ex.s. c 180 § 4.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Chapter 82.36 RCW was repealed in its entirety by 2013 c 225 § 501, effective July 1, 2016.

**Effective date—2012 2nd sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 2.68.020.

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 329:** See notes following RCW 28B.105.110.

**Effective dates—Severability—1991 sp.s. c 13:** See notes following RCW 18.08.240.

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Intent—Application—Captions—Severability—1989 c 388:** See notes following RCW 90.56.010.

**Findings—1989 c 262:** See note following RCW 90.48.142.

**RCW 90.48.400 Coastal protection fund—Disbursal of moneys from.**

(1) Moneys in the coastal protection fund shall be disbursed for the following purposes and no others:

(a) Environmental restoration and enhancement projects intended to restore or enhance environmental, recreational, archaeological, or aesthetic resources for the benefit of Washington's citizens;

(b) Investigations of the long-term effects of oil spills; and

(c) Development and implementation of an aquatic land geographic information system.

(2) The director may allocate a portion of the fund to be devoted to research and development in the causes, effects, and removal of pollution caused by the discharge of oil or other hazardous substances.

(3) A steering committee consisting of representatives of the departments of ecology, fish and wildlife, and natural resources, and the parks and recreation commission shall authorize the expenditure of the moneys collected under RCW 90.48.366 through 90.48.368, after consulting impacted local agencies and local and tribal governments.

(4) Agencies may not be reimbursed from the coastal protection fund for the salaries and benefits of permanent employees for routine operational support. Agencies may only be reimbursed under this section if money for reconnaissance and damage assessment activities

is unavailable from other sources. [1994 c 264 § 93; 1992 c 73 § 30; 1991 c 200 § 816; 1990 c 116 § 14. Prior: 1989 c 388 § 8; 1989 c 262 § 4; 1971 ex.s. c 180 § 5.]

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Intent—Application—Captions—Severability—1989 c 388:** See notes following RCW 90.56.010.

**Findings—1989 c 262:** See note following RCW 90.48.142.

**RCW 90.48.420 Water quality standards affected by forest practices—Department of ecology solely responsible for water quality standards—Forest practices rules—Adoption—Examination—Enforcement procedures.** (1) The department of ecology, pursuant to powers vested in it previously by chapter 90.48 RCW and consistent with the policies of said chapter and RCW 90.54.020(3), shall be solely responsible for establishing water quality standards for waters of the state. On or before January 1, 1975, the department of ecology shall examine existing rules containing water quality standards and other applicable rules of said department pertaining to waters of the state affected by nonpoint sources of pollution arising from forest practices and, when it appears appropriate to the department of ecology, modify said rules. In any such examination or modification the department of ecology shall consider such factors, among others, as uses of the receiving waters, diffusion, down-stream cooling, and reasonable transient and short-term effects resulting from forest practices.

Adoption of forest practices rules pertaining to water quality by the forest practices board shall be accomplished after reaching agreement with the director of the department or the director's designee on the board. Adoption shall be accomplished so that compliance with such forest practice[s] rules will achieve compliance with water pollution control laws.

(2) The department of ecology shall monitor water quality to determine whether revisions in such water quality standards or revisions in such forest practices rules are necessary to accomplish the foregoing result, and either adopt appropriate revisions to such water quality standards or propose appropriate revisions to such forest practices rules or both.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provisions of chapter 90.48 RCW or of the rules adopted thereunder, no permit system pertaining to nonpoint sources of pollution arising from forest practices shall be authorized, and no civil or criminal penalties shall be imposed with respect to any forest practices conducted in full compliance with the applicable provisions of RCW 76.09.010 through 76.09.280, forest practices rules, and any approvals or directives of the department of natural resources thereunder.

(4) Prior to the department of ecology taking action under statutes or rules relating to water quality, regarding violations of water quality standards arising from forest practices, the department

of ecology shall notify the department of natural resources. [1999 sp.s. c 4 § 1101; 1975 1st ex.s. c 200 § 13; 1974 ex.s. c 137 § 30.]

**Part headings not law—1999 sp.s. c 4:** See note following RCW 77.85.180.

**Effective dates—1974 ex.s. c 137:** See RCW 76.09.925.

**Severability—1974 ex.s. c 137:** See RCW 76.09.935.

*Forest practices: Chapter 76.09 RCW.*

*Right of entry to administer this section: RCW 76.09.160.*

**RCW 90.48.422 Water quality standards—Compliance methods—**

**Department authority.** (1) The legislature finds that the courts have rendered decisions in Elkhorn (*Public Utility District No. 1 v. Washington Department of Ecology*, 511 U.S. 700, 114 S. Ct. 1900, 128 L.Ed. 2d 716 (1994)) and Sullivan Creek (*Public Utility District No. 1 of Pend Oreille County v. Washington Department of Ecology*, 146 Wn.2d 778, 51 P.3d 744 (2002)) related to water quality certifications issued under section 401 of the clean water act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq. Enactment of this legislation does not expand or contract the legal holdings of these decisions and does not affect in any way the application of these holdings to any future case or fact pattern related to water quality certifications issued for federally licensed hydropower facilities under section 401 of the clean water act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq.

(2) When a water quality standard cannot be reasonably met through the issuance of permits or regulatory orders issued under the authority of this chapter, the department may use voluntary, incentive-based methods including funding of water conservation projects, lease and purchase of water rights, development of new storage projects, or habitat restoration projects in an attempt to meet water quality standards.

(3) The department may not abrogate, supersede, impair, or condition the ability of a water right holder to fully divert or withdraw water under a water right permit, certificate, statutory exemption, or claim granted or recognized under chapter 90.03, 90.14, or 90.44 RCW through the authority granted to the department in this chapter. However, nothing in chapter 15, Laws of 2003 1st sp. sess. shall be construed to affect the department's authority related to the issuance of certifications under section 401 of the federal clean water act, 33 U.S.C. 1251 et seq., with respect to the application of federally authorized water quality standards, for federal energy regulatory commission licensed hydropower projects as provided under this chapter and chapter 90.74 RCW. With respect to federal energy regulatory commission licensed hydropower projects, the department may only require a person to mitigate or remedy a water quality violation or problem to the extent there is substantial evidence such person has caused such violation or problem. [2003 1st sp.s. c 15 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.425 Forest practices act and regulations relating to water quality protection to be utilized to satisfy federal water**

**pollution act.** The forest practices act, chapter 76.09 RCW, and the forest practices regulations adopted thereunder relating to water quality protection shall be utilized to satisfy the planning and program requirements of sections 208, 209, and 305 of the federal Water Pollution Control Act, as regards silvicultural activities, unless it is determined by the department of ecology that extraordinary conditions exist which make forest practices regulations unsuitable to satisfy such federal requirements. [1975 1st ex.s. c 200 § 14.]

*Provisions of state law pertaining to federal clean water act: RCW 90.48.260, 90.48.262.*

**RCW 90.48.430 Watershed restoration projects—Approval process—Waiver of public review.** A permit, certification, or other approval required by the department for a watershed restoration project as defined in RCW 89.08.460 shall be processed in compliance with RCW 89.08.450 through 89.08.510. Public review of proposed watershed restoration projects may be shortened or waived by the department. [1995 c 378 § 15.]

**RCW 90.48.445 Aquatic noxious weed control—Water quality permits—Definition.** (1) The director shall issue or approve water quality permits for use by federal, state, or local governmental agencies and licensed applicators for the purpose of using, for aquatic noxious weed control, herbicides and surfactants registered under state or federal pesticide control laws, and for the purpose of experimental use of herbicides on aquatic sites, as defined in 40 C.F.R. Sec. 172.3. The issuance of the permits shall be subject only to compliance with: Federal and state pesticide label requirements, the requirements of the federal insecticide, fungicide, and rodenticide act, the Washington pesticide control act, the Washington pesticide application act, and the state environmental policy act, except that:

(a) When the director issues water quality permits for the purpose of using glyphosate and surfactants registered by the department of agriculture to control spartina, as defined by RCW 17.26.020, the water quality permits shall contain the following criteria:

(i) Spartina treatment shall occur between June 1st and October 31st of each year unless the department, the department of agriculture, and the department of fish and wildlife agree to add additional dates beyond this period, except that no aerial application shall be allowed on July 4th or Labor Day and for ground application on those days the applicator shall post signs at each corner of the treatment area;

(ii) The applicator shall take all reasonable precautions to prevent the spraying of nontarget vegetation and nonvegetated areas;

(iii) A period of fourteen days between treatments is required prior to re-treating the previously treated areas;

(iv) Aerial or ground broadcast application shall not be made when the wind speed exceeds ten miles per hour; and

(v) An application shall not be made when a tidal regime leaves the plants dry for less than four hours.



(b) The director shall issue water quality permits for the purpose of using herbicides or surfactants registered by the department of agriculture to control aquatic noxious weeds, other than spartina, and the permit shall state that aerial and ground broadcast applications may not be made when the wind speed exceeds ten miles per hour.

(c) The director shall issue water quality permits for the experimental use of herbicides on aquatic sites, as defined in 40 C.F.R. Sec. 172.3, when the department of agriculture has issued an experimental use permit, under the authority of RCW 15.58.405(3). Because of the small geographic areas involved and the short duration of herbicide application, water quality permits issued under this subsection are not subject to state environmental policy act review.

(2) Applicable requirements established in an option or options recommended for controlling the noxious weed by a final environmental impact statement published under chapter 43.21C RCW by the department prior to May 5, 1995, by the department of agriculture, or by the department of agriculture jointly with other state agencies shall be considered guidelines for the purpose of granting the permits issued under this chapter. This section may not be construed as requiring the preparation of a new environmental impact statement to replace a final environmental impact statement published before May 5, 1995, but instead shall authorize the department of agriculture, as lead agency for the control of spartina under RCW 17.26.015, to supplement, amend, or issue addenda to the final environmental impact statement published before May 5, 1995, which may assess the environmental impact of the application of stronger concentrations of active ingredients, altered application patterns, or other changes as the department of agriculture deems appropriate.

(3) The director of ecology may not utilize this permit authority to otherwise condition or burden weed control efforts. Except for permits issued by the director under subsection (1)(c) of this section, permits issued under this section are effective for five years, unless a shorter duration is requested by the applicant. The director's authority to issue water quality modification permits for activities other than the application of surfactants and approved herbicides, to control aquatic noxious weeds or the experimental use of herbicides used on aquatic sites, as defined in 40 C.F.R. Sec. 172.3, is unaffected by this section.

(4) As used in this section, "aquatic noxious weed" means an aquatic weed on the state noxious weed list adopted under RCW 17.10.080. [1999 sp.s. c 11 § 1; 1995 c 255 § 3.]

**Effective date—1999 sp.s. c 11:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [June 7, 1999]." [1999 sp.s. c 11 § 2.]

**Effective date—1995 c 255:** See RCW 17.26.901.

**RCW 90.48.447 Aquatic plant management program—Commercial herbicide information—Experimental application of herbicides—Appropriation for study.** (1) The department of ecology shall update the final supplemental environmental impact statement completed in 1992 for the aquatic plant management program to reflect new

information on herbicides evaluated in 1992 and new, commercially available herbicides. The department shall maintain the currency of the information on herbicides and evaluate new herbicides as they become commercially available.

(2) For the 1999 treatment season, the department shall permit by May 15, 1999, municipal experimental application of herbicides such as hydrothol 191 for algae control in lakes managed under chapter 90.24 RCW. If experimental use is determined to be ineffective, then the department shall within fourteen days consult with other state, federal, and local agencies and interested parties, and may permit the use of copper sulfate. The Washington institute for public policy shall contract for a study on the lake-wide effectiveness of any herbicide used under this subsection. Prior to issuing the contract for the study, the institute for public policy shall determine the parameters of the study in consultation with licensed applicators who have recent experience treating the lake and with the nonprofit corporation that participated in centennial clean water fund phase one lake management studies for the lake. The parameters must include measurement of the lake-wide effectiveness of the application of the herbicide in maintaining beneficial uses of the lake, including any uses designated under state or federal water quality standards. The effectiveness of the application shall be determined by objective criteria such as turbidity of the water, the effectiveness in killing algae, any harm to fish or wildlife, any risk to human health, or other criteria developed by the institute. The results of the study shall be reported to the appropriate legislative committees by December 1, 1999. A general fund appropriation in the amount of \$35,000 is provided to the Washington institute for public policy for fiscal year 1999 for the study required under this subsection. [1999 c 255 § 2.]

**Findings—Purpose—1999 c 255:** "The legislature finds that the environmental, recreational, and aesthetic values of many of the state's lakes are threatened by the invasion of nuisance and noxious aquatic weeds. Once established, these nuisance and noxious aquatic weeds can colonize the shallow shorelines and other areas of lakes with dense surface vegetation mats that degrade water quality, pose a threat to swimmers, and restrict use of lakes. Algae can generate health and safety conditions dangerous to fish, wildlife, and humans. The current environmental impact statement is causing difficulty in responding to environmentally damaging weed and algae problems. Many commercially available herbicides have been demonstrated to be effective in controlling nuisance and noxious aquatic weeds and algae and do not pose a risk to the environment or public health. The purpose of this act is to allow the use of commercially available herbicides that have been approved by the environmental protection agency and the department of agriculture and subject to rigorous evaluation by the department of ecology through an environmental impact statement for the aquatic plant management program." [1999 c 255 § 1.]

**Effective date—1999 c 255:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 10, 1999]." [1999 c 255 § 5.]

**RCW 90.48.448 Eurasian water milfoil—Pesticide 2,4-D**

**application.** (1) Subject to restrictions in this section, a government entity seeking to control a limited infestation of Eurasian water milfoil may use the pesticide 2,4-D to treat the milfoil infestation, without obtaining a permit under RCW 90.48.445, if the milfoil infestation is either recently documented or remaining after the application of other control measures, and is limited to twenty percent or less of the littoral zone of the lake. Any pesticide application made under this section must be made according to all label requirements for the product and must meet the public notice requirements of subsection (2) of this section.

(2) Before applying 2,4-D, the government entity shall: (a) Provide at least twenty-one days' notice to the department of ecology, the department of fish and wildlife, the department of agriculture, the department of health, and all lake residents; (b) post notices of the intent to apply 2,4-D at all public access points; and (c) place informational buoys around the treatment area.

(3) The department of fish and wildlife may impose timing restrictions on the use of 2,4-D to protect salmon and other fish and wildlife.

(4) The department may prohibit the use of 2,4-D if the department finds the product contains dioxin in excess of the standard allowed by the United States environmental protection agency. Sampling protocols and analysis used by the department under this section must be consistent with those used by the United States environmental protection agency for testing this product.

(5) Government entities using this section to apply 2,4-D may apply for funds from the freshwater aquatic weeds account consistent with the freshwater aquatic weeds management program as provided in RCW 43.21A.660.

(6) Government entities using this section shall consider development of long-term control strategies for eradication and control of the Eurasian water milfoil.

(7) For the purpose of this section, "government entities" includes cities, counties, state agencies, tribes, special purpose districts, and county weed boards. [1999 c 255 § 3.]

**Findings—Purpose—Effective date—1999 c 255:** See notes following RCW 90.48.447.

**RCW 90.48.450 Discharges from agricultural activity—Consideration to be given as to whether enforcement action would contribute to conversion of land to nonagricultural use—Minimize the possibility.** (1) Prior to issuing a notice of violation related to discharges from agricultural activity on agricultural land, the department shall consider whether an enforcement action would contribute to the conversion of agricultural land to nonagricultural uses. Any enforcement action shall attempt to minimize the possibility of such conversion.

(2) As used in this section:

(a) "Agricultural activity" means the growing, raising, or production of horticultural or viticultural crops, berries, poultry, livestock, grain, mint, hay and dairy products.

(b) "Agricultural land" means at least five acres of land devoted primarily to the commercial production of livestock or agricultural commodities. [1981 c 297 § 31.]

**Legislative finding, intent—1981 c 297:** See note following RCW 70A.15.4530.

**Severability—1981 c 297:** See note following RCW 15.36.201.

**RCW 90.48.455 Discharge of chlorinated organics—Engineering reports by pulp and paper mills—Permits limiting discharge.** (1) The department may require each pulp mill and paper mill discharging chlorinated organics to conduct and submit an engineering report on the cost of installing technology designed to reduce the amount of chlorinated organic compounds discharged into the waters of the state. The department shall allow at least twenty-four months from June 11, 1992, for each pulp mill and each paper mill to submit an engineering report.

(2) The department may not issue a permit establishing limits to the discharge of chlorinated organic compounds by a pulp mill or a paper mill under RCW 90.48.160 or 90.48.260 until at least nine months after receiving an engineering report from a kraft mill and at least fifteen months after receiving an engineering report from a sulfite mill.

(3) Nothing in this section shall apply to dioxin compounds. [1992 c 201 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.465 Water discharge fees—Report to the legislature.**

(1) The department shall establish fees to collect expenses for issuing and administering each class of permits under RCW 90.48.160, 90.48.162, and 90.48.260. An initial fee schedule shall be established by rule and be adjusted no more often than once every two years. This fee schedule shall apply to all permits, regardless of date of issuance, and fees shall be assessed prospectively. All fees charged shall be based on factors relating to the complexity of permit issuance and compliance and may be based on pollutant loading and toxicity and be designed to encourage recycling and the reduction of the quantity of pollutants. Fees shall be established in amounts to fully recover and not to exceed expenses incurred by the department in processing permit applications and modifications, monitoring and evaluating compliance with permits, conducting inspections, securing laboratory analysis of samples taken during inspections, reviewing plans and documents directly related to operations of permittees, overseeing performance of delegated pretreatment programs, and supporting the overhead expenses that are directly related to these activities.

(2) The department shall ensure that indirect dischargers do not pay twice for the administrative expense of a permit. Accordingly, administrative expenses for permits issued by a municipality under RCW 90.48.165 are not recoverable by the department.

(3) In establishing fees, the department shall consider the economic impact of fees on small dischargers and the economic impact of fees on public entities required to obtain permits for stormwater runoff and shall provide appropriate adjustments.

(4) The fee for an individual permit issued for a dairy farm as defined under chapter 90.64 RCW shall be fifty cents per animal unit up to one thousand two hundred fourteen dollars for fiscal year 1999. The fee for a general permit issued for a dairy farm as defined under chapter 90.64 RCW shall be fifty cents per animal unit up to eight hundred fifty dollars for fiscal year 1999. Thereafter, these fees may rise in accordance with the fiscal growth factor as provided in chapter 43.135 RCW.

(5) The fee for a general permit or an individual permit developed solely as a result of the federal court of appeals decision in *Headwaters, Inc. v. Talent Irrigation District*, 243 F.3rd 526 (9th Cir. 2001) is limited, until June 30, 2003, to a maximum of three hundred dollars. Such a permit is required only, and as long as, the interpretation of this court decision is not overturned or modified by future court rulings, administrative rule making, or clarification of scope by the United States environmental protection agency or legislative action. In such a case the department shall take appropriate action to rescind or modify these permits.

(6) All fees collected under this section shall be deposited in the water quality permit account hereby created in the state treasury. Moneys in the account may be appropriated only for purposes of administering permits under RCW 90.46.220, 90.48.160, 90.48.162, and 90.48.260.

(7) The department shall present a biennial progress report on the use of moneys from the account to the legislature. The report will be due December 31st of odd-numbered years. The report shall consist of information on fees collected, actual expenses incurred, and anticipated expenses for the current and following fiscal years. [2022 c 227 § 1. Prior: 2009 c 456 § 6; 2009 c 249 § 1; 2002 c 361 § 2; 1998 c 262 § 16; 1997 c 398 § 2; 1996 c 37 § 3; 1992 c 174 § 17; 1991 c 307 § 1; 1989 c 2 § 13 (Initiative Measure No. 97, approved November 8, 1988).]

**Findings—Intent—2002 c 361:** "The legislature finds that the recent federal court of appeals decision in *Headwaters, Inc. v. Talent Irrigation District*, 243 F.3rd 526 (9th Cir. 2001) imposes a duty to obtain a national pollutant discharge elimination system permit under the clean water act for the application of pesticides to irrigation canals. This duty is also extended to other individuals and organizations that apply pesticides to other waters, where no duty existed before the *Talent* decision.

The legislature finds that the costs associated with the issuance of the national pollutant discharge elimination system permit now required by the department of ecology as a result of the federal decision is burdensome to the affected individuals and organizations. The legislature intends to temporarily reduce the burden of the federal decision on those individuals and organizations." [2002 c 361 § 1.]

**Effective date—2002 c 361:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 4, 2002]." [2002 c 361 § 3.]

**Effective date—1998 c 262:** See RCW 90.64.900.

~~Short title—Captions—Construction—Existing agreements—~~  
~~Effective date—1989 c 2:~~ See RCW 70A.305.900 through 70A.305.904,  
respectively.

**RCW 90.48.467 Report to the legislature—Required information.**  
Beginning in 2025, the department of ecology's biennial progress report required in RCW 90.48.465(7) must include information on the implementation of a revised fee structure for full cost recovery for municipal wastewater discharge permits and the use of the fees to administer the municipal discharge permitting program and issue permits in a timely manner. The biennial report must also include information demonstrating progress towards achieving the goal of reducing the wastewater discharge permit backlog to no more than 40 percent by July 1, 2025, and not more than a 20 percent backlog by July 1, 2027. [2022 c 227 § 3.]

**RCW 90.48.480 Reduction of sewer overflows—Plans—Compliance schedule.** The department of ecology shall work with local governments to develop reasonable plans and compliance schedules for the greatest reasonable reduction of combined sewer overflows. The plan shall address various options, including construction of storage tanks for sewage and separation of sewage and stormwater transport systems. The compliance schedule shall be designed to achieve the greatest reasonable reduction of combined sewer overflows at the earliest possible date. The plans and compliance schedules shall be completed by January 1, 1988. A compliance schedule will be a condition of any waste discharge permit issued or renewed after January 1, 1988. [1998 c 245 § 174; 1985 c 249 § 2.]

**RCW 90.48.490 Sewage treatment facilities—Plans to upgrade or construct.** Plans for upgrading sewage treatment facilities and plans for new sewage treatment facilities shall address the greatest reasonable reduction of combined sewer overflows and implementation of pretreatment standards. [1985 c 249 § 3.]

**RCW 90.48.495 Water conservation measures to be considered in sewer plans.** The department of ecology shall require sewer plans to include a discussion of water conservation measures considered or underway that would reduce flows to the sewerage system and an analysis of their anticipated impact on public sewer service and treatment capacity. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 11; 1989 c 348 § 10.]

~~Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:~~ See note following RCW 90.03.015.

~~Severability—1989 c 348:~~ See note following RCW 90.54.020.

~~Rights not impaired—1989 c 348:~~ See RCW 90.54.920.

**RCW 90.48.520 Review of operations before issuance or renewal of wastewater discharge permits—Incorporation of permit conditions.** In

order to improve water quality by controlling toxicants in wastewater, the department of ecology shall in issuing and renewing state and federal wastewater discharge permits review the applicant's operations and incorporate permit conditions which require all known, available, and reasonable methods to control toxicants in the applicant's wastewater. Such conditions may include, but are not limited to: (1) Limits on the discharge of specific chemicals, and (2) limits on the overall toxicity of the effluent. The toxicity of the effluent shall be determined by techniques such as chronic or acute bioassays. Such conditions shall be required regardless of the quality of receiving water and regardless of the minimum water quality standards. In no event shall the discharge of toxicants be allowed that would violate any water quality standard, including toxicant standards, sediment criteria, and dilution zone criteria. [1987 c 500 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.530 Construction projects involving fill material—Leaching test.** (1) In order to ensure that construction projects involving the use of fill material do not pose a threat to water quality, the department may require that the suitability of potential fill material be evaluated using a leaching test included in the soil clean-up rules adopted by the department under chapter 70A.305 RCW in any water quality certification issued under section 401 of the federal clean water act and in any administrative order issued under this chapter, where such certification or administrative order authorizes the placement of fill material, some or all of which will be placed in waters of the state. Any such requirement imposed by the department in a water quality certification or administrative order issued prior to May 9, 2003, is ratified and approved by the legislature as a valid and reliable method for determining concentrations of chemical constituents that can be present in fill material without posing an unacceptable risk of violating water quality standards, and shall be in effect as imposed by the department for all work not completed by June 1, 2003.

(2) Nothing in this section limits, in any way, the department's authority under this chapter. [2020 c 20 § 1502; 2003 c 210 § 1.]

**Effective date—2003 c 210:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 9, 2003]." [2003 c 210 § 3.]

**RCW 90.48.531 Leaching tests—Identification—Report to the legislature.** The department shall identify the leaching tests utilized for evaluating the potential impacts to water quality in situations where fill material is imported. The tests may include those identified in the soil clean-up rules adopted by the department under chapter 70A.305 RCW. Within existing resources, the department shall assess whether this list of leaching tests provides appropriate methods for analyzing water quality impacts for all types of projects and in all circumstances where fill material is imported. The department shall also identify any gaps in leaching test methodology. The department shall report both the leaching test list and the list of test methodology gaps to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 31, 2003. [2020 c 20 § 1503; 2003 c 210 § 2.]

**Effective date—2003 c 210:** See note following RCW 90.48.530.

**RCW 90.48.540 Use attainability analysis of water within federal reclamation project boundaries—Rules.** (1) The department, as resources allow, shall at the request of the United States bureau of reclamation or federal reclamation project irrigation districts cooperatively conduct a use attainability analysis of water bodies located within the boundaries of the federal reclamation project.

(2) If necessary because of the use attainability analysis conducted under subsection (1) of this section, the department, consistent with applicable federal water quality laws and regulations, shall adopt rules designating uses for water bodies within the federal reclamation project that support beneficial uses consistent with the primary authorized project purposes of constructed storage and conveyance facilities and other water transport systems and that recognize the unique site-specific characteristics of the arid and semiarid regions of the state of Washington where federal reclamation projects are located. The rules shall also recognize the need to deliver project irrigation water and to construct, operate, and maintain project facilities. [2004 c 214 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.545 Stormwater technical resource center—Duties—Advisory committee—Report to legislative committees.** (1) As funding to do so becomes available, the department shall create a stormwater technical resource center in partnership with a university, nonprofit organization, or other public or private entity to provide tools for stormwater management. The center shall use its authority to support the duties listed in this subsection through research, development, technology demonstration, technology transfer, education, outreach, recognition, and training programs. The center may:

- (a) Review and evaluate emerging stormwater technologies;
- (b) Research and develop innovative and cost-effective technical solutions to remove pollutants from runoff and to reduce or eliminate stormwater discharges;
- (c) Conduct pilot projects to test technical solutions;
- (d) Serve as a clearinghouse and outreach center for information on stormwater technology;
- (e) Assist in the development of stormwater control methods to better protect water quality, including source control, product substitution, pollution prevention, and stormwater treatment;
- (f) Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies and private organizations in administering programs related to stormwater control measures; and
- (g) Collaborate with existing stormwater outreach programs.

(2) The department shall consult with an advisory committee in the development of the stormwater technical resource center. The advisory committee must include representatives from relevant state agencies, local governments, the business community, the environmental community, tribes, and the building and development industry.

(3) The department, in consultation with the stormwater technical resource center advisory committee, shall identify a funding strategy for funding the stormwater technical resource center.

(4) The department shall encourage all interested parties to help and support the technical resource center with in-kind services.



(5) The department and other partners in the center shall in even-numbered years inform the appropriate legislative committees of the progress made in achieving the objectives of this section. [2014 c 76 § 11; 2009 c 449 § 2.]

**RCW 90.48.570 Water quality data—Findings—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The proper collection and review of credible water quality data is necessary to ensure compliance with the requirements of the federal clean water act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 et seq.);

(b) The state needs to assemble and evaluate all existing and readily available water quality-related data and information from sources other than the state water quality agency, such as federal agencies, tribes, universities, and volunteer monitoring groups, if the data meets the state's requirements for data quality; and

(c) Developing and implementing water quality protection measures based on credible water quality data ensures that the financial resources of state and local governments and regulated entities are prioritized to address our state's most important water quality issues.

(2) The legislature intends to ensure that credible water quality data is used as the basis for the assessment of the status of a water body relative to the surface water quality standards.

(3) It is the intent of the legislature that a water body in which pollutant loadings from naturally occurring conditions are the sole cause of a violation of applicable surface water quality standards not be listed as impaired. [2004 c 228 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.575 Water quality data—Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply to RCW 90.48.580 and 90.48.585 unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Credible data" means data meeting the requirements of RCW 90.48.585.

(2) "Department" means the Washington state department of ecology.

(3) "Impaired water" means a water body or segment for which credible data exists that: (a) Satisfies the requirements of RCW 90.48.580 and 90.48.585; and (b) demonstrates the water body should be identified pursuant to 33 U.S.C. Sec. 1313(d).

(4) "Naturally occurring condition" means any condition affecting water quality that is not caused by human influence.

(5) "Section 303(d)" has the same meaning as in the federal clean water act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1313(d)).

(6) "Total maximum daily load" has the same meaning as in the federal clean water act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1313(d)). [2004 c 228 § 2.]

**RCW 90.48.580 Water quality data—Credible data, information, literature.** (1) The department shall use credible information and literature for developing and reviewing a surface water quality standard or technical model used to establish a total maximum daily load for any surface water of the state.

(2) The department shall use credible data for the following actions after June 10, 2004:

(a) Determining whether any water of the state is to be placed on or removed from any section 303(d) list;

(b) Establishing a total maximum daily load for any surface water of the state; or

(c) Determining whether any surface water of the state is supporting its designated use or other classification.

(3) The department shall respond to questions regarding the data, literature, and other information it uses under this section. The department shall reply to requests within five business days acknowledging that the department has received the request and provide a reasonable estimate of the time the department will require to respond to the request.

(4) The department, the United States environmental protection agency, and the Indian tribes in Washington state have developed a voluntary agreement relating to the cooperative management of the clean water act section 303(d) program. The department shall consider water quality data that has been collected by Indian tribes under a quality assurance project plan that has been approved by the United States environmental protection agency if that data meets the objectives of the plan. [2004 c 228 § 3.]

**RCW 90.48.585 Water quality data—When credible.** (1) In collecting and analyzing water quality data for any purpose identified in RCW 90.48.580(2), data is considered credible data if:

(a) Appropriate quality assurance and quality control procedures were followed and documented in collecting and analyzing water quality samples;

(b) The samples or measurements are representative of water quality conditions at the time the data was collected;

(c) The data consists of an adequate number of samples based on the objectives of the sampling, the nature of the water in question, and the parameters being analyzed; and

(d) Sampling and laboratory analysis conform to methods and protocols generally acceptable in the scientific community as appropriate for use in assessing the condition of the water.

(2) Data interpretation, statistical, and modeling methods shall be those methods generally acceptable in the scientific community as appropriate for use in assessing the condition of the water.

(3) The department shall develop policy:

(a) Explaining how it uses scientific research and literature for developing and reviewing any water quality standard or technical model used to establish a total maximum daily load for any water of the state;

(b) Describing the specific criteria that determine data credibility; and

(c) Recommending the appropriate training and experience for collection of credible data. [2004 c 228 § 4.]

**RCW 90.48.590 Water quality data—Falsified data—Penalty.** Any person who knowingly falsifies data is guilty of a gross misdemeanor. [2004 c 228 § 5.]

**RCW 90.48.595 On-site sewage disposal system repair and replacement—Loan and grant programs.** The department shall offer financial and technical assistance to local governments and tribal entities in Puget Sound counties to establish or expand on-site sewage disposal system repair and replacement through local loan and grant programs. The programs must give priority to low-income and financially distressed homeowners. [2006 c 18 § 10.]

**RCW 90.48.605 Amending state water quality standards—Compliance schedules in excess of ten years authorized.** The department shall amend the state water quality standards to authorize compliance schedules in excess of ten years for discharge permits issued under this chapter that implement allocations contained in a total maximum daily load under certain circumstances. Any such amendment must be submitted to the United States environmental protection agency under the clean water act. Compliance schedules for the permits may exceed ten years if the department determines that:

(1) The permittee is meeting its requirements under the total maximum daily load as soon as possible;

(2) The actions proposed in the compliance schedule are sufficient to achieve water quality standards as soon as possible;

(3) A compliance schedule is appropriate; and

(4) The permittee is not able to meet its waste load allocation solely by controlling and treating its own effluent. [2009 c 457 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.615 Motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining—Prohibited acts.** (1) A discharge to waters of the state from a motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining operation is subject to the department's authority under this chapter and the federal clean water act. The department shall evaluate whether the number of dischargers subject to this section warrants the adoption of a general permit for motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining. If so, the department is directed to minimize the cost to permit applicants by basing general permit provisions on existing general permits adopted in other states to comply with the federal clean water act.

(2) The following act or acts are prohibited: Motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining or discharge of effluent from such activity to any waters of the state that has been designated under the endangered species act as critical habitat, or would impact critical habitat for salmon, steelhead, or bull trout. This includes all fresh waters with designated uses of: Salmonid spawning, rearing, and migration.

(3) A person commits the offense of unlawful motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining if the person engages in such an activity in violation of this chapter or the federal clean water act. Such an offense is subject to enforcement under this chapter. Before the department may take any enforcement action against a person pursuant to this section, the department shall first attempt to achieve voluntary compliance. As part of this first response, the department shall offer information and technical assistance to the person in writing identifying one or more means to accomplish the person's purposes within the framework of the law.

(4) For the purposes of this section, "motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining" means mining using any form of motorized equipment, including but not limited to a motorized suction dredge, or a gravity siphon suction dredge, for the purpose of extracting gold, silver, or other precious metals, that involves a discharge within the ordinary high water mark of waters of the state.

(5) This section does not apply to:

(a) Aquatic mining using nonmotorized methods, such as gold panning, if the nonmotorized method does not involve use of a gravity siphon suction dredge;

(b) Mining operations where no part of the operation or discharge of effluent from the operation is to waters of the state;

(c) Surface mining operations regulated by the department of natural resources under Title 78 RCW;

(d) Metals mining and milling operations as defined in chapter 78.56 RCW; or

(e) Activities related to an industrial facility, dredging related to navigability, or activities subject to a clean water act section 404 individual permit. [2020 c 10 § 2.]

**Findings—2020 c 10:** "The legislature finds that under RCW 90.48.260, the department of ecology is directed to implement and comply with the federal clean water act. The legislature further finds that Washington state, unlike other states and the environmental protection agency, has taken no action to regulate or limit water quality impacts from motorized or gravity siphon aquatic mining. The legislature also finds that federal courts have determined that discharges from this activity require regulation under the clean water act and that Washington's attorney general has supported such regulations in other states as necessary to protect water quality and fish species, even though such protections do not exist in Washington state. The legislature further finds that harmful water quality impacts are occurring in areas designated as critical habitat for threatened or endangered steelhead, salmon, and bull trout, including spawning areas for chinook salmon relied on by southern resident orcas." [2020 c 10 § 1.]

**RCW 90.48.906 Short title—1971 ex.s. c 180.** This 1971 amendatory act may be cited as the "Coastal Waters Protection Act of 1971". [1971 ex.s. c 180 § 13.]

**Chapter 90.50A RCW**  
**WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITIES—FEDERAL CAPITALIZATION GRANTS**

**Sections**

- 90.50A.005 Purpose.
- 90.50A.010 Definitions.
- 90.50A.020 Water pollution control revolving fund.
- 90.50A.030 Use of moneys in fund.
- 90.50A.040 Administration of fund.
- 90.50A.050 Loans from fund—Requirements for recipients.
- 90.50A.060 Defaults.
- 90.50A.070 Establishment of policies for loan terms and interest rates.
- 90.50A.080 Puget Sound partners.
- 90.50A.090 Water pollution control revolving administration account  
—Creation—Report to the legislature.

**Chapter 90.50A RCW**  
**WATER POLLUTION CONTROL FACILITIES—FEDERAL CAPITALIZATION GRANTS**

**Sections**

90.50A.005	Purpose.
90.50A.010	Definitions.
90.50A.020	Water pollution control revolving fund.
90.50A.030	Use of moneys in fund.
90.50A.040	Administration of fund.
90.50A.050	Loans from fund—Requirements for recipients.
90.50A.060	Defaults.
90.50A.070	Establishment of policies for loan terms and interest rates.
90.50A.080	Puget Sound partners.
90.50A.090	Water pollution control revolving administration account —Creation—Report to the legislature.

**RCW 90.50A.005 Purpose.** The long-range health and environmental goals for the state of Washington require the protection of the state's surface and underground waters for the health, safety, use, enjoyment, and economic benefit of its people. It is the purpose of this chapter to provide an account to receive federal capitalization grants to provide financial assistance to the state and to local governments for the planning, design, acquisition, construction, and improvement of water pollution control facilities and related activities in the achievement of state and federal water pollution control requirements for the protection of the state's waters. [1988 c 284 § 1.]

**RCW 90.50A.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Clean water act" means 33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 through 1388, as it existed on June 9, 2016.

(2) "Debt service" means the total of all principal, interest, and administration charges associated with a water pollution control revolving fund loan that must be repaid to the department by the public body.

(3) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(4) "Eligible cost" means the cost of that portion of a water pollution control facility or activity that can be financed under this chapter.

(5) "Federal capitalization grants" means grants from the federal government provided by the clean water act.

(6) "Fund" means the water pollution control revolving fund in the custody of the state treasurer.

(7) "Nonpoint source water pollution" means pollution that enters any waters of the state from any dispersed water-based or land-use activities, including, but not limited to, atmospheric deposition, surface water runoff from agricultural lands, urban areas, and forestlands, subsurface or underground sources, and discharges from boats or other marine vessels.

(8) "Public body" means the state of Washington or any agency, county, city or town, other political subdivision, municipal

corporation or quasi-municipal corporation, and those Indian tribes now or hereafter recognized as such by the federal government.

(9) "Water pollution" means such contamination, or other alteration of the physical, chemical, or biological properties of any waters of the state, including change in temperature, taste, color, turbidity, or odor of the waters, or such discharge of any liquid, gaseous, solid, radioactive, or other substance into any waters of the state as will or is likely to create a nuisance or render such waters harmful, detrimental, or injurious to the public health, safety, or welfare, or to domestic, commercial, industrial, agricultural, recreational, or other legitimate beneficial uses, or to livestock, wild animals, birds, fish, or other aquatic life.

(10) "Water pollution control activities" means actions taken by a public body for the following purposes: (a) To control nonpoint sources of water pollution; (b) to develop and implement a comprehensive management plan for estuaries; and (c) to maintain or improve water quality through the use of water pollution control facilities or other means.

(11) "Water pollution control facility" or "water pollution control facilities" means any facilities or systems owned or operated by a public body for the control, collection, storage, treatment, disposal, or recycling of wastewater, including but not limited to sanitary sewage, stormwater, combined sewer overflows, residential, commercial, industrial, and agricultural wastes, which are causing water quality degradation due to concentrations of conventional, nonconventional, or toxic pollutants. Water pollution control facilities include all equipment, utilities, structures, real property, and interests in and improvements on real property necessary for or incidental to such purpose. Water pollution control facilities also include such facilities, equipment, and collection systems as are necessary to protect federally designated sole source aquifers. [2016 c 88 § 1; 2013 c 96 § 1; 1988 c 284 § 2.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**RCW 90.50A.020 Water pollution control revolving fund.** (1) The water pollution control revolving fund is hereby established in the state treasury. Moneys in this fund may be spent only after legislative appropriation. Moneys in the fund may be spent only in a manner consistent with this chapter.

(2) The water pollution control revolving fund shall consist of:

(a) All capitalization grants provided by the federal government under the clean water act;

(b) All state matching funds appropriated or authorized by the legislature;

(c) Any other revenues derived from gifts or bequests pledged to the state for the purpose of providing financial assistance for water pollution control projects;

(d) All repayments of moneys borrowed from the fund;

(e) All interest payments made by borrowers from the fund;

(f) Any other fee or charge levied in conjunction with administration of the fund; and

(g) Any new funds as a result of leveraging.

(3) The state treasurer may invest and reinvest moneys in the water pollution control revolving fund in the manner provided by law.

All earnings from such investment and reinvestment shall be credited to the water pollution control revolving fund. [2016 c 88 § 2; 1993 c 329 § 1; 1992 c 235 § 9; 1991 sp.s. c 13 § 102; 1988 c 284 § 3.]

**Effective date—1993 c 329:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [May 12, 1993]." [1993 c 329 § 3.]

**Effective dates—Severability—1991 sp.s. c 13:** See notes following RCW 18.08.240.

**RCW 90.50A.030 Use of moneys in fund.** The department shall use the moneys in the water pollution control revolving fund to provide financial assistance as provided in the clean water act and as provided in RCW 90.50A.040:

(1) To make loans, on the condition that:

(a) Such loans are made at or below market interest rates, including interest free loans, at terms not to exceed the lesser of thirty years or the projected useful life, as determined by the state, of the project to be financed with the proceeds of the loan;

(b) Annual principal and interest payments will commence not later than one year after completion of any project and all loans will be fully amortized upon the expiration of the term of the loan;

(c) The recipient of a loan will establish a dedicated source of revenue for repayment of loans; and

(d) The fund will be credited with all payments of principal and interest on all loans.

(2) Loans may be made for the following purposes:

(a) To public bodies for the construction or replacement of water pollution control facilities as defined in the clean water act, including publicly owned industrial wastewater treatment facilities that reduce the burden on a municipal wastewater facility;

(b) For the implementation of a management program established under the clean water act relating to the management of nonpoint sources of pollution, subject to the requirements of that act; and

(c) For development and implementation of a conservation and management plan under the clean water act relating to the national estuary program, subject to the requirements of that act.

(3) The department may also use the moneys in the fund for the following purposes:

(a) To buy or refinance the water pollution control facilities' debt obligations of public bodies at or below market rates, if such debt was incurred after March 7, 1985;

(b) To guarantee, or purchase insurance for, public body obligations for water pollution control facility construction or replacement or activities if the guarantee or insurance would improve credit market access or reduce interest rates, or to provide loans to a public body for this purpose;

(c) As a source of revenue or security for the payment of principal and interest on revenue or general obligation bonds issued by the state if the proceeds of the sale of such bonds will be deposited in the fund;

(d) To earn interest on fund accounts; and



(e) To pay the expenses of the department in administering the water pollution control revolving fund according to administrative reserves authorized by federal and state law.

(4) The department shall present a biennial progress report on the use of moneys from the account to the appropriate committees of the legislature. The report shall consist of a list of each recipient, project description, and amount of the grant, loan, or both.

(5) The department may not use the moneys in the water pollution control revolving fund for grants. [2018 c 152 § 1; 2016 c 88 § 3; 2007 c 341 § 38; 1996 c 37 § 4; 1988 c 284 § 4.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**RCW 90.50A.040 Administration of fund.** Moneys deposited in the water pollution control revolving fund shall be administered by the department. In administering the fund, the department shall:

(1) Consistent with RCW 90.50A.030 and 90.50A.080, allocate funds for loans in accordance with the annual project priority list in accordance with the clean water act;

(2) Use accounting, audit, and fiscal procedures that conform to generally accepted government accounting standards;

(3) Prepare any reports required by the federal government as a condition to awarding federal capitalization grants;

(4) Adopt by rule any procedures or standards necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter;

(5) Enter into agreements with the federal environmental protection agency;

(6) Cooperate with local, substate regional, and interstate entities regarding state assessment reports and state management programs related to the nonpoint source management programs as noted in the clean water act;

(7) Comply with provisions of the clean water act; and

(8) After January 1, 2010, not provide funding for projects designed to address the restoration of Puget Sound that are in conflict with the action agenda developed by the Puget Sound partnership under RCW 90.71.310. [2016 c 88 § 4; 2007 c 341 § 39; 1988 c 284 § 5.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**RCW 90.50A.050 Loans from fund—Requirements for recipients.**

Any public body receiving a loan from the fund shall:

(1) Appear on the annual project priority list to be identified for funding under the clean water act;

(2) Submit an application to the department;

(3) Establish and maintain a dedicated source of revenue or other acceptable source of revenue for the repayment of the loan; and

(4) Demonstrate to the satisfaction of the department that it has sufficient legal authority to incur the debt for which it is applying. [2016 c 88 § 5; 1988 c 284 § 6.]

**RCW 90.50A.060 Defaults.** If a public body defaults on payments due to the fund, the state may withhold any amounts otherwise due to

the public body and direct that such funds be applied to the indebtedness and deposited into the account. [1988 c 284 § 7.]

**RCW 90.50A.070 Establishment of policies for loan terms and interest rates.** The department shall establish by rule policies for establishing loan terms and interest rates for loans made from the fund that assure that the objectives of this chapter are met and that adequate funds are maintained in the fund to meet future needs. [1988 c 284 § 8.]

**RCW 90.50A.080 Puget Sound partners.** (1) In administering the fund, the department shall give priority consideration to:

(a) A public body that is a Puget Sound partner, as defined in RCW 90.71.010; and

(b) A project that is referenced in the action agenda developed by the Puget Sound partnership under RCW 90.71.310.

(2) When implementing this section, the department shall give preference only to Puget Sound partners, as defined in RCW 90.71.010, in comparison to other entities that are eligible to be included in the definition of Puget Sound partner. Entities that are not eligible to be a Puget Sound partner due to geographic location, composition, exclusion from the scope of the Puget Sound action agenda developed under RCW 90.71.310, or for any other reason, shall not be given less preferential treatment than Puget Sound partners. [2007 c 341 § 40.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**RCW 90.50A.090 Water pollution control revolving administration account—Creation—Report to the legislature.** (1) The water pollution control revolving administration account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from charges authorized in this section must be deposited in the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only in a manner consistent with this section.

(2) The department is authorized to assess administration charges as a portion of the debt service for loans issued under the water pollution control revolving fund created in RCW 90.50A.020. The sole purpose of assessing administration charges is to predictably and adequately fund the department's costs of administering the water pollution control revolving fund loan program, as identified in subsection (5) of this section. The department must assess administration charges on each water pollution control revolving fund loan at the point the loan enters repayment status, after July 28, 2013, and rule changes are adopted to implement the administration charge. Loans that are at an interest rate below the established administration charge rate are exempt from the administration charge.

(3) The water pollution control revolving administration account consists of:

(a) Any administration charge levied by the department in conjunction with administration of the water pollution control revolving fund; and

(b) Any other revenues derived from gifts, grants, or bequests pledged to the state for the purpose of administering the water pollution control revolving fund.

(4) The state treasurer may invest and reinvest moneys in the water pollution control revolving administration account in the manner provided by law. All earnings from such investment and reinvestment must be credited to the water pollution control revolving administration account.

(5) Moneys in the water pollution control revolving administration account are to be used for the following water pollution control revolving fund loan program costs:

(a) Administration costs associated with conducting application processes, managing contracts, collecting loan repayments, managing the revolving fund, providing technical assistance, and meeting state and federal reporting requirements; and

(b) Information and data system costs associated with loan tracking and fund management.

(6) Each biennium, the department may spend from the water pollution control revolving administration account an amount no greater than four percent of the water pollution control revolving fund new capital appropriation.

(7) For its 2017-2019 biennial operating budget submittal, and every biennium thereafter, the department must compare the projected water pollution control revolving administration account balance and the projected administration charge income with projected program costs, including an adequate working capital reserve as defined by the office of financial management. In its submittal to the office of financial management, the department may:

(a) Find that the projected administration charge income is inadequate to fund the cost of administering the program, and that the rate of the charge must be increased. However, the administration charge may never exceed one percent on the declining principal loan balance;

(b) Find that the projected administration charge income exceeds what is needed to fund the cost of administering the program, and that the rate of the charge must be decreased;

(c) Find that there is an excess balance in the revolving administration account, and that the excess must be transferred to the water pollution control revolving fund to be used for loans; or

(d) Find that there is no need for any rate adjustments or balance transfers.

(8) At the point where the water pollution control revolving administration account adequately covers the program administration costs, the department may no longer use the federal administration allowance. If a federal capitalization grant is awarded after that point, all federal capitalization dollars must be used for making loans.

(9) By December 1, 2018, the department must submit to the appropriate legislative fiscal committees a report on implementation of the administration charge, including information on: The amount of income the administration charge has produced since its inception; the uses and adequacy of the income for administrative costs; any excess balances that have been transferred to the water pollution control revolving fund; and any additional sources that the department is using for program administration.

(10) The legislature may direct the state treasurer to make transfers of moneys in the water pollution control revolving

administration account to the water pollution control revolving fund.  
[2022 c 157 § 22; 2021 c 334 § 1000; 2019 c 415 § 992; 2013 c 96 § 2.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—Effective date—2021 c 334:**  
See notes following RCW 43.79.555.

**Effective date—2019 c 415:** See note following RCW 28B.20.476.

**Chapter 90.52 RCW**  
**POLLUTION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1971**

**Sections**

- 90.52.005 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.
- 90.52.010 Annual reports required—Contents—Critical materials designated.
- 90.52.020 Confidentiality as to manufacturing processes.
- 90.52.030 Operation subject to injunction, when—Civil penalties.
- 90.52.040 Wastes to be provided with available methods of treatment prior to discharge into waters of the state.
- 90.52.900 Short title.

**Chapter 90.52 RCW**  
**POLLUTION DISCLOSURE ACT OF 1971**

**Sections**

- 90.52.005 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.
- 90.52.010 Annual reports required—Contents—Critical materials designated.
- 90.52.020 Confidentiality as to manufacturing processes.
- 90.52.030 Operation subject to injunction, when—Civil penalties.
- 90.52.040 Wastes to be provided with available methods of treatment prior to discharge into waters of the state.
- 90.52.900 Short title.

**RCW 90.52.005 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any legal requirement under this chapter, including any standard, limitation, rule, or order is superseded and replaced in accordance with the terms and provisions of an environmental excellence program agreement, entered into under chapter 43.21K RCW. [1997 c 381 § 27.]

**Purpose—1997 c 381:** See RCW 43.21K.005.

**RCW 90.52.010 Annual reports required—Contents—Critical materials designated.** Every person conducting a commercial or industrial operation within this state who discharges wastes, other than sanitary sewage, into waters of the state or into any sewer system which discharges into waters of the state, and every person conducting a commercial or industrial operation within the state who discharges wastes into the air of the state, shall file, annually, during the month of January, reports, on forms provided by the department of ecology, setting forth:

- (1) The nature of the enterprise;
- (2) A list of materials used in, and incidental to, its manufacturing processes, including by-products and waste products;
- (3) The estimated annual total gallons or pounds (or other appropriate measurement) of wastes, including, but not limited to, process and cooling water to be discharged into the water or air, or into any sewer system.

The list of materials provided for in subsection (2) hereof shall relate to all materials designated by the director of the department of ecology, after consultation with a committee on [of] environmental specialists of not less than five appointed by the director, as critical materials which have substantial potential to adversely affect the quality of waters or environment of the state, or the uses made thereof, if allowed to enter the same. Formal designation shall be adopted by the director as a rule and filed in a "critical materials" registry of the department of ecology. "Person" as used herein means an individual partnership, firm, corporation, association or other entity. [1971 ex.s. c 160 § 1.]

**RCW 90.52.020 Confidentiality as to manufacturing processes.** The department of ecology shall provide proper and adequate procedures

to safeguard the confidentiality of manufacturing processes: PROVIDED, That the confidentiality shall not extend to waste products discharged into the waters or air of the state. [1971 ex.s. c 160 § 2.]

**RCW 90.52.030 Operation subject to injunction, when—Civil penalties.** Operation of an industrial or commercial operation in violation of RCW 90.52.010 may be enjoined on petition of the attorney general to the superior court of Thurston county or of the county in which the operation is located.

Operation of an industrial or commercial operation in violation of this chapter shall provide the basis of a civil penalty under RCW 90.48.144 or 70A.15.3160 as now or are hereafter amended. No person may discharge wastes into the waters or air of the state who fails to satisfy the requirements of RCW 90.52.010 and 90.52.040. [2020 c 20 § 1504; 1971 ex.s. c 160 § 3.]

**RCW 90.52.040 Wastes to be provided with available methods of treatment prior to discharge into waters of the state.** Except as provided in RCW 90.54.020(3)(b), in the administration of the provisions of chapter 90.48 RCW, the director of the department of ecology shall, regardless of the quality of the water of the state to which wastes are discharged or proposed for discharge, and regardless of the minimum water quality standards established by the director for said waters, require wastes to be provided with all known, available, and reasonable methods of treatment prior to their discharge or entry into waters of the state. [1987 c 399 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 160 § 4.]

**RCW 90.52.900 Short title.** This act shall be known and may be cited as the Pollution Disclosure Act of 1971. [1971 ex.s. c 160 § 5.]

**Chapter 90.54 RCW**  
**WATER RESOURCES ACT OF 1971**

**Sections**

- 90.54.005 Findings—Objectives—2002 c 329.
- 90.54.010 Purpose.
- 90.54.020 General declaration of fundamentals for utilization and management of waters of the state.
- 90.54.030 Water and related resources—Department to be advised—Water resources data program.
- 90.54.035 State funding of water resource programs—Priorities.
- 90.54.040 Comprehensive state water resources program—Modifying existing and adopting new regulations and statutes.
- 90.54.045 Water resource planning—Pilot process—Report to the legislature.
- 90.54.050 Setting aside or withdrawing waters—Rules—Consultation with legislative committees—Public hearing, notice—Review.
- 90.54.060 Department to seek involvement of other persons and entities, means—Assistance grants.
- 90.54.080 State to vigorously represent its interests before federal agencies, interstate agencies.
- 90.54.090 State, local governments, municipal corporations to comply with chapter.
- 90.54.100 Department to evaluate needs for projects and alternative methods of financing.
- 90.54.110 Authority to secure and obtain benefits, including grants.
- 90.54.120 "Department," "utilize," and "utilization" defined.
- 90.54.130 Land use management policy modifications—Advisory recommendations.
- 90.54.140 Protection of groundwater aquifers if sole drinking water source.
- 90.54.150 Water supply projects—Cooperation with other agencies—Scope of participation.
- 90.54.160 Department to report on dam safety.
- 90.54.170 Electric generation facility—Evaluation of application to appropriate water.
- 90.54.180 Water use efficiency and conservation programs and practices.
- 90.54.191 Streamflow restoration a priority.
- 90.54.210 Department shall act on water rights applications that rely on reservations of water established in WAC 173-518-080 or 173-545-090.
- 90.54.800 Policy guidelines.
- 90.54.900 Certain rights, authority, not to be affected by chapter.
- 90.54.910 Short title.
- 90.54.920 Rights not impaired.

*Environmental certification programs—Fees—Rules—Liability: RCW 43.21A.175.*



**Chapter 90.54 RCW**  
**WATER RESOURCES ACT OF 1971**

**Sections**

- 90.54.005 Findings—Objectives—2002 c 329.
- 90.54.010 Purpose.
- 90.54.020 General declaration of fundamentals for utilization and management of waters of the state.
- 90.54.030 Water and related resources—Department to be advised—Water resources data program.
- 90.54.035 State funding of water resource programs—Priorities.
- 90.54.040 Comprehensive state water resources program—Modifying existing and adopting new regulations and statutes.
- 90.54.045 Water resource planning—Pilot process—Report to the legislature.
- 90.54.050 Setting aside or withdrawing waters—Rules—Consultation with legislative committees—Public hearing, notice—Review.
- 90.54.060 Department to seek involvement of other persons and entities, means—Assistance grants.
- 90.54.080 State to vigorously represent its interests before federal agencies, interstate agencies.
- 90.54.090 State, local governments, municipal corporations to comply with chapter.
- 90.54.100 Department to evaluate needs for projects and alternative methods of financing.
- 90.54.110 Authority to secure and obtain benefits, including grants.
- 90.54.120 "Department," "utilize," and "utilization" defined.
- 90.54.130 Land use management policy modifications—Advisory recommendations.
- 90.54.140 Protection of groundwater aquifers if sole drinking water source.
- 90.54.150 Water supply projects—Cooperation with other agencies—Scope of participation.
- 90.54.160 Department to report on dam safety.
- 90.54.170 Electric generation facility—Evaluation of application to appropriate water.
- 90.54.180 Water use efficiency and conservation programs and practices.
- 90.54.191 Streamflow restoration a priority.
- 90.54.210 Department shall act on water rights applications that rely on reservations of water established in WAC 173-518-080 or 173-545-090.
- 90.54.800 Policy guidelines.
- 90.54.900 Certain rights, authority, not to be affected by chapter.
- 90.54.910 Short title.
- 90.54.920 Rights not impaired.

*Environmental certification programs—Fees—Rules—Liability: RCW 43.21A.175.*

**RCW 90.54.005 Findings—Objectives—2002 c 329.** The legislature recognizes the critical importance of providing and securing sufficient water to meet the needs of people, farms, and fish. The

legislature finds that an effective way to meet the water needs of people, farms, and fish is through strategies developed and implemented at the local watershed level. The objectives of these strategies are to supply water in sufficient quantities to satisfy the following three water resource objectives:

(1) Providing sufficient water for residential, commercial, and industrial needs;

(2) Providing sufficient water for productive fish populations; and

(3) Providing sufficient water for productive agriculture.

The legislature affirms its intent to provide continued support for watershed strategies and provides the tools in chapter 329, Laws of 2002 to assist local watersheds in meeting these objectives. [2002 c 329 § 1.]

**RCW 90.54.010 Purpose.** (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Proper utilization of the water resources of this state is necessary to the promotion of public health and the economic well-being of the state and the preservation of its natural resources and aesthetic values. Although water is a renewable resource, its supply and availability are becoming increasingly limited, particularly during summer and fall months and dry years when demand is greatest. Growth and prosperity have significantly increased the competition for this limited resource. Adequate water supplies are essential to meet the needs of the state's growing population and economy. At the same time instream resources and values must be preserved and protected so that future generations can continue to enjoy them.

(b) All citizens of Washington share an interest in the proper stewardship of our invaluable water resources. To ensure that available water supplies are managed to best meet both instream and offstream needs, a comprehensive planning process is essential. The people of the state have the unique opportunity to work together to plan and manage our water. Through a comprehensive planning process that includes the state, Indian tribes, local governments, and interested parties, it is possible to make better use of available water supplies and achieve better management of water resources. Through comprehensive planning, conflicts among water users and interests can be reduced or resolved. It is in the best interests of the state that comprehensive water resource planning be given a high priority so that water resources and associated values can be utilized and enjoyed today and protected for tomorrow.

(c) Diverse hydrologic, climatic, cultural, and socioeconomic conditions exist throughout the regions of the state. Water resource issues vary significantly across regions. Comprehensive water resource planning is best accomplished through a regional planning process sensitive to the unique characteristics and issues of each region.

(d) Comprehensive water resource planning must provide interested parties adequate opportunity to participate. Water resource issues are best addressed through cooperation and coordination among the state, Indian tribes, local governments, and interested parties.

(e) The long-term needs of the state require ongoing assessment of water availability, use, and demand. A thorough inventory of available resources is essential to water resource management. Current state water resource data and data management is inadequate to meet changing needs and respond to competing water demands. Therefore, a state water resource data program is needed to support an effective

water resource management program. Efforts should be made to coordinate and consolidate into one resource data system all relevant information developed by the department of ecology and other agencies relating to the use, protection, and management of the state's water resources.

(2) It is the purpose of this chapter to set forth fundamentals of water resource policy for the state to insure that waters of the state are protected and fully utilized for the greatest benefit to the people of the state of Washington and, in relation thereto, to provide direction to the department of ecology, other state agencies and officials, and local government in carrying out water and related resources programs. It is the intent of the legislature to work closely with the executive branch, Indian tribes, local government, and interested parties to ensure that water resources of the state are wisely managed. [1990 c 295 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 1.]

**RCW 90.54.020 General declaration of fundamentals for utilization and management of waters of the state.** Utilization and management of the waters of the state shall be guided by the following general declaration of fundamentals:

(1) Uses of water for domestic, stock watering, industrial, commercial, agricultural, irrigation, hydroelectric power production, mining, fish and wildlife maintenance and enhancement, recreational, and thermal power production purposes, and preservation of environmental and aesthetic values, and all other uses compatible with the enjoyment of the public waters of the state, are declared to be beneficial.

(2) Allocation of waters among potential uses and users shall be based generally on the securing of the maximum net benefits for the people of the state. Maximum net benefits shall constitute total benefits less costs including opportunities lost.

(3) The quality of the natural environment shall be protected and, where possible, enhanced as follows:

(a) Perennial rivers and streams of the state shall be retained with base flows necessary to provide for preservation of wildlife, fish, scenic, aesthetic and other environmental values, and navigational values. Lakes and ponds shall be retained substantially in their natural condition. Withdrawals of water which would conflict therewith shall be authorized only in those situations where it is clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will be served.

(b) Waters of the state shall be of high quality. Regardless of the quality of the waters of the state, all wastes and other materials and substances proposed for entry into said waters shall be provided with all known, available, and reasonable methods of treatment prior to entry. Notwithstanding that standards of quality established for the waters of the state would not be violated, wastes and other materials and substances shall not be allowed to enter such waters which will reduce the existing quality thereof, except in those situations where it is clear that overriding considerations of the public interest will be served. Technology-based effluent limitations or standards for discharges for municipal water treatment plants located on the Chehalis, Columbia, Cowlitz, Lewis, or Skagit river shall be adjusted to reflect credit for substances removed from the plant intake water if:

(i) The municipality demonstrates that the intake water is drawn from the same body of water into which the discharge is made; and  
(ii) The municipality demonstrates that no violation of receiving water quality standards or appreciable environmental degradation will result.

(4) The development of multipurpose water storage facilities shall be a high priority for programs of water allocation, planning, management, and efficiency. The department, other state agencies, local governments, and planning units formed under \*section 107 or 108 of this act shall evaluate the potential for the development of new storage projects and the benefits and effects of storage in reducing damage to stream banks and property, increasing the use of land, providing water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, power generation, and other beneficial uses, and improving streamflow regimes for fisheries and other instream uses.

(5) Adequate and safe supplies of water shall be preserved and protected in potable condition to satisfy human domestic needs.

(6) Multiple-purpose impoundment structures are to be preferred over single-purpose structures. Due regard shall be given to means and methods for protection of fishery resources in the planning for and construction of water impoundment structures and other artificial obstructions.

(7) Federal, state, and local governments, individuals, corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry out practices of conservation as they relate to the use of the waters of the state. In addition to traditional development approaches, improved water use efficiency, conservation, and use of reclaimed water shall be emphasized in the management of the state's water resources and in some cases will be a potential new source of water with which to meet future needs throughout the state. Use of reclaimed water shall be encouraged through state and local planning and programs with incentives for state financial assistance recognizing programs and plans that encourage the use of conservation and reclaimed water use, and state agencies shall continue to review and reduce regulatory barriers and streamline permitting for the use of reclaimed water where appropriate.

(8) Development of water supply systems, whether publicly or privately owned, which provide water to the public generally in regional areas within the state shall be encouraged. Development of water supply systems for multiple domestic use which will not serve the public generally shall be discouraged where water supplies are available from water systems serving the public.

(9) Full recognition shall be given in the administration of water allocation and use programs to the natural interrelationships of surface and groundwaters.

(10) Expressions of the public interest will be sought at all stages of water planning and allocation discussions.

(11) Water management programs, including but not limited to, water quality, flood control, drainage, erosion control and storm runoff are deemed to be in the public interest. [2007 c 445 § 8; 1997 c 442 § 201; 1989 c 348 § 1; 1987 c 399 § 2; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 2.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Sections 107 and 108 of this act were vetoed by the governor.

**Findings—Intent—2007 c 445:** See note following RCW 90.46.005.

**Severability—1989 c 348:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1989 c 348 § 13.]

**Rights not impaired—1989 c 348:** See RCW 90.54.920.

**RCW 90.54.030 Water and related resources—Department to be advised—Water resources data program.** For the purpose of ensuring that the department is fully advised in relation to the performance of the water resources program provided in RCW 90.54.040, the department is directed to become informed with regard to all phases of water and related resources of the state. To accomplish this objective the department shall:

(1) Develop a comprehensive water resource data program that provides the information necessary for effective planning and management on a regional and statewide basis. The data program shall include an information management plan describing the data requirements for effective water resource planning, and a system for collecting and providing access to water resource data on a regional and statewide basis;

(2) Collect, organize and catalog existing information and studies available to it from all sources, both public and private, pertaining to water and related resources of the state;

(3) Develop such additional data and studies pertaining to water and related resources as are necessary to accomplish the objectives of this chapter; and

(4) Develop alternate courses of action to solve existing and foreseeable problems of water and related resources and include therein, to the extent feasible, the economic and social consequences of each such course, and the impact on the natural environment.

All the foregoing shall be included in a "water resources information system" established and maintained by the department. The department shall develop a system of cataloging, storing and retrieving the information and studies of the information system so that they may be made readily available to and effectively used not only by the department but by the public generally. [1997 c 32 § 1; 1990 c 295 § 2; 1988 c 47 § 4; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 3.]

**Application—1988 c 47:** "Nothing in this act shall apply to or interfere with the processing or issuance of water rights in connection with the Yakima River Basin Water Enhancement Project." [1988 c 47 § 8.]

**RCW 90.54.035 State funding of water resource programs—Priorities.** (1) State funding of water resource, supply, and quality related capital programs, both current and future, shall, to the maximum extent possible within state or federal legal requirements, be directed to assist in the resolution of current conflicts and implementation of regional water resource plans with priority given to current needs over new requirements.

(2) Consistent with RCW 90.54.180, priority shall be given, to the maximum extent possible within state or federal legal

requirements, to those water conservation projects funded by the state that will result in the greatest net water savings. [1991 c 347 § 3.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.54.040 Comprehensive state water resources program—Modifying existing and adopting new regulations and statutes.** (1) The department, through the adoption of appropriate rules, is directed, as a matter of high priority to insure that the waters of the state are utilized for the best interests of the people, to develop and implement in accordance with the policies of this chapter a comprehensive state water resources program which will provide a process for making decisions on future water resource allocation and use. The department may develop the program in segments so that immediate attention may be given to waters of a given physioeconomic region of the state or to specific critical problems of water allocation and use.

(2) In relation to the management and regulatory programs relating to water resources vested in it, the department is further directed to modify existing regulations and adopt new regulations, when needed and possible, to insure that existing regulatory programs are in accord with the water resource policy of this chapter and the program established in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) The department is directed to review all statutes relating to water resources which it is responsible for implementing. When any of the same appear to the department to be ambiguous, unclear, unworkable, unnecessary, or otherwise deficient, it shall make recommendations to the legislature including appropriate proposals for statutory modifications or additions. Whenever it appears that the policies of any such statutes are in conflict with the policies of this chapter, and the department is unable to fully perform as provided in subsection (2) of this section, the department is directed to submit statutory modifications to the legislature which, if enacted, would allow the department to carry out such statutes in harmony with this chapter. [1997 c 32 § 2; 1988 c 47 § 5; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 4.]

**Application—1988 c 47:** See note following RCW 90.54.030.

**RCW 90.54.045 Water resource planning—Pilot process—Report to the legislature.** (1) In the development and implementation of the comprehensive state water resources program required in RCW 90.54.040(1), the process described therein shall involve participation of appropriate state agencies, Indian tribes, local governments, and interested parties, and shall be applied on a regional basis pursuant to subsection (2) of this section.

(2) Prior to July 1, 1991, the department, with advice from appropriate state agencies, Indian tribes, local government, and interested parties, shall identify regions and establish regional boundaries for water resource planning and shall designate two regions in which the process shall be initiated on a pilot basis. One region shall encompass an area within the Puget Sound basin in which critical water resource issues exist. A concurrent pilot process may encompass a region east of the Cascade mountains.

(3) The department shall report to the chairs of the appropriate legislative committees prior to July 1st each year summarizing the progress of the pilot process in the two regions. The pilot process in each region shall be completed and shall produce a regional water plan by December 31, 1993.

(4) Appropriate state agencies, Indian tribes, local governments, and interested parties in regions not selected for the pilot program are strongly encouraged to commence water resource planning within their regions. [1991 c 347 § 4; 1990 c 295 § 3.]

**Effective date—1991 c 347 § 4:** "Section 4 of this act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect July 1, 1991." [1991 c 347 § 28.]

**Purposes—1991 c 347:** See note following RCW 90.42.005.

**RCW 90.54.050 Setting aside or withdrawing waters—Rules—Consultation with legislative committees—Public hearing, notice—Review.** In conjunction with the programs provided for in RCW 90.54.040(1), whenever it appears necessary to the director in carrying out the policy of this chapter, the department may by rule adopted pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW:

(1) Reserve and set aside waters for beneficial utilization in the future, and

(2) When sufficient information and data are lacking to allow for the making of sound decisions, withdraw various waters of the state from additional appropriations until such data and information are available. Before proposing the adoption of rules to withdraw waters of the state from additional appropriation, the department shall consult with the standing committees of the house of representatives and the senate having jurisdiction over water resource management issues.

Prior to the adoption of a rule under this section, the department shall conduct a public hearing in each county in which waters relating to the rule are located. The public hearing shall be preceded by a notice placed in a newspaper of general circulation published within each of said counties. Rules adopted hereunder shall be subject to review in accordance with the provisions of RCW 34.05.240. [1997 c 439 § 2; 1997 c 32 § 3; 1988 c 47 § 7; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 5.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 1997 c 32 § 3 and by 1997 c 439 § 2, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**WAC 173-563-015—Validity—1997 c 439:** "WAC 173-563-015 as it existed prior to July 27, 1997, is void." [1997 c 439 § 1.]

**Application—1988 c 47:** See note following RCW 90.54.030.

**RCW 90.54.060 Department to seek involvement of other persons and entities, means—Assistance grants.** To insure that all of the

various persons and entities having an interest in the water resources of the state and the programs of the chapter are provided with a full opportunity for involvement not only with the development of the program but the implementation by the department under this chapter, the following directions are given:

(1) The department shall make reasonable efforts to inform the people of the state about the state's water and related resources and their management. The department in the performance of the responsibilities provided in this chapter shall not only invite but actively encourage participation by all persons and private groups and entities showing an interest in water resources programs of this chapter.

(2) The department shall similarly invite and encourage participation by all agencies of federal, state and local government, including counties, municipal and public corporations, having interests or responsibilities relating to water resources. Said state and local agencies are directed to fully participate to insure that their interests are considered by the department. The department shall, when funds are made available to it for such purposes, provide assistance grants to said state and local agencies for the purposes of financing activities directed to be performed by them under this subsection. [1971 ex.s. c 225 § 6.]

**RCW 90.54.080 State to vigorously represent its interests before federal agencies, interstate agencies.** The state shall vigorously represent its interest before water resource regulation, management, development, and use agencies of the United States, including among others the federal power commission, environmental protection agency, army corps of engineers, department of the interior, department of agriculture and the atomic energy commission, and of interstate agencies with regard to planning, licensing, relicensing, permit proposals, and proposed construction, development and utilization plans. Where federal or interstate agency plans, activities, or procedures conflict with state water policies, all reasonable steps available shall be taken by the state to preserve the integrity of this state's policies. [1971 ex.s. c 225 § 8.]

**RCW 90.54.090 State, local governments, municipal corporations to comply with chapter.** All agencies of state and local government, including counties and municipal and public corporations, shall, whenever possible, carry out powers vested in them in manners which are consistent with the provisions of this chapter. [1987 c 505 § 82; 1977 c 75 § 95; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 10.]

**RCW 90.54.100 Department to evaluate needs for projects and alternative methods of financing.** The department of ecology shall as a matter of high priority evaluate the needs for water resource development projects and the alternative methods of financing of the same by public and private agencies, including financing by federal, state and local governments and combinations thereof. Such evaluations shall be broadly based and be included as a part of the comprehensive state water resources program relating to uses and management as defined in RCW 90.54.030. [1997 c 32 § 5; 1971 ex.s. c 225 § 11.]



**RCW 90.54.110 Authority to secure and obtain benefits, including grants.** The department of ecology is authorized to obtain the benefits including acceptance of grants, of any program of the federal government or any other source to carry out the provisions of this chapter and is empowered to take such actions as are necessary and appropriate to secure such benefits. [1971 ex.s. c 225 § 12.]

**RCW 90.54.120 "Department," "utilize," and "utilization" defined.** For the purposes of this chapter, unless the context is clearly to the contrary, the following definitions shall be used:

(1) "Department" means department of ecology.

(2) "Utilize" or "utilization" shall not only mean use of water for such long recognized consumptive or nonconsumptive beneficial purposes as domestic, stock watering, industrial, commercial, agricultural, irrigation, hydroelectric power production, thermal power production, mining, recreational, maintenance of wildlife and fish life purposes, but includes the retention of water in lakes and streams for the protection of environmental, scenic, aesthetic and related purposes, upon which economic values have not been placed historically and are difficult to quantify. [1971 ex.s. c 225 § 13.]

**RCW 90.54.130 Land use management policy modifications—Advisory recommendations.** The department of ecology may recommend land use management policy modifications it finds appropriate for the further protection of ground and surface water resources in this state. Such advisory recommendations may be made to other state regulatory agencies, local governments, water systems, and other appropriate bodies. [1984 c 253 § 4.]

**RCW 90.54.140 Protection of groundwater aquifers if sole drinking water source.** The legislature hereby declares that the protection of groundwater aquifers which are the sole drinking water source for a given jurisdiction shall be of the uppermost priority of the state department of ecology, department of social and health services, and all local government agencies with jurisdiction over such areas. In administration of programs related to the disposal of wastes and other practices which may impact such water quality, the department of ecology, department of social and health services, and such affected local agencies shall explore all possible measures for the protection of the aquifer, including any appropriate incentives, penalties, or other measures designed to bring about practices which provide for the least impact on the quality of the groundwater. [1984 c 253 § 5.]

**RCW 90.54.150 Water supply projects—Cooperation with other agencies—Scope of participation.** When feasible, the department of ecology shall cooperate with the United States and other public entities, including Indian tribes, in the planning, development, and operation of comprehensive water supply projects designed primarily to resolve controversies and conflicts over water use by increasing water quantity and improving water quality within a stream or river system, or other bodies of water, as well as to enhance opportunities for both

instream and diversionary water uses within the system, and, in relation thereto, the department may:

(1) Participate with the federal government and other public entities in the planning, development, operation, and management of various phases of water projects hereafter authorized by congress;

(2) Provide rights to the use of public waters under the state's surface and ground water codes for these projects when the waters are available for allocation; and

(3) Provide financial assistance through grants and loans for projects when moneys are made available to the department for this assistance by other provisions of this code. [1979 ex.s. c 216 § 9.]

**Effective date—Severability—1979 ex.s. c 216:** See notes following RCW 90.03.245.

**RCW 90.54.160 Department to report on dam safety.** The department of ecology shall report to the legislature on the last working day of December of 1984, 1985, and 1986, and thereafter as deemed appropriate by the department, on dam facilities that exhibit safety deficiencies sufficient to pose a significant threat to the safety of life and property. The report shall identify the owner or owners of such facilities, detail the owner's ability and attitude towards correcting such deficiencies, and provide an estimate of the cost of correcting the deficiencies if a study has been completed. [1984 c 83 § 1.]

**RCW 90.54.170 Electric generation facility—Evaluation of application to appropriate water.** In addition to other requirements of this chapter, when the proposed water resource development project involves a new water supply combined with an electric generation facility where such electricity generated may be sold to an entity authorized by law to distribute electricity, the department shall evaluate and utilize, in connection with any application to appropriate water pursuant to the water code, chapter 90.03 RCW, sufficient information furnished by the project applicant regarding the need for the project, alternative means of serving the purposes of the project, the cumulative effects of the project and similar projects that are built, under construction or permitted in the relevant river basin or basins, the impact, if any, on flood control plans and an estimate of the impact, if any, of the sale of the project's electricity on the rates of utility customers of the Bonneville power administration. Such information shall be furnished at the project applicant's own cost and expense. [1985 c 444 § 6.]

**Intent—Construction—Severability—1985 c 444:** See notes following RCW 35.92.010.

**RCW 90.54.180 Water use efficiency and conservation programs and practices.** Consistent with the fundamentals of water resource policy set forth in this chapter, state and local governments, individuals, corporations, groups and other entities shall be encouraged to carry out water use efficiency and conservation programs and practices consistent with the following:

(1) Water efficiency and conservation programs should utilize an appropriate mix of economic incentives, cost share programs, regulatory programs, and technical and public information efforts. Programs which encourage voluntary participation are preferred.

(2) Increased water use efficiency and reclaimed water should receive consideration as a potential source of water in state and local water resource planning processes. In determining the cost-effectiveness of alternative water sources, consideration should be given to the benefits of conservation, wastewater recycling, and impoundment of waters. Where reclaimed water is a feasible replacement source of water, it shall be used by state agencies and state facilities for nonpotable water uses in lieu of the use of potable water. For purposes of this requirement, feasible replacement source means (a) the reclaimed water is of adequate quality and quantity for the proposed use; (b) the proposed use is approved by the departments of ecology and health; (c) the reclaimed water can be reliably supplied by a local public agency or public water system; and (d) the cost of the reclaimed water is reasonable relative to the costs of conservation or other potentially available supplies of potable water, after taking into account all costs and benefits, including environmental costs and benefits.

(3) In determining the cost-effectiveness of alternative water sources, full consideration should be given to the benefits of storage which can reduce the damage to stream banks and property, increase the utilization of land, provide water for municipal, industrial, agricultural, and other beneficial uses, provide for the generation of electric power from renewable resources, and improve streamflow regimes for fishery and other instream uses.

(4) Entities receiving state financial assistance for construction of water source expansion or acquisition of new sources shall develop, and implement if cost-effective, a water use efficiency and conservation element of a water supply plan pursuant to RCW 43.20.230(1).

(5) State programs to improve water use efficiency should focus on those areas of the state in which water is overappropriated; areas that experience diminished streamflows or aquifer levels; regional areas that the governor has identified as high priority for investments in improved water quality and quantity, including the Spokane river, the Columbia river basin, and the Puget Sound; areas most likely to be affected by global warming; and areas where projected water needs, including those for instream flows, exceed available supplies.

(6) Existing and future generations of citizens of the state of Washington should be made aware of the importance of the state's water resources and the need for wise and efficient use and development of this vital resource. In order to increase this awareness, state agencies should integrate public information programs on increasing water use efficiency into existing public information efforts. This effort shall be coordinated with other levels of government, including local governments and Indian tribes. [2007 c 445 § 9; 1989 c 348 § 5.]

**Findings—Intent—2007 c 445:** See note following RCW 90.46.005.

**Severability—1989 c 348:** See note following RCW 90.54.020.

**RCW 90.54.191 Streamflow restoration a priority.** The department shall prioritize the expenditure of funds and other resources for programs related to streamflow restoration in watersheds where the exercise of inchoate water rights may have a larger effect on streamflows and other water uses. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 10.]

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.54.210 Department shall act on water rights applications that rely on reservations of water established in WAC 173-518-080 or 173-545-090.** (1) The department shall act on all water rights applications that rely on the reservations of water established in WAC 173-518-080 or 173-545-090, as those provisions existed on March 31, 2016. The legislature declares that the reservations of water established in WAC 173-518-080 and 173-545-090, as those provisions existed on March 31, 2016, are consistent with legislative intent and are specifically authorized to be maintained and implemented by the department.

(2) This section does not affect the department's authority to lawfully adopt, amend, or repeal any rule, including WAC 173-518-080 or 173-545-090.

(3) This section may not be construed to prejudice any reservation of water not referenced in this section. [2016 c 117 § 1.]

**Effective date—2016 c 117:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 31, 2016]." [2016 c 117 § 2.]

**RCW 90.54.800 Policy guidelines.** Future development of hydropower and protection of river-related resources shall be guided by policies and programs which:

(1) Create opportunities for balanced development of cost-effective and environmentally sound hydropower projects by a range of development interests;

(2) Protect significant values associated with the state's rivers, including fish and wildlife populations and habitats, water quality and quantity, unique physical and botanical features, archaeological sites, and scenic and recreational resources;

(3) Protect the interests of the citizens of the state regarding river-related economic development, municipal water supply, supply of electric energy, flood control, recreational opportunity, and environmental integrity;

(4) Fully utilize the state's authority in the federal hydropower licensing process. [1989 c 159 § 3.]

**Legislative findings—1989 c 159:** "The legislature finds that the task force on hydroelectric development and resource protection has recommended that:

(1) The state adopt goals to direct future development of hydropower and protection of river-related resources;

(2) The state take steps to enhance the existing hydropower permit review process; and

(3) The state develop, in concert with appropriate interests, a comprehensive state hydropower plan." [1989 c 159 § 1.]

**Hydro task force—1989 c 159:** "(1) The Washington state energy office shall contract with an independent facilitator to reconvene and coordinate the task force assembled to implement section 301, chapter 7, Laws of 1987 1st ex. sess. The task force shall prepare by March 31, 1991, a state comprehensive hydropower plan to serve the broad public interest regarding development of cost-effective electricity and conservation of river-related environmental values. Task force meetings shall be open to the public. The facilitator shall assist the task force in appropriate efforts to inform the general public regarding project concepts and progress. Task force members shall make appropriate efforts to inform the interest groups they represent.

(2) By December 15, 1989, the task force shall engage in a midpoint review whereby participants can jointly appraise the progress of the project. If, in the opinion of the participants, a consensus to continue as a task force cannot be achieved, the executive agencies shall use their existing statutory authority to develop a plan, with the assistance of all affected parties and participating agencies, building upon the work that has been done by the task force.

(3) If the task force continues beyond December 15, 1989, it shall by July 1, 1990, recommend to the legislature a lead agency for implementation and management of the state comprehensive hydropower plan." [1989 c 159 § 2.]

**Plan content—1989 c 159:** "(1) At a minimum, the plan shall designate two categories of resource agreement areas: (a) Sensitive areas where hydropower development is likely to conflict with significant environmental values, and (b) less sensitive areas where development will not conflict with or may enhance environmental values. Some areas may remain unclassified due to lack of information or if they fall between the two categories. The plan shall integrate resource agreement area findings with existing state laws and programs including instream flow basin plans prepared by the department of ecology, watershed planning coordinated by the department of fisheries, watershed planning coordinated through the Puget Sound water quality authority, watershed planning for municipal water supply, the scenic rivers program administered by the parks and recreation commission, and the planning process developed through the joint select committee on water resources policy and any actions resulting from that process.

(2) At a minimum, the final plan report shall:

(a) List applicable laws, rules, and policies;

(b) Describe the waterways or basins covered by the plan;

(c) Designate the categories of resource agreement area for each waterway or basin;

(d) Describe, for each waterway where hydropower is to be affected, the significant resources that cause the waterway or basin to be so designated;

(e) Identify goals, objectives, and recommendations for improving, developing, or conserving affected waterways;

(f) Describe how the plan is to be integrated with other planning activities and policy initiatives and how the plan will be implemented and amended;

(g) Assess the anticipated effect of the plan on hydropower development and resource protection; and

(h) Describe the plan development process." [1989 c 159 § 4.]

**RCW 90.54.900 Certain rights, authority, not to be affected by chapter.** Nothing in this chapter shall affect any existing water rights, riparian, appropriative, or otherwise; nor shall it affect existing rights relating to the operation of any hydroelectric or water storage reservoir or related facility; nor shall it affect any exploratory work, construction or operation of a thermal power plant by an electric utility in accordance with the provisions of chapter 80.50 RCW. Nothing in this chapter shall enlarge or reduce the department of ecology's authority to regulate the surface use of waters of this state or structures on the underlying beds, tidelands or shorelands. [1971 ex.s. c 225 § 9.]

**RCW 90.54.910 Short title.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Water Resources Act of 1971". [1971 ex.s. c 225 § 14.]

**RCW 90.54.920 Rights not impaired.** (1) Nothing in this act shall affect or operate to impair any existing water rights.

(2) Nothing in this act shall be used to prevent future storage options, recognizing that storage may be necessary as a method of conserving water to meet both instream and out-of-stream needs.

(3) Nothing in this act shall infringe upon the rate-making prerogatives of any public water purveyor.

(4) Nothing in this act shall preclude the joint select committee on water resource policy from reviewing any subject matter contained herein for any future modifications. [1989 c 348 § 3.]

**Severability—1989 c 348:** See note following RCW 90.54.020.

**Chapter 90.56 RCW**  
**OIL AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

**Sections**

- 90.56.005 Findings—Purpose.
- 90.56.010 Definitions.
- 90.56.020 Director responsible for spill response.
- 90.56.030 Powers and duties.
- 90.56.040 Authority supplemental.
- 90.56.050 Rules.
- 90.56.060 Statewide master oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and contingency plan—Evaluation and revision or elimination of advisory committees.
- 90.56.070 Coordination with federal law.
- 90.56.080 Hazardous substances incident response training and education program.
- 90.56.100 Washington wildlife rescue coalition.
- 90.56.110 Rehabilitation of wildlife—Rules.
- 90.56.200 Prevention plans.
- 90.56.210 Contingency plans.
- 90.56.2101 Contingency plans—Department to update rules.
- 90.56.220 Facility operation standards.
- 90.56.230 Operations manuals.
- 90.56.240 Standards for spill management, cleanup, and containment services contractors.
- 90.56.250 Index of prevention plans and contingency plans—Equipment inventory.
- 90.56.260 Adequacy of contingency plans—Practice drills—Report.
- 90.56.270 Enforcement of contingency plans.
- 90.56.275 Joint large-scale, multiple plan equipment deployment drills of onshore and offshore facilities and covered vessels—Requirements.
- 90.56.280 Duty to notify coast guard and division of emergency management of discharge.
- 90.56.300 Unlawful operation of facility—Criminal penalties.
- 90.56.310 Operation of a facility or vessel without contingency or prevention plan or financial responsibility—Civil penalty.
- 90.56.320 Unlawful for oil to enter waters—Exceptions.
- 90.56.330 Additional penalties.
- 90.56.340 Duty to remove oil.
- 90.56.350 Investigation, removal, containment, treatment, or dispersal of oil and hazardous substances—Record of expenses.
- 90.56.360 Liability for expenses.
- 90.56.370 Strict liability of owner or controller of oil—Damages—Exceptions.
- 90.56.380 Liability of others for cleanup expenses.
- 90.56.390 Liability for removal costs.
- 90.56.400 Department investigation of circumstances of entry of oil—Order for reimbursement of expenses—Modification—Action to recover necessary expenses.
- 90.56.410 Right of entry and access to records pertinent to investigations.
- 90.56.420 Authorized discharges of oil—Permits.

- 90.56.500 Oil spill response account.
- 90.56.510 Oil spill prevention account.
- 90.56.530 Reckless operation of a tank vessel—Penalty.
- 90.56.540 Operation of a vessel while under influence of liquor or drugs—Penalty.
- 90.56.550 Breath or blood analysis.
- 90.56.560 Limited immunity for blood withdrawal.
- 90.56.565 Facilities that receive crude oil from a railroad car—  
Advanced notice system—Department required to report information—Adoption of rules.
- 90.56.569 Updates to the senate and house of representatives.
- 90.56.570 Periodic evaluation and update of planning standards for oil spill response equipment.
- 90.56.580 Crude oil vapor pressure—Maximum—Penalty.
- 90.56.900 Construction—Appeal not to stay order, rule, or regulation.
- 90.56.901 Effective dates—1991 c 200.

*Environmental certification programs—Fees—Rules—Liability: RCW 43.21A.175.*



**Chapter 90.56 RCW**  
**OIL AND HAZARDOUS SUBSTANCE SPILL PREVENTION AND RESPONSE**

**Sections**

- 90.56.005 Findings—Purpose.
- 90.56.010 Definitions.
- 90.56.020 Director responsible for spill response.
- 90.56.030 Powers and duties.
- 90.56.040 Authority supplemental.
- 90.56.050 Rules.
- 90.56.060 Statewide master oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and contingency plan—Evaluation and revision or elimination of advisory committees.
- 90.56.070 Coordination with federal law.
- 90.56.080 Hazardous substances incident response training and education program.
- 90.56.100 Washington wildlife rescue coalition.
- 90.56.110 Rehabilitation of wildlife—Rules.
- 90.56.200 Prevention plans.
- 90.56.210 Contingency plans.
- 90.56.2101 Contingency plans—Department to update rules.
- 90.56.220 Facility operation standards.
- 90.56.230 Operations manuals.
- 90.56.240 Standards for spill management, cleanup, and containment services contractors.
- 90.56.250 Index of prevention plans and contingency plans—Equipment inventory.
- 90.56.260 Adequacy of contingency plans—Practice drills—Report.
- 90.56.270 Enforcement of contingency plans.
- 90.56.275 Joint large-scale, multiple plan equipment deployment drills of onshore and offshore facilities and covered vessels—Requirements.
- 90.56.280 Duty to notify coast guard and division of emergency management of discharge.
- 90.56.300 Unlawful operation of facility—Criminal penalties.
- 90.56.310 Operation of a facility or vessel without contingency or prevention plan or financial responsibility—Civil penalty.
- 90.56.320 Unlawful for oil to enter waters—Exceptions.
- 90.56.330 Additional penalties.
- 90.56.340 Duty to remove oil.
- 90.56.350 Investigation, removal, containment, treatment, or dispersal of oil and hazardous substances—Record of expenses.
- 90.56.360 Liability for expenses.
- 90.56.370 Strict liability of owner or controller of oil—Damages—Exceptions.
- 90.56.380 Liability of others for cleanup expenses.
- 90.56.390 Liability for removal costs.
- 90.56.400 Department investigation of circumstances of entry of oil—Order for reimbursement of expenses—Modification—Action to recover necessary expenses.
- 90.56.410 Right of entry and access to records pertinent to investigations.
- 90.56.420 Authorized discharges of oil—Permits.

90.56.500 Oil spill response account.  
90.56.510 Oil spill prevention account.  
90.56.530 Reckless operation of a tank vessel—Penalty.  
90.56.540 Operation of a vessel while under influence of liquor or  
drugs—Penalty.  
90.56.550 Breath or blood analysis.  
90.56.560 Limited immunity for blood withdrawal.  
90.56.565 Facilities that receive crude oil from a railroad car—  
Advanced notice system—Department required to report  
information—Adoption of rules.  
90.56.569 Updates to the senate and house of representatives.  
90.56.570 Periodic evaluation and update of planning standards for  
oil spill response equipment.  
90.56.580 Crude oil vapor pressure—Maximum—Penalty.  
90.56.900 Construction—Appeal not to stay order, rule, or  
regulation.  
90.56.901 Effective dates—1991 c 200.

*Environmental certification programs—Fees—Rules—Liability: RCW  
43.21A.175.*

**RCW 90.56.005 Findings—Purpose.** (1) The legislature declares that waterborne transportation as a source of supply for oil and hazardous substances poses special concern for the state of Washington. Each year billions of gallons of crude oil and refined petroleum products are transported as cargo and fuel by vessels on the navigable waters of the state. The movement of crude oil through rail corridors and over Washington waters creates safety and environmental risks. The sources and transport of crude oil bring risks to our communities along rail lines and to the Columbia river, Grays Harbor, and Puget Sound waters. These shipments are expected to increase in the coming years. Vessels and trains transporting oil into Washington travel on some of the most unique and special marine environments in the United States. These marine environments are a source of natural beauty, recreation, and economic livelihood for many residents of this state. As a result, the state has an obligation to ensure the citizens of the state that the waters of the state will be protected from oil spills.

(2) The legislature finds that prevention is the best method to protect the unique and special marine environments in this state. The technology for containing and cleaning up a spill of oil or hazardous substances is at best only partially effective. Preventing spills is more protective of the environment and more cost-effective when all the response and damage costs associated with responding to a spill are considered. Therefore, the legislature finds that the primary objective of the state is to achieve a zero spills strategy to prevent any oil or hazardous substances from entering waters of the state.

(3) The legislature also finds that:

(a) Recent accidents in Washington, Alaska, southern California, Texas, Pennsylvania, and other parts of the nation have shown that the transportation, transfer, and storage of oil have caused significant damage to the marine environment;

(b) Even with the best efforts, it is nearly impossible to remove all oil that is spilled into the water, and average removal rates are only fourteen percent;

(c) Washington's navigable waters are treasured environmental and economic resources that the state cannot afford to place at undue risk from an oil spill;

(d) The state has a fundamental responsibility, as the trustee of the state's natural resources and the protector of public health and the environment to prevent the spill of oil; and

(e) In section 5002 of the federal oil pollution act of 1990, the United States congress found that many people believed that complacency on the part of industry and government was one of the contributing factors to the Exxon Valdez spill and, further, that one method to combat this complacency is to involve local citizens in the monitoring and oversight of oil spill plans. Congress also found that a mechanism should be established that fosters the long-term partnership of industry, government, and local communities in overseeing compliance with environmental concerns in the operation of crude oil terminals. Moreover, congress concluded that, in addition to Alaska, a program of citizen monitoring and oversight should be established in other major crude oil terminals in the United States because recent oil spills indicate that the safe transportation of oil is a national problem.

(4) In order to establish a comprehensive prevention and response program to protect Washington's waters and natural resources from spills of oil, it is the purpose of this chapter:

(a) To establish state agency expertise in marine safety and to centralize state activities in spill prevention and response activities;

(b) To prevent spills of oil and to promote programs that reduce the risk of both catastrophic and small chronic spills;

(c) To ensure that responsible parties are liable, and have the resources and ability, to respond to spills and provide compensation for all costs and damages;

(d) To provide for state spill response and wildlife rescue planning and implementation;

(e) To support and complement the federal oil pollution act of 1990 and other federal law, especially those provisions relating to the national contingency plan for cleanup of oil spills and discharges, including provisions relating to the responsibilities of state agencies designated as natural resource trustees. The legislature intends this chapter to be interpreted and implemented in a manner consistent with federal law;

(f) To provide broad powers of regulation to the department of ecology relating to spill prevention and response;

(g) To provide for independent review on an ongoing basis the adequacy of oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response activities in this state;

(h) To provide an adequate funding source for state response and prevention programs; and

(i) To maintain the best achievable protection that can be obtained through the use of the best achievable technology and those staffing levels, training procedures, and operational methods that provide the greatest degree of protection achievable. [2015 c 274 § 1; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 § 72; 2005 c 304 § 1; 2004 c 226 § 2; 1991 c 200 § 101; 1990 c 116 § 1.]

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or

support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2015." [2015 c 274 § 29.]

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 26; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 43.03.027.

**RCW 90.56.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Best achievable protection" means the highest level of protection that can be achieved through the use of the best achievable technology and those staffing levels, training procedures, and operational methods that provide the greatest degree of protection achievable. The director's determination of best achievable protection shall be guided by the critical need to protect the state's natural resources and waters, while considering (a) the additional protection provided by the measures; (b) the technological achievability of the measures; and (c) the cost of the measures.

(2) "Best achievable technology" means the technology that provides the greatest degree of protection taking into consideration (a) processes that are being developed, or could feasibly be developed, given overall reasonable expenditures on research and development, and (b) processes that are currently in use. In determining what is best achievable technology, the director shall consider the effectiveness, engineering feasibility, and commercial availability of the technology.

(3) "Board" means the pollution control hearings board.

(4) "Bulk" means material that is stored or transported in a loose, unpackaged liquid, powder, or granular form capable of being conveyed by a pipe, bucket, chute, or belt system.

(5) "Cargo vessel" means a self-propelled ship in commerce, other than a tank vessel or a passenger vessel, three hundred or more gross tons, including but not limited to, commercial fish processing vessels and freighters.

(6) "Committee" means the preassessment screening committee established under RCW 90.48.368.

(7) "Covered vessel" means a tank vessel, cargo vessel, or passenger vessel.

(8) "Crude oil" means any naturally occurring hydrocarbons coming from the earth that are liquid at twenty-five degrees Celsius and one atmosphere of pressure including, but not limited to, crude oil, bitumen and diluted bitumen, synthetic crude oil, and natural gas well condensate.

(9) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(10) "Director" means the director of the department of ecology.

(11) "Discharge" means any spilling, leaking, pumping, pouring, emitting, emptying, or dumping.

(12)(a) "Facility" means any structure, group of structures, equipment, pipeline, or device, other than a vessel, located on or near the navigable waters of the state that transfers oil in bulk to or from a tank vessel or pipeline, that is used for producing, storing, handling, transferring, processing, or transporting oil in bulk.

(b) For the purposes of oil spill contingency planning in RCW 90.56.210, facility also means a railroad that is not owned by the state that transports oil as bulk cargo.

(c) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, a facility does not include any: (i) Railroad car, motor vehicle, or other rolling stock while transporting oil over the highways or rail lines of this state; (ii) underground storage tank regulated by the department or a local government under chapter 70A.355 RCW; (iii) motor vehicle motor fuel outlet; (iv) facility that is operated as part of an exempt agricultural activity as provided in RCW 82.04.330; or (v) marine fuel outlet that does not dispense more than three thousand gallons of fuel to a ship that is not a covered vessel, in a single transaction.

(13) "Fund" means the state coastal protection fund as provided in RCW 90.48.390 and 90.48.400.

(14) "Having control over oil" shall include but not be limited to any person using, storing, or transporting oil immediately prior to entry of such oil into the waters of the state, and shall specifically include carriers and bailees of such oil.

(15) "Marine facility" means any facility used for tank vessel wharfage or anchorage, including any equipment used for the purpose of handling or transferring oil in bulk to or from a tank vessel.

(16) "Navigable waters of the state" means those waters of the state, and their adjoining shorelines, that are subject to the ebb and flow of the tide and/or are presently used, have been used in the past, or may be susceptible for use to transport intrastate, interstate, or foreign commerce.

(17) "Necessary expenses" means the expenses incurred by the department and assisting state agencies for (a) investigating the source of the discharge; (b) investigating the extent of the environmental damage caused by the discharge; (c) conducting actions necessary to clean up the discharge; (d) conducting predamage and damage assessment studies; and (e) enforcing the provisions of this chapter and collecting for damages caused by a discharge.

(18) "Offshore facility" means any facility located in, on, or under any of the navigable waters of the state, but does not include a facility any part of which is located in, on, or under any land of the state, other than submerged land.

(19) "Oil" or "oils" means oil of any kind that is liquid at twenty-five degrees Celsius and one atmosphere of pressure and any fractionation thereof, including, but not limited to, crude oil, bitumen, synthetic crude oil, natural gas well condensate, petroleum, gasoline, fuel oil, diesel oil, biological oils and blends, oil sludge, oil refuse, and oil mixed with wastes other than dredged spoil. Oil does not include any substance listed in Table 302.4 of 40 C.F.R. Part 302 adopted August 14, 1989, under section 102(a) of the federal comprehensive environmental response, compensation, and liability act of 1980, as amended by P.L. 99-499.

(20) "Onshore facility" means any facility any part of which is located in, on, or under any land of the state, other than submerged land, that because of its location, could reasonably be expected to cause substantial harm to the environment by discharging oil into or on the navigable waters of the state or the adjoining shorelines.

(21)(a) "Owner or operator" means (i) in the case of a vessel, any person owning, operating, or chartering by demise, the vessel; (ii) in the case of an onshore or offshore facility, any person owning or operating the facility; and (iii) in the case of an abandoned

vessel or onshore or offshore facility, the person who owned or operated the vessel or facility immediately before its abandonment.

(b) "Operator" does not include any person who owns the land underlying a facility if the person is not involved in the operations of the facility.

(22) "Passenger vessel" means a ship of three hundred or more gross tons with a fuel capacity of at least six thousand gallons carrying passengers for compensation.

(23) "Person" means any political subdivision, government agency, municipality, industry, public or private corporation, copartnership, association, firm, individual, or any other entity whatsoever.

(24) "Ship" means any boat, ship, vessel, barge, or other floating craft of any kind.

(25) "Spill" means an unauthorized discharge of oil or hazardous substances into the waters of the state.

(26) "Tank vessel" means a ship that is constructed or adapted to carry, or that carries, oil in bulk as cargo or cargo residue, and that:

(a) Operates on the waters of the state; or

(b) Transfers oil in a port or place subject to the jurisdiction of this state.

(27) "Waters of the state" includes lakes, rivers, ponds, streams, inland waters, underground water, salt waters, estuaries, tidal flats, beaches and lands adjoining the seacoast of the state, sewers, and all other surface waters and watercourses within the jurisdiction of the state of Washington.

(28) "Worst case spill" means: (a) In the case of a vessel, a spill of the entire cargo and fuel of the vessel complicated by adverse weather conditions; and (b) in the case of an onshore or offshore facility, the largest foreseeable spill in adverse weather conditions. [2020 c 20 § 1505. Prior: 2015 c 274 § 3; 2007 c 347 § 6; 2000 c 69 § 15; 1992 c 73 § 31; 1991 c 200 § 102; 1990 c 116 § 2; 1989 c 388 § 6; 1985 c 316 § 5; 1971 ex.s. c 180 § 1; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 1; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 10. Formerly RCW 90.48.315.]

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Intent—1989 c 388:** "The legislature finds that oil spills can cause significant damage to the environment and natural resources held in trust by and for the people of this state. Some of these damages are unquantifiable, and others cannot be quantified at a reasonable cost. Both quantifiable and unquantifiable damages often occur despite prompt containment and cleanup measures. Due to the inability to measure the exact nature and extent of certain types of damages, current damage assessment methodologies used by the state inadequately assess the damage caused by oil spills.

In light of the magnitude of environmental and natural resource damage which may be caused by oil spills, and the importance of fishing, tourism, recreation, and Washington's natural abundance and beauty to the quality of life and economic future of the people of this state, the legislature declares that compensation should be

sought for those damages that cannot be quantified at a reasonable cost and for those unquantifiable damages that result from oil spills. This compensation is intended to ensure that the public does not bear substantial losses caused by oil pollution for which compensation may not otherwise be received." [1989 c 388 § 1.]

**Application—1989 c 388:** "This act applies prospectively only, and not retroactively. It applies only to causes of action which arise after May 13, 1989." [1989 c 388 § 12.]

**Captions not law—1989 c 388:** "Section headings as used in this act do not constitute any part of the law." [1989 c 388 § 13.]

**Severability—1989 c 388:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1989 c 388 § 14.]

**Severability—Construction—1969 ex.s. c 133:** "If any provision of this 1969 act or the application thereof to any person or circumstance is held invalid, this 1969 act can be given effect without the invalid provision or application; and to this end the provisions of this 1969 act are declared to be severable. This 1969 act shall be liberally construed to effectuate its purpose." [1969 ex.s. c 133 § 12.]

*Marine oil pollution—Baseline study program: RCW 43.21A.405 through 43.21A.420.*

**RCW 90.56.020 Director responsible for spill response.** Except as otherwise specifically provided in this chapter or other law, the director has the primary authority, in conformance with the statewide master oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and contingency plan adopted pursuant to RCW 90.56.060 and any applicable contingency plans prepared pursuant to this chapter and chapter 88.46 RCW, to oversee prevention, abatement, response, containment, and cleanup efforts with regard to any oil or hazardous substance spill in the navigable waters of the state. The director is the head of the state incident command system in response to a spill of oil or hazardous substances and shall coordinate the response efforts of all state agencies and local emergency response personnel. If a discharge of oil or hazardous substances is subject to the national contingency plan, in responding to the discharge, the director shall to the greatest extent practicable act in accordance with the national contingency plan and cooperate with the federal on-scene coordinator or other federal agency or official exercising authority under the national contingency plan. [1991 c 200 § 103.]

**RCW 90.56.030 Powers and duties.** The powers, duties, and functions conferred by this chapter shall be exercised by the department of ecology and shall be deemed an essential government function in the exercise of the police power of the state. Such powers, duties, and functions of the department shall extend to all waters under the jurisdiction of the state. [1991 c 200 § 104; 1971 ex.s. c 180 § 2. Formerly RCW 90.48.370.]

**RCW 90.56.040 Authority supplemental.** This chapter grants authority to the department which is supplemental to and in no way reduces or otherwise modifies the powers granted to the department by other statutes. [1991 c 200 § 105; 1987 c 109 § 153; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 11. Formerly RCW 90.48.365.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.050 Rules.** The department may adopt rules including but not limited to the following matters:

(1) Procedures and methods of reporting discharges and other occurrences prohibited by this chapter;

(2) Procedures, methods, means, and equipment to be used by persons subject to regulation by this chapter and such rules may prescribe the times, places, and methods of transfer of oil;

(3) Coordination of procedures, methods, means, and equipment to be used in the removal of oil;

(4) Development and implementation of criteria and plans to meet oil spills of various kinds and degrees;

(5) When and under what circumstances, if any, chemical agents, such as coagulants, dispersants, and bioremediation, may be used in response to an oil spill;

(6) The disposal of oil recovered from a spill; and

(7) Such other rules and regulations as the exigencies of any condition may require or such as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the intent of this chapter. [1991 c 200 § 106; 1971 ex.s. c 180 § 3. Formerly RCW 90.48.380.]

**RCW 90.56.060 Statewide master oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and contingency plan—Evaluation and revision or elimination of advisory committees.** (1) (a) The department shall

prepare and annually update a statewide master oil and hazardous substance spill prevention and contingency plan. In preparing the plan, the department shall consult with an advisory committee representing diverse interests concerned with oil and hazardous substance spills, including the United States coast guard, the federal environmental protection agency, other appropriate federal agencies, appropriate agencies from other states, interested federally recognized tribes, state agencies, local governments, port districts, private facilities, environmental organizations, oil companies, shipping companies, spill management, cleanup, and containment contractors, tow companies, and hazardous substance manufacturers.

(b) For the purposes of this subsection, "spill management" means managing:

(i) Some or all aspects of a response, containment, and cleanup of a spill and utilizing an incident command or unified command structure; or

(ii) Wildlife rehabilitation and recovery services for a spill response.

(2) The state master plan prepared under this section shall at a minimum:

(a) Take into consideration the elements of oil spill prevention and contingency plans approved or submitted for approval pursuant to



this chapter and chapter 88.46 RCW and oil and hazardous substance spill contingency plans prepared pursuant to other state or federal law or prepared by federal agencies and regional entities;

(b) State the respective responsibilities as established by relevant statutes and rules of each of the following in the prevention of and the assessment, containment, and cleanup of a worst case spill of oil or hazardous substances into the environment of the state: (i) State agencies; (ii) local governments; (iii) appropriate federal agencies; (iv) facility operators; (v) property owners whose land or other property may be affected by the oil or hazardous substance spill; (vi) federally recognized tribes; and (vii) other parties identified by the department as having an interest in or the resources to assist in the containment and cleanup of an oil or hazardous substance spill;

(c) State the respective responsibilities of the parties identified in (b) of this subsection in an emergency response;

(d) Identify actions necessary to reduce the likelihood of spills of oil and hazardous substances;

(e) Identify and obtain mapping of environmentally sensitive areas at particular risk to oil and hazardous substance spills;

(f) Establish an incident command system for responding to oil and hazardous substances spills; and

(g) Establish a process for immediately notifying affected tribes of any oil spill.

(3) In preparing and updating the state master plan, the department shall:

(a) Consult with federal, provincial, municipal, and community officials, other state agencies, the state of Oregon, the state of Idaho, and with representatives of affected regional organizations;

(b) Invite consultation and engagement from federally recognized tribes;

(c) Submit the draft plan to the public for review and comment;

(d) Submit to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature for review, not later than November 1st of each year, the plan and any annual revision of the plan; and

(e) Require or schedule unannounced oil spill drills as required by RCW 90.56.260 to test the sufficiency of oil spill contingency plans approved under RCW 90.56.210 and as required under RCW 88.46.068, 88.46.139, and 88.46.220 for plans approved under RCW 88.46.060.

(4) The department shall evaluate the functions of advisory committees created by the department regarding oil spill prevention, preparedness, and response programs, and shall revise or eliminate those functions which are no longer necessary. [2022 c 54 § 1; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 § 73; 2005 c 304 § 4; 2004 c 226 § 4; 2000 c 69 § 16; 1991 c 200 § 107; 1990 c 116 § 10. Formerly RCW 90.48.378.]

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 26; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 43.03.027.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.070 Coordination with federal law.** In carrying out the purposes of this chapter, including the adoption of rules for

contingency plans, the department shall to the greatest extent practicable implement this chapter in a manner consistent with federal law. [1991 c 200 § 108.]

**RCW 90.56.080 Hazardous substances incident response training and education program.** The division of fire protection services shall establish and manage the Washington oil and hazardous substances incident response training and education program to provide approved classes in hazardous substance response, taught by trained instructors. To carry out this program, the division of fire protection services shall:

- (1) Adopt rules necessary to implement the program;
- (2) Establish a training and education program by developing the curriculum to be used in the program in colleges, academies, and other educational institutions;
- (3) Provide training to local oil and hazardous materials emergency response personnel; and
- (4) Establish and collect admission fees and other fees that may be necessary to the program. [2000 c 69 § 17; 1991 c 200 § 109.]

**RCW 90.56.100 Washington wildlife rescue coalition.** (1) The Washington wildlife rescue coalition is established for the purpose of coordinating the rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife injured or endangered by oil spills or the release of other hazardous substances into the environment.

- (2) The Washington wildlife rescue coalition shall be composed of:
- (a) A representative of the department of fish and wildlife designated by the director of fish and wildlife. The department of fish and wildlife shall be designated as lead agency in the operations of the coalition. The coalition shall be chaired by the representative from the department of fish and wildlife;
  - (b) A representative of the department of ecology designated by the director;
  - (c) A representative of the Washington military department emergency management division, designated by the director of the Washington military department;
  - (d) A licensed veterinarian, with experience and training in wildlife rehabilitation, appointed by the veterinary board of governors;
  - (e) A lay person, with training and experience in the rescue and rehabilitation of wildlife appointed by the department; and
  - (f) A person designated by the legislative authority of the county where oil spills or spills of other hazardous substances may occur. This member of the coalition shall serve on the coalition until wildlife rescue and rehabilitation is completed in that county. The completion of any rescue or rehabilitation project shall be determined by the director of fish and wildlife.

- (3) The duties of the Washington wildlife rescue coalition are to:
- (a) Develop an emergency mobilization plan to rescue and rehabilitate waterfowl and other wildlife that are injured or endangered by an oil spill or the release of other hazardous substances into the environment;

(b) Develop and maintain a resource directory of persons, governmental agencies, and private organizations that may provide assistance in an emergency rescue effort;

(c) Provide advance training and instruction to volunteers in rescuing and rehabilitating waterfowl and wildlife injured or endangered by oil spills or the release of other hazardous substances into the environment. The training may be provided through grants to community colleges or to groups that conduct programs for training volunteers. The coalition representatives from the agencies described in subsection (2) of this section shall coordinate their training efforts and work to provide training opportunities for young citizens;

(d) Obtain and maintain equipment and supplies used in emergency rescue efforts.

(4) (a) Expenses for the coalition may be provided by the coastal protection fund administered according to RCW 90.48.400.

(b) The coalition is encouraged to seek grants, gifts, or donations from private sources in order to carry out the provisions of this section and RCW 90.56.110. Any private funds donated to the commission shall be deposited into the wildlife rescue account hereby created within the \*wildlife fund as authorized under Title 77 RCW. [2000 c 69 § 18; 1998 c 245 § 175; 1994 c 264 § 94; 1992 c 73 § 32; 1990 c 116 § 12. Formerly RCW 90.48.387.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The "state wildlife fund" was renamed the "state wildlife account" pursuant to 2005 c 224 § 4 and 2005 c 225 § 4. Subsequently, 2020 c 148 divided the state wildlife account into two separate accounts, the "limited fish and wildlife account" and the "fish, wildlife, and conservation account," effective July 1, 2021.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.110 Rehabilitation of wildlife—Rules.** The department of fish and wildlife may adopt rules including, but not limited to, the following:

(1) Procedures and methods of handling and caring for waterfowl or other wildlife affected by spills of oil and other hazardous materials;

(2) The certification of persons trained in the removal of pollutants from waterfowl or other wildlife;

(3) Development of procedures with respect to removal of oil and other hazardous substances from waterfowl or other wildlife;

(4) The establishment of training exercises, courses, and other training procedures as necessary;

(5) Such other rules as may be reasonably necessary to carry out the intent of RCW 90.56.100. [1994 c 264 § 95; 1990 c 116 § 13. Formerly RCW 90.48.388.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.200 Prevention plans.** (1) The owner or operator for each onshore and offshore facility, except as determined in subsection

(3) of this section, shall prepare and submit to the department an oil spill prevention plan in conformance with the requirements of this chapter. The plans shall be submitted to the department in the time and manner directed by the department. The spill prevention plan may be consolidated with a spill contingency plan submitted pursuant to RCW 90.56.210. The department may accept plans prepared to comply with other state or federal law as spill prevention plans to the extent those plans comply with the requirements of this chapter. The department, by rule, shall establish standards for spill prevention plans.

(2) The spill prevention plan for an onshore or offshore facility shall:

(a) Establish compliance with the federal oil pollution act of 1990, if applicable, and financial responsibility requirements under federal and state law;

(b) Certify that supervisory and other key personnel in charge of transfer, storage, and handling of oil have received certification pursuant to RCW 90.56.220;

(c) Certify that the facility has an operations manual required by RCW 90.56.230;

(d) Certify the implementation of alcohol and drug use awareness programs;

(e) Describe the facility's maintenance and inspection program and contain a current maintenance and inspection record of the storage and transfer facilities and related equipment;

(f) Describe the facility's alcohol and drug treatment programs;

(g) Describe spill prevention technology that has been installed, including overflow alarms, automatic overflow cut-off switches, secondary containment facilities, and stormwater retention, treatment, and discharge systems;

(h) Describe any discharges of oil to the land or the water of more than twenty-five barrels in the prior five years and the measures taken to prevent a reoccurrence;

(i) Describe the procedures followed by the facility to contain and recover any oil that spills during the transfer of oil to or from the facility;

(j) Provide for the incorporation into the facility during the period covered by the plan of those measures that will provide the best achievable protection for the public health and the environment; and

(k) Include any other information reasonably necessary to carry out the purposes of this chapter required by rules adopted by the department.

(3) Plan requirements in subsection (2) of this section are not applicable to railroad facility operators while transporting oil over rail lines of this state.

(4) The department shall only approve a prevention plan if it provides the best achievable protection from damages caused by the discharge of oil into the waters of the state and if it determines that the plan meets the requirements of this section and rules adopted by the department.

(5) Upon approval of a prevention plan, the department shall provide to the person submitting the plan a statement indicating that the plan has been approved, the facilities covered by the plan, and other information the department determines should be included.

(6) The approval of a prevention plan shall be valid for five years. An owner or operator of a facility shall notify the department

in writing immediately of any significant change of which it is aware affecting its prevention plan, including changes in any factor set forth in this section or in rules adopted by the department. The department may require the owner or operator to update a prevention plan as a result of these changes.

(7) The department by rule shall require prevention plans to be reviewed, updated, if necessary, and resubmitted to the department at least once every five years.

(8) Approval of a prevention plan by the department does not constitute an express assurance regarding the adequacy of the plan nor constitute a defense to liability imposed under this chapter or other state law.

(9) This section does not authorize the department to modify the terms of a collective bargaining agreement. [2015 c 274 § 4; 2000 c 69 § 19; 1991 c 200 § 201.]

**Reviser's note:** Chapter 226, Laws of 2004 (Substitute Senate Bill No. 6641) directed that: "If specific funding for the purposes of sections 5 and 6 of this act, referencing sections 5 and 6 of this act by bill or chapter or section number, is not provided by June 30, 2004, in the omnibus transportation appropriations act, sections 5 and 6 of this act are null and void." Substitute Senate Bill No. 6641 was referenced by bill number in chapter 276, Laws of 2004, the omnibus operating appropriations act, in section 301(9), however neither the bill nor the chapter number were mentioned in chapter 229, Laws of 2004, the omnibus transportation appropriations act. Therefore, the chapter 226, Laws of 2004 amendments to RCW 90.56.200 and 90.56.210, did not take effect.

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**RCW 90.56.210 Contingency plans.** (1) Each onshore and offshore facility shall have a contingency plan for the containment and cleanup of oil spills from the facility into the waters of the state and for the protection of fisheries and wildlife, shellfish beds, natural resources, and public and private property from such spills. The department shall by rule adopt and periodically revise standards for the preparation of contingency plans. The department shall require contingency plans, at a minimum, to meet the following standards:

(a) Include full details of the method of response to spills of various sizes from any facility which is covered by the plan;

(b) Be designed to be capable in terms of personnel, materials, and equipment, of promptly and properly, to the maximum extent practicable, as defined by the department removing oil and minimizing any damage to the environment resulting from a worst case spill;

(c) Provide a clear, precise, and detailed description of how the plan relates to and is integrated into relevant contingency plans which have been prepared by cooperatives, ports, regional entities, the state, and the federal government;

(d) Provide procedures for early detection of oil spills and timely notification of such spills to appropriate federal, state, and local authorities under applicable state and federal law;

(e) State the number, training preparedness, and fitness of all dedicated, prepositioned personnel assigned to direct and implement the plan;

(f) Incorporate periodic training and drill programs to evaluate whether personnel and equipment provided under the plan are in a state of operational readiness at all times;

(g) Describe important features of the surrounding environment, including fish habitat, water column species and subsurface resources, wildlife habitat, shellfish beds, environmentally and archaeologically sensitive areas, and public facilities, that are: (i) Based on information documented in geographic response plans and area contingency plans, as required under RCW 90.56.210; or (ii) for areas without geographic response plans or area contingency plans, existing practices protecting these resources used for similar areas. The departments of ecology, fish and wildlife, and natural resources, and the department of archaeology and historic preservation, upon request, shall provide information that they have available to assist in preparing this description. The description of archaeologically sensitive areas shall not be required to be included in a contingency plan until it is reviewed and updated pursuant to subsection (9) of this section;

(h) State the means of protecting and mitigating effects on the environment, including fish, shellfish, marine mammals, and other wildlife, and ensure that implementation of the plan does not pose unacceptable risks to the public or the environment;

(i) Provide arrangements for the prepositioning of oil spill containment and cleanup equipment and trained personnel at strategic locations from which they can be deployed to the spill site to promptly and properly remove the spilled oil;

(j) Provide arrangements for enlisting the use of qualified and trained cleanup personnel to implement the plan;

(k) Provide for disposal of recovered spilled oil in accordance with local, state, and federal laws;

(l) Until a spill prevention plan has been submitted pursuant to RCW 90.56.200, state the measures that have been taken to reduce the likelihood that a spill will occur, including but not limited to, design and operation of a facility, training of personnel, number of personnel, and backup systems designed to prevent a spill;

(m) State the amount and type of equipment available to respond to a spill, where the equipment is located, and the extent to which other contingency plans rely on the same equipment; and

(n) If the department has adopted rules permitting the use of dispersants, the circumstances, if any, and the manner for the application of the dispersants in conformance with the department's rules.

(2) (a) The following shall submit contingency plans to the department within six months after the department adopts rules establishing standards for contingency plans under subsection (1) of this section:

(i) Onshore facilities capable of storing one million gallons or more of oil; and

(ii) Offshore facilities.

(b) Contingency plans for all other onshore and offshore facilities shall be submitted to the department within eighteen months after the department has adopted rules under subsection (1) of this section. The department may adopt a schedule for submission of plans within the eighteen-month period.

(3) (a) The department by rule shall determine the contingency plan requirements for railroads transporting oil in bulk.

(b) For class III railroads transporting oil in bulk that is not crude oil in an amount of forty-nine or more tank carloads per year, the rules adopted under this subsection may not require contingency plans to include:

(i) Contracted access to oil spill response equipment; or

(ii) The completion of more than a total of one basic tabletop drill every three years to test the contingency plans.

(c) For class III railroads transporting oil in bulk that is not crude oil in an amount less than forty-nine tank carloads per year, rules adopted under this subsection may only require railroads to submit a basic contingency plan to the department. A basic contingency plan filed under this subsection (3)(c) must be limited to requiring the class III railroads to:

(i) Keep documentation of the basic contingency plan on file with the department at the plan holder's principal place of business and at dispatcher field offices of the railroad;

(ii) Identify and include contact information for the chain of command and other personnel, including employees or spill response contractors, who will be involved in the railroad's response in the event of a spill;

(iii) Include information related to the relevant accident insurance carried by the railroad and provide a certificate of insurance upon request;

(iv) Develop a field document for use by personnel involved in oil handling operations that includes time-critical information regarding basic contingency plan procedures to be used in the initial response to a spill or a threatened spill; and

(v) Annually review the plan for accuracy.

(d) Federal oil spill response plans created pursuant to 33 U.S.C. Sec. 1321 may be submitted in lieu of contingency plans by a class III railroad transporting oil in bulk that is not crude oil.

(e) For the purposes of this section, "class III railroad" has the same meaning as defined by the United States surface transportation board as of January 1, 2017.

(4)(a) The owner or operator of a facility shall submit the contingency plan for the facility.

(b) A person who has contracted with a facility to provide containment and cleanup services and who meets the standards established pursuant to RCW 90.56.240, may submit the plan for any facility for which the person is contractually obligated to provide services. Subject to conditions imposed by the department, the person may submit a single plan for more than one facility.

(5) A contingency plan prepared for an agency of the federal government or another state that satisfies the requirements of this section and rules adopted by the department may be accepted by the department as a contingency plan under this section. The department shall ensure that to the greatest extent possible, requirements for contingency plans under this section are consistent with the requirements for contingency plans under federal law.

(6) In reviewing the contingency plans required by this section, the department shall consider at least the following factors:

(a) The adequacy of containment and cleanup equipment, personnel, communications equipment, notification procedures and call down lists, response time, and logistical arrangements for coordination and implementation of response efforts to remove oil spills promptly and properly and to protect the environment;

(b) The nature and amount of vessel traffic within the area covered by the plan;

(c) The volume and type of oil being transported within the area covered by the plan;

(d) The existence of navigational hazards within the area covered by the plan;

(e) The history and circumstances surrounding prior spills of oil within the area covered by the plan;

(f) The sensitivity of fisheries, shellfish beds, and wildlife and other natural resources within the area covered by the plan;

(g) Relevant information on previous spills contained in on-scene coordinator reports prepared by the department; and

(h) The extent to which reasonable, cost-effective measures to prevent a likelihood that a spill will occur have been incorporated into the plan.

(7) The department shall approve a contingency plan only if it determines that the plan meets the requirements of this section and that, if implemented, the plan is capable, in terms of personnel, materials, and equipment, of removing oil promptly and properly and minimizing any damage to the environment.

(8) The approval of the contingency plan shall be valid for five years. Upon approval of a contingency plan, the department shall provide to the person submitting the plan a statement indicating that the plan has been approved, the facilities or vessels covered by the plan, and other information the department determines should be included.

(9) An owner or operator of a facility shall notify the department in writing immediately of any significant change of which it is aware affecting its contingency plan, including changes in any factor set forth in this section or in rules adopted by the department. The department may require the owner or operator to update a contingency plan as a result of these changes.

(10) The department by rule shall require contingency plans to be reviewed, updated, if necessary, and resubmitted to the department at least once every five years.

(11) Approval of a contingency plan by the department does not constitute an express assurance regarding the adequacy of the plan nor constitute a defense to liability imposed under this chapter or other state law. [2018 c 262 § 301; 2017 c 239 § 1; 2015 c 274 § 5; 2005 c 78 § 1; 2000 c 69 § 20; 1992 c 73 § 33; 1991 c 200 § 202; 1990 c 116 § 3. Formerly RCW 90.48.371.]

**Reviser's note:** Chapter 226, Laws of 2004 (Substitute Senate Bill No. 6641) directed that: "If specific funding for the purposes of sections 5 and 6 of this act, referencing sections 5 and 6 of this act by bill or chapter or section number, is not provided by June 30, 2004, in the omnibus transportation appropriations act, sections 5 and 6 of this act are null and void." Substitute Senate Bill No. 6641 was referenced by bill number in chapter 276, Laws of 2004, the omnibus operating appropriations act, in section 301(9), however neither the bill nor the chapter number were mentioned in chapter 229, Laws of 2004, the omnibus transportation appropriations act. Therefore, the chapter 226, Laws of 2004 amendments to RCW 90.56.200 and 90.56.210, did not take effect.

**Findings—Intent—Report—2018 c 262:** See notes following RCW 82.23B.010.



**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Severability—1990 c 116:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1990 c 116 § 35.]

**RCW 90.56.2101 Contingency plans—Department to update rules.**

By December 31, 2019, consistent with the authority under RCW 90.56.210, the department must update rules for contingency plans to require:

(1) Covered facilities to address situations where oils, depending on their qualities, weathering, environmental factors, and method of discharge, may submerge or sink in water; and

(2) Standards for best achievable protection for situations involving the oils in subsection (1) of this section. [2018 c 262 § 302.]

**Findings—Intent—Report—2018 c 262:** See notes following RCW 82.23B.010.

**RCW 90.56.220 Facility operation standards.** (1) The department by rule shall adopt standards for onshore and offshore facilities regarding the equipment and operation of the facilities with respect to the transfer, storage, and handling of oil to ensure that the best achievable protection of the public health and the environment is employed at all times. The department shall implement a program to provide for the inspection of all onshore and offshore facilities on a regular schedule to ensure that each facility is in compliance with the standards.

(2) The department shall adopt rules for certification of supervisory and other key personnel in charge of the transfer, storage, and handling of oil at onshore and offshore facilities. The rules shall include, but are not limited to:

(a) Minimum training requirements for all facility workers involved in the transfer, storage, and handling of oil at a facility;

(b) Provisions for periodic renewal of certificates for supervisory and other key personnel involved in the transfer, storage, and handling of oil at the facility; and

(c) Continuing education requirements.

(3) The rules adopted by the department shall not conflict with or modify standards imposed pursuant to federal or state laws regulating worker safety. [1991 c 200 § 203.]

**RCW 90.56.230 Operations manuals.** (1) Each owner or operator of an onshore or offshore facility shall prepare an operations manual describing equipment and procedures involving the transfer, storage, and handling of oil that the operator employs or will employ for best achievable protection for the public health and the environment and to prevent oil spills in the navigable waters. The operations manual shall also describe equipment and procedures required for all vessels

to or from which oil is transferred through use of the facility. The operations manual shall be submitted to the department for approval.

(2) Every existing onshore and offshore facility shall prepare and submit to the department its operations manual within eighteen months after the department has adopted rules governing the content of the manual.

(3) The department shall approve an operations manual for an onshore or offshore facility if the manual complies with the rules adopted by the department. If the department determines a manual does not comply with the rules, it shall provide written reasons for the decision. The owner or operator shall resubmit the manual within ninety days of notification of the reasons for noncompliance, responding to the reasons and incorporating any suggested modifications.

(4) The approval of an operations manual shall be valid for five years. The owner or operator of the facility shall notify the department in writing immediately of any significant change in its operations affecting its operations manual. The department may require the owner or operator to modify its operations manual as a result of these changes.

(5) All equipment and operations of an operator's onshore or offshore facility shall be maintained and carried out in accordance with the facility's operations manual. The owner or operator of the facility shall ensure that all covered vessels docked at an onshore or offshore facility comply with the terms of the operations manual for the facility. [1991 c 200 § 204.]

**RCW 90.56.240 Standards for spill management, cleanup, and containment services contractors.** (1) The department shall by rule establish standards for persons who contract to provide spill management, cleanup, and containment services under contingency plans approved under RCW 90.56.210.

(2) For the purposes of this section, "spill management" means managing:

(a) Some or all aspects of a response, containment, and cleanup of a spill, and utilizing an incident command or unified command structure; or

(b) Wildlife rehabilitation and recovery services for a spill response. [2018 c 262 § 303; 1990 c 116 § 4. Formerly RCW 90.48.372.]

**Findings—Intent—Report—2018 c 262:** See notes following RCW 82.23B.010.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.250 Index of prevention plans and contingency plans—Equipment inventory.** The department shall annually publish an index of available, up-to-date descriptions of prevention plans and contingency plans for oil spills submitted and approved pursuant to RCW 90.56.200, 90.56.210, 88.46.040, and 88.46.060 and an inventory of equipment available for responding to such spills. [1991 c 200 § 205; 1990 c 116 § 5. Formerly RCW 90.48.373.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.260 Adequacy of contingency plans—Practice drills—Report.** The department shall by rule adopt procedures to determine the adequacy of contingency plans approved under RCW 90.56.210. The rules shall require random practice drills without prior notice that will test the adequacy of the responding entities. The rules may provide for unannounced practice drills of individual contingency plans. The department shall review and publish a report on the drills, including an assessment of response time and available equipment and personnel compared to those listed in the contingency plans relying on the responding entities, and requirements, if any, for changes in the plans or their implementation. The department may require additional drills and changes in arrangements for implementing approved plans which are necessary to ensure their effective implementation. [1990 c 116 § 6. Formerly RCW 90.48.374.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.270 Enforcement of contingency plans.** (1) The provisions of contingency plans approved by the department under RCW 90.56.210 and prevention plans approved by the department pursuant to RCW 90.56.200 shall be legally binding on those persons submitting them to the department and on their successors, assigns, agents, and employees. The superior court shall have jurisdiction to restrain a violation of, compel specific performance of, or otherwise to enforce such plans upon application by the department. The department may issue an order pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW requiring compliance with a contingency plan or a prevention plan and may impose administrative penalties under RCW 43.21B.300 for failure to comply with a plan. An order under this section is not subject to review by the pollution control hearings board as provided in RCW 43.21B.110.

(2) (a) Any person responsible or potentially responsible for a discharge, all of the agents and employees of that person, the operators of all vessels docked at an onshore or offshore facility that is a source of a discharge, and all state and local agencies shall carry out response and cleanup operations in accordance with applicable contingency plans, unless directed otherwise by the director or the coast guard. Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, the responsible party, potentially responsible parties, their agents and employees, the operators of all vessels docked at an onshore or offshore facility that is the source of the discharge, and all state and local agencies shall carry out whatever direction is given by the director in connection with the response, containment, and cleanup of the spill, if the directions are not in direct conflict with the directions of the coast guard.

(b) If a responsible party or potentially responsible party reasonably, and in good faith, believes that the directions or orders given by the director pursuant to (a) of this subsection will substantially endanger the public safety or the environment, the party may refuse to act in compliance with the orders or directions of the director. The responsible party or potentially responsible party shall

state, at the time of the refusal, the reasons why the party refuses to follow the orders or directions of the director. The responsible party or potentially responsible party shall give the director written notice of the reasons for the refusal within forty-eight hours of refusing to follow the orders or directions of the director. In any civil or criminal proceeding commenced pursuant to this section, the burden of proof shall be on the responsible party or potentially responsible party to demonstrate, by clear and convincing evidence, why the refusal to follow the orders or directions of the director was justified under the circumstances. [1991 c 200 § 206; 1990 c 116 § 7. Formerly RCW 90.48.375.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.275 Joint large-scale, multiple plan equipment deployment drills of onshore and offshore facilities and covered vessels—Requirements.** (1) The department is responsible for requiring joint large-scale, multiple plan equipment deployment drills of onshore and offshore facilities and covered vessels under chapter 88.46 RCW to determine the adequacy of the owner's or operator's compliance with the contingency plan requirements of this chapter and chapter 88.46 RCW. The department must order at least one drill as outlined in this section every three years, which must address situations where oils, depending on their qualities, weathering, environmental factors, and method of discharge, may submerge or sink in water.

(2) Drills required under this section must focus on, at a minimum, the following:

(a) The functional ability for multiple contingency plans to be simultaneously activated with the purpose of testing the ability for dedicated equipment and trained personnel cited in multiple contingency plans to be activated in a large-scale spill; and

(b) The operational readiness during both the first six hours of a spill and, at the department's discretion, over multiple operational periods of response.

(3) Drills required under this section may be incorporated into other drill requirements under this chapter to avoid increasing the number of drills and equipment deployments otherwise required.

(4) Each successful drill conducted under this section may be considered by the department as a drill of the underlying contingency plan and credit may be awarded to the plan holder accordingly.

(5) The department must prioritize drills for situations where oils, depending on their qualities, weathering, environmental factors, and method of discharge, may submerge or sink in water. [2018 c 262 § 305.]

**Findings—Intent—Report—2018 c 262:** See notes following RCW 82.23B.010.

**RCW 90.56.280 Duty to notify coast guard and division of emergency management of discharge.** It shall be the duty of any person discharging oil or hazardous substances or otherwise causing, permitting, or allowing the same to enter the waters of the state,

unless the discharge or entry was expressly authorized by the department prior thereto or authorized by operation of law under RCW 90.48.200, to immediately notify the coast guard and the division of emergency management. The notice to the division of emergency management within the department of commerce shall be made to the division's twenty-four hour statewide toll-free number established for reporting emergencies. [2023 c 470 § 2130; 1995 c 399 § 218; 1990 c 116 § 24; 1987 c 109 § 152; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 9. Formerly RCW 90.48.360.]

**Explanatory statement—2023 c 470:** See note following RCW 10.99.030.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.300 Unlawful operation of facility—Criminal penalties.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, it shall be unlawful for the owner or operator to knowingly and intentionally operate in this state or on the waters of this state an onshore or offshore facility without an approved contingency plan or an approved prevention plan as required by this chapter, or financial responsibility in compliance with chapter 88.40 RCW and the federal oil pollution act of 1990.

(2)(a) The first conviction under this section is a gross misdemeanor under chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(b) A second or subsequent conviction is a class C felony under chapter 9A.20 RCW.

(3) It shall not be unlawful for the owner or operator to operate an onshore or offshore facility if:

(a) The facility is not required to have a contingency plan, spill prevention plan, or financial responsibility; or

(b) All required plans have been submitted to the department as required by RCW 90.56.210 and rules adopted by the department and the department is reviewing the plan and has not denied approval.

(4) A person may rely on a copy of the statement issued by the department pursuant to \*RCW 90.56.210(7) as evidence that a facility has an approved contingency plan and the statement issued pursuant to \*\*RCW 90.56.200(4) that a facility has an approved prevention plan. [2003 c 53 § 420; 1992 c 73 § 34; 1991 c 200 § 301; 1990 c 116 § 8. Formerly RCW 90.48.376.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 90.56.210 was amended by 2015 c 274 § 5, changing subsection (7) to subsection (8).

\*\* (2) RCW 90.56.200 was amended by 2015 c 274 § 4, changing subsection (4) to subsection (5).

**Intent—Effective date—2003 c 53:** See notes following RCW 2.48.180.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.310 Operation of a facility or vessel without contingency or prevention plan or financial responsibility—Civil penalty.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (3) of this section, it shall be unlawful:

(a) For the owner or operator to operate an onshore or offshore facility without an approved contingency plan as required under RCW 90.56.210, a spill prevention plan required by RCW 90.56.200, or financial responsibility in compliance with chapter 88.40 RCW and the federal oil pollution act of 1990; or

(b) For the owner or operator of an onshore or offshore facility to transfer cargo or passengers to or from a covered vessel that does not have an approved contingency plan or an approved prevention plan required under chapter 88.46 RCW or financial responsibility in compliance with chapter 88.40 RCW and the federal oil pollution act of 1990.

(2) The department may assess a civil penalty under RCW 43.21B.300 of up to one hundred thousand dollars against any person who is in violation of this section. Each day that a facility or person is in violation of this section shall be considered a separate violation.

(3) It shall not be unlawful for a facility or other person to operate or accept cargo or passengers from a covered vessel if:

(a) A contingency plan, a prevention plan, or financial responsibility is not required for the facility; or

(b) A contingency and prevention plan has been submitted to the department as required by this chapter and rules adopted by the department and the department is reviewing the plan and has not denied approval.

(4) Any person may rely on a copy of the statement issued by the department pursuant to \*RCW 90.56.210(7) as evidence that the facility has an approved contingency plan and the statement issued pursuant to \*\*RCW 90.56.200(4) as evidence that the facility has an approved spill prevention plan. Any person may rely on a copy of the statement issued by the \*\*\*office of marine safety, or its successor agency, the department, pursuant to RCW 88.46.060 as evidence that the vessel has an approved contingency plan and the statement issued pursuant to RCW 88.46.040 as evidence that the vessel has an approved prevention plan. [2000 c 69 § 34; 1992 c 73 § 35; 1991 c 200 § 302; 1990 c 116 § 9. Formerly RCW 90.48.377.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 90.56.210 was amended by 2015 c 274 § 5, changing subsection (7) to subsection (8).

\*\* (2) RCW 90.56.200 was amended by 2015 c 274 § 4, changing subsection (4) to subsection (5).

\*\*\* (3) The office of marine safety was abolished and its powers, duties, and functions transferred to the department of ecology by 1991 c 200 § 430, effective July 1, 1997.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.320 Unlawful for oil to enter waters—Exceptions.** It shall be unlawful, except under the circumstances hereafter described in this section, for oil to enter the waters of the state from any ship or any fixed or mobile facility or installation located offshore or onshore whether publicly or privately operated, regardless of the cause of the entry or fault of the person having control over the oil, or regardless of whether it be the result of intentional or negligent conduct, accident or other cause. This section shall not apply to discharges of oil in the following circumstances:

(1) The person discharging was expressly authorized to do so by the department prior to the entry of the oil into state waters; or

(2) The person discharging was authorized to do so by operation of law as provided in RCW 90.48.200. [1990 c 116 § 17; 1987 c 109 § 146; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 2; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 1. Formerly RCW 90.48.320.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.330 Additional penalties.** (1) Except as otherwise provided in RCW 90.56.390, any person who negligently discharges oil, or causes or permits the entry of the same, shall incur, in addition to any other penalty as provided by law, a penalty in an amount of up to one hundred thousand dollars for every such violation, and for each day the spill poses risks to the environment as determined by the director. Any person who intentionally or recklessly discharges or causes or permits the entry of oil into the waters of the state shall incur, in addition to any other penalty authorized by law, a penalty of up to five hundred thousand dollars for every such violation and for each day the spill poses risks to the environment as determined by the director. The amount of the penalty shall be determined by the director after taking into consideration the size of the business of the violator, the gravity of the violation, the previous record of the violator in complying, or failing to comply, with the provisions of chapter 90.48 RCW, the speed and thoroughness of the collection and removal of the oil, and such other considerations as the director deems appropriate. Every act of commission or omission which procures, aids or abets in the violation shall be considered a violation under the provisions of this section and subject to the penalty herein provided for. The penalty provided for in this section shall be imposed pursuant to RCW 43.21B.300.

(2) The director may impose the penalty authorized under subsection (1) of this section, in addition to any other assessment for damages the director is authorized to impose pursuant to law, if the discharge of oil is at an energy facility regulated by the energy facility site evaluation council.

(3) Any penalty recovered pursuant to this section shall be credited to the coastal protection fund created in RCW 90.48.390. [2015 3rd sp.s. c 39 § 4; 2007 c 347 § 3; 1992 c 73 § 36; 1990 c 116 § 20; 1989 c 388 § 9; 1987 c 109 § 20; 1985 c 316 § 7; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 9; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 7. Formerly RCW 90.48.350.]

**Findings—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 39:** See note following RCW 80.50.150.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Intent—Application—Captions—Severability—1989 c 388:** See notes following RCW 90.56.010.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.340 Duty to remove oil.** It shall be the obligation of any person owning or having control over oil entering waters of the state in violation of RCW 90.56.320 to immediately collect and remove the same. If it is not feasible to collect and remove, said person shall take all practicable actions to contain, treat and disperse the same. The director shall prohibit or restrict the use of any chemicals or other dispersant or treatment materials proposed for use under this section whenever it appears to the director that use thereof would be detrimental to the public interest. [1991 c 200 § 303; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 3; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 2. Formerly RCW 90.48.325.]

**RCW 90.56.350 Investigation, removal, containment, treatment, or dispersal of oil and hazardous substances—Record of expenses.** The department shall take all actions necessary to respond to a substantial threat of a discharge of oil or hazardous substances into the waters of this state or to collect, investigate, perform surveillance over, remove, contain, treat, or disperse oil or hazardous substances discharged into waters of the state. The department shall keep a record of all necessary expenses incurred in carrying out any project or activity authorized under this section, including a reasonable charge for the services performed by the state's personnel and the state's equipment and materials utilized. The authority granted hereunder shall be limited to projects and activities which are designed to protect the public interest or public property. The department may use staff, equipment, and material under its control, or contract with others, to carry out its responsibilities under this section. [1990 c 116 § 21; 1987 c 109 § 147; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 4; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 3. Formerly RCW 90.48.330.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.360 Liability for expenses.** Any person who unlawfully discharges oil or hazardous substances into the waters of the state or who poses a substantial threat of discharging oil or hazardous



substances into the waters of the state shall be responsible for the necessary expenses incurred by the state in carrying out a project or activity authorized under RCW 90.56.350. [1990 c 116 § 22; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 5; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 4. Formerly RCW 90.48.335.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.370 Strict liability of owner or controller of oil—Damages—Exceptions.** (1) Any person owning oil or having control over oil that enters the waters of the state in violation of RCW 90.56.320 shall be strictly liable, without regard to fault, for the damages to persons or property, public or private, caused by such entry.

(2) Damages for which responsible parties are liable under this section include loss of income, net revenue, the means of producing income or revenue, or an economic benefit resulting from an injury to or loss of real or personal property or natural resources.

(3) Damages for which responsible parties are liable under this section include damages provided in subsections (1) and (2) of this section resulting from the use and deployment of chemical dispersants or from in situ burning in response to a violation of RCW 90.56.320.

(4) In any action to recover damages resulting from the discharge of oil in violation of RCW 90.56.320, the owner or person having control over the oil shall be relieved from strict liability, without regard to fault, if that person can prove that the discharge was caused solely by:

- (a) An act of war or sabotage;
- (b) An act of God;
- (c) Negligence on the part of the United States government; or
- (d) Negligence on the part of the state of Washington.

(5) The liability established in this section shall in no way affect the rights which: (a) The owner or other person having control over the oil may have against any person whose acts may in any way have caused or contributed to the discharge of oil, or (b) the state of Washington may have against any person whose actions may have caused or contributed to the discharge of oil. [2011 c 122 § 10; 2000 c 69 § 21; 1990 c 116 § 18; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 6. Formerly RCW 90.48.336.]

**Prospective application—1990 c 116 § 18(2):** "The section 18(2), chapter 116, Laws of 1990 changes requiring the defenses in that subsection to be the sole causes of the discharge, and the text of section 18(2)(b), chapter 116, Laws of 1990 shall apply prospectively and not retroactively after June 7, 1990." [2000 c 69 § 26.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.380 Liability of others for cleanup expenses.** In addition to any cause of action the state may have to recover necessary expenses for the cleanup of oil pursuant to RCW 90.56.340 and 90.56.330, and except as otherwise provided in RCW 90.56.390, any other person causing the entry of oil shall be directly liable to the state for the necessary expenses of oil cleanup arising from such

entry and the state shall have a cause of action to recover from any or all of said persons. Except as otherwise provided in RCW 90.56.390, any person liable for cost of oil cleanup as provided in RCW 90.56.340 and 90.56.330 shall have a cause of action to recover for costs of cleanup from any other person causing the entry of oil into the waters of the state including any amount recoverable by the state as necessary expenses under RCW 90.56.330. [1992 c 73 § 37; 1990 c 116 § 19; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 7. Formerly RCW 90.48.338.]

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**RCW 90.56.390 Liability for removal costs.** (1)(a) A person is not liable for removal costs or damages that result from actions taken or omitted to be taken in the course of rendering care, assistance, or advice consistent with the national contingency plan or as otherwise directed by the federal on-scene coordinator or by the official within the department with responsibility for oil spill response. This subsection (1)(a) does not apply:

(i) To a responsible party;  
(ii) With respect to personal injury or wrongful death; or  
(iii) If the person is grossly negligent or engages in willful misconduct.

(b) A responsible party is liable for any removal costs and damages that another person is relieved of under (a) of this subsection.

(c) Nothing in this section affects the liability of a responsible party for oil spill response under state law.

(2) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Damages" means damages of any kind for which liability may exist under the laws of this state resulting from, arising out of, or related to the discharge or threatened discharge of oil.

(b) "Federal on-scene coordinator" means the federal official predesignated by the United States environmental protection agency or the United States coast guard to coordinate and direct federal responses under subpart D, or the official designated by the lead agency to coordinate and direct removal under subpart E, of the national contingency plan.

(c) "National contingency plan" means the national contingency plan prepared and published under section 311(d) of the federal water pollution control act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1321(d)), as amended by the oil pollution act of 1990 (P.L. 101-380, 104 Stat. 484 (1990)).

(d) "Removal costs" means the costs of removal that are incurred after a discharge of oil has occurred or, in any case in which there is a substantial threat of a discharge of oil, the costs to prevent, minimize, or mitigate oil pollution from such an incident.

(e) "Responsible party" means a person liable under RCW 90.56.370. [1992 c 73 § 38; 1991 c 200 § 304.]

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**RCW 90.56.400 Department investigation of circumstances of entry of oil—Order for reimbursement of expenses—Modification—Action to recover necessary expenses.** The department shall investigate each activity or project conducted under RCW 90.56.350 to determine, if possible, the circumstances surrounding the entry of oil into waters of the state and the person or persons allowing said entry or responsible for the act or acts which result in said entry. Whenever it appears to the department, after investigation, that a specific person or persons are responsible for the necessary expenses incurred by the state pertaining to a project or activity as specified in RCW 90.56.360, the department shall notify said person or persons by appropriate order. The department may not issue an order pertaining to a project or activity which was completed more than five years prior to the date of the proposed issuance of the order. The order shall state the findings of the department, the amount of necessary expenses incurred in conducting the project or activity, and a notice that said amount is due and payable immediately upon receipt of said order. The department may, upon application from the recipient of an order received within thirty days from the receipt of the order, reduce or set aside in its entirety the amount due and payable, when it appears from the application, and from any further investigation the department may desire to undertake, that a reduction or setting aside is just and fair under all the circumstances. If the amount specified in the order issued by the department notifying said person or persons is not paid within thirty days after receipt of notice imposing the same, or if an application has been made within thirty days as herein provided and the amount provided in the order issued by the department subsequent to such application is not paid within fifteen days after receipt thereof, the attorney general, upon request of the department, shall bring an action on behalf of the state in the superior court of Thurston county or any county in which the person to which the order is directed does business, or in any other court of competent jurisdiction, to recover the amount specified in the final order of the department. No order issued under this section shall be construed as an order within the meaning of RCW 43.21B.310 and shall not be appealable to the hearings board. In any action to recover necessary expenses as herein provided said person shall be relieved from liability for necessary expenses if the person can prove that the oil to which the necessary expenses relate entered the waters of the state by causes set forth in \*RCW 90.56.370(2). [1992 c 73 § 39; 1991 c 200 § 305; 1987 c 109 § 148; 1985 c 316 § 4; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 10; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 5. Formerly RCW 90.48.340.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 90.56.370 was amended by 2011 c 122 § 10, changing subsection (2) to subsection (4).

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.410 Right of entry and access to records pertinent to investigations.** (1) The department, through its duly authorized representatives, shall have the power to enter upon any private or public property, including the boarding of any ship, at any reasonable time, and the owner, managing agent, master, or occupant of such

property shall permit such entry for the purpose of investigating conditions relating to violations or possible violations of this chapter, and to have access to any pertinent records relating to such property, including but not limited to operation and maintenance records and logs. The authority granted in this section shall not be construed to require any person to divulge trade secrets or secret processes. The director may issue subpoenas for the production of any books, records, documents, or witnesses in any hearing conducted pursuant to this chapter.

(2) The department may utilize the authority granted to it in RCW 79.100.140 for the purposes of mitigating a potential threat to health, safety, or the environment from a vessel. [2013 c 291 § 36; 1990 c 116 § 23; 1987 c 109 § 151; 1969 ex.s. c 133 § 8. Formerly RCW 90.48.355.]

**Findings—Severability—1990 c 116:** See notes following RCW 90.56.210.

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.420 Authorized discharges of oil—Permits.** Any person who proposes to discharge oil or cause or permit the entry of same into waters of the state shall prior to such discharge obtain permission from the director. The director is authorized to permit the discharge of oil into waters of the state consistent with the pertinent effluent and receiving water standards and treatment requirements established by the department. Permission for industrial or commercial discharges shall be given through the terms of a waste discharge permit issued pursuant to RCW 90.48.180. Permission shall be given in all other cases on a form prescribed by the director. [1987 c 109 § 149; 1970 ex.s. c 88 § 8. Formerly RCW 90.48.343.]

**Purpose—Short title—Construction—Rules—Severability—Captions—1987 c 109:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**RCW 90.56.500 Oil spill response account.** (1) The state oil spill response account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from RCW 82.23B.020(1) shall be deposited in the account. All costs reimbursed to the state by a responsible party or any other person for responding to a spill of oil shall also be deposited in the account. Moneys in the account shall be spent only after appropriation. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW.

(2) (a) The account shall be used exclusively to pay for:

(i) The costs associated with the response to spills or imminent threats of spills of crude oil or petroleum products into the waters of the state; and

(ii) The costs associated with the department's use of an emergency response towing vessel.

(b) During the 2017-2019 fiscal biennium, the legislature may transfer up to four million seven hundred twenty-one thousand dollars from the account to the oil spill prevention account created in RCW 90.56.510.

(c) During the 2019-2021 fiscal biennium, the legislature may transfer up to one million forty thousand dollars from the account to the oil spill prevention account created in RCW 90.56.510.

(3) Payment of response costs under subsection (2)(a)(i) of this section shall be limited to spills which the director has determined are likely to exceed one thousand dollars.

(4) Before expending moneys from the account, but without delaying response activities, the director shall make reasonable efforts to obtain funding for response costs under subsection (2) of this section from the person responsible for the spill and from other sources, including the federal government.

(5) Reimbursement for response costs from this account shall be allowed only for costs which are not covered by funds appropriated to the agencies responsible for response activities. Costs associated with the response to spills of crude oil or petroleum products shall include:

(a) Natural resource damage assessment and related activities;

(b) Spill related response, containment, wildlife rescue, cleanup, disposal, and associated costs;

(c) Interagency coordination and public information related to a response; and

(d) Appropriate travel, goods and services, contracts, and equipment. [2019 c 415 § 993; 2018 c 299 § 918; 2015 c 274 § 6; 2009 c 11 § 9; 1991 c 200 § 805.]

**Effective date—2019 c 415:** See note following RCW 28B.20.476.

**Effective date—2018 c 299:** See note following RCW 43.41.433.

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 11:** See note following RCW 88.46.130.

**RCW 90.56.510 Oil spill prevention account.** (1) The oil spill prevention account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from RCW 82.23B.020(2) shall be deposited in the account. Moneys from the account may be spent only after appropriation. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW. If, on the first day of any calendar month, the balance of the oil spill response account is greater than nine million dollars and the balance of the oil spill prevention account exceeds the unexpended appropriation for the current biennium, then the tax under RCW 82.23B.020(2) shall be suspended on the first day of the next calendar month until the beginning of the following biennium, provided that the tax shall not be suspended during the last six months of the biennium. If the tax imposed under RCW 82.23B.020(2) is suspended during two consecutive biennia, the department shall by November 1st after the end of the second biennium, recommend to the appropriate standing committees an adjustment in the tax rate. For the biennium ending June 30, 1999, and the biennium ending June 30, 2001, the state treasurer may transfer a total of up to one million dollars from the oil spill response account to the oil spill prevention account to support appropriations made from the oil spill prevention account in the omnibus appropriations act adopted not later than June 30, 1999.

(2) Expenditures from the oil spill prevention account shall be used exclusively for the administrative costs related to the purposes of this chapter, and chapters 90.48, 88.40, and 88.46 RCW. In addition, until June 30, 2021, expenditures from the oil spill prevention account may be used, subject to amounts appropriated specifically for this purpose, for the development and annual review of local emergency planning committee emergency response plans in RCW 38.52.040(3). Starting with the 1995-1997 biennium, the legislature shall give activities of state agencies related to prevention of oil spills priority in funding from the oil spill prevention account. Costs of prevention include the costs of:

- (a) Routine responses not covered under RCW 90.56.500;
- (b) Management and staff development activities;
- (c) Development of rules and policies and the statewide plan provided for in RCW 90.56.060;
- (d) Facility and vessel plan review and approval, drills, inspections, investigations, enforcement, and litigation;
- (e) Interagency coordination and public outreach and education;
- (f) Collection and administration of the tax provided for in chapter 82.23B RCW; and
- (g) Appropriate travel, goods and services, contracts, and equipment.

(3) Before expending moneys from the account for a response under subsection (2)(a) of this section, but without delaying response activities, the director shall make reasonable efforts to obtain funding for response costs under this section from the person responsible for the spill and from other sources, including the federal government.

(4) During the 2019-2021 fiscal biennium, the legislature may appropriate moneys from the oil spill prevention account to the oil spill response account. [2020 c 357 § 921; 2019 c 415 § 994; 2015 c 274 § 7; 2000 c 69 § 22; 1999 sp.s. c 7 § 2; 1997 c 449 § 3; 1995 2nd sp.s. c 14 § 525; 1994 sp.s. c 6 § 903; 1993 c 162 § 2; 1992 c 73 § 41; 1991 c 200 § 806.]

**Effective date—2020 c 357:** See note following RCW 43.79.545.

**Effective date—2019 c 415:** See note following RCW 28B.20.476.

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**Effective date—1999 sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 82.23B.020.

**Effective date—1997 c 449:** See note following RCW 82.23B.020.

**Severability—1995 2nd sp.s. c 14:** See note following RCW 43.19.1919.

**Effective dates—1995 2nd sp.s. c 14:** See note following RCW 43.19.1919.

**Severability—Effective date—1994 sp.s. c 6:** See notes following RCW 28A.310.020.

**Severability—Effective date—1993 c 162:** See notes following RCW 88.46.170.

**Effective dates—1992 c 73:** See RCW 82.23B.902.

**RCW 90.56.530 Reckless operation of a tank vessel—Penalty.** (1) A person commits the crime of reckless operation of a tank vessel if, while (a) navigating a tank vessel, (b) piloting a tank vessel, or (c) on the vessel control bridge and in control of the motion, direction, or speed of a tank vessel, the person, with recklessness as defined in RCW 9A.08.010, causes a release of oil.

(2) Reckless operation of a tank vessel is a class C felony under chapter 9A.20 RCW. [1991 c 200 § 604. Formerly RCW 88.16.210.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 90.56.540 Operation of a vessel while under influence of liquor or drugs—Penalty.** (1) A person is guilty of operating a vessel while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs if the person operates a covered vessel within this state while:

(a) The person has 0.06 grams or more of alcohol per two hundred ten liters of breath, as shown by analysis of the person's breath made under RCW 90.56.550; or

(b) The person has 0.06 percent or more by weight of alcohol in the person's blood as shown by analysis of the person's blood made under RCW 90.56.550; or

(c) The person is under the influence of or affected by intoxicating liquor or drugs; or

(d) The person is under the combined influence of or affected by intoxicating liquor or drugs.

(2) The fact that any person charged with a violation of this section is or has been entitled to use such drug under the laws of this state shall not constitute a defense against any charge of violating this section.

(3) Operating a vessel while intoxicated is a class C felony under chapter 9A.20 RCW. [2000 c 69 § 23; 1991 c 200 § 605. Formerly RCW 88.16.220.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 90.56.550 Breath or blood analysis.** (1) Upon the trial of any civil or criminal action or proceeding arising out of acts alleged to have been committed by a person while operating a vessel while under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs, if the amount of alcohol in the person's blood or breath at the time alleged as shown by analysis of his blood or breath is less than 0.06 percent by weight of alcohol in his blood or 0.06 grams of alcohol per two hundred ten liters of the person's breath, it is evidence that may be considered with other competent evidence in determining whether the person was under the influence of intoxicating liquor or drugs.

(2) The breath analysis shall be based upon grams of alcohol per two hundred ten liters of breath. The foregoing provisions of this section shall not be construed as limiting the introduction of any

other competent evidence bearing upon the question whether the person was under the influence of intoxicating liquor or any drug.

(3) Analysis of the person's blood or breath to be considered valid under this section shall have been performed according to methods approved by the state toxicologist and by an individual possessing a valid permit issued by the state toxicologist for this purpose. The state toxicologist shall approve satisfactory techniques or methods, to supervise the examination of individuals to ascertain their qualifications and competence to conduct such analyses, and to issue permits that are subject to termination or revocation at the discretion of the state toxicologist.

(4) If a blood test is administered under this section, the withdrawal of blood for the purpose of determining its alcoholic content may be performed only by a physician, a registered nurse, or a qualified technician. This limitation shall not apply to the taking of breath specimens.

(5) The person tested may have a physician, or a qualified technician, chemist, registered nurse, or other qualified person of his or her own choosing administer one or more tests in addition to any administered at the direction of a law enforcement officer. The failure or inability to obtain an additional test by a person shall not preclude the admission of evidence relating to the test or tests taken at the direction of a law enforcement officer.

(6) Upon the request of the person who submits to a test or tests at the request of a law enforcement officer, full information concerning the test or tests shall be made available to the person or his or her attorney. [1991 c 200 § 606. Formerly RCW 88.16.230.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 90.56.560 Limited immunity for blood withdrawal.** No physician, registered nurse, qualified technician, or hospital, or duly licensed clinical laboratory employing or using services of the physician, registered nurse, or qualified technician, may incur any civil or criminal liability as a result of the act of withdrawing blood from any person when directed by a law enforcement officer to do so for the purpose of a blood test under RCW 90.56.550. This section shall not relieve any physician, registered nurse, qualified technician, or hospital or duly licensed clinical laboratory from civil liability arising from the use of improper procedures or failing to exercise the required standard of care. [2000 c 69 § 24; 1991 c 200 § 607. Formerly RCW 88.16.240.]

**Effective dates—1991 c 200:** See RCW 90.56.901.

**RCW 90.56.565 Facilities that receive crude oil from a railroad car—Advanced notice system—Department required to report information—Adoption of rules.** (1)(a) A facility that receives crude oil from a railroad car must provide advance notice to the department that the facility will receive crude oil from a railroad car, as provided in this section. The advance notice must include the route taken to the facility within the state, if known, and the scheduled time, location, volume, region per bill of lading, type, vapor pressure, and gravity as measured by standards developed by the American petroleum



institute, of crude oil received. Each week, a facility that provides advance notice under this section must provide the required information regarding the scheduled arrival of railroad cars carrying crude oil to be received by the facility in the succeeding seven-day period. A facility is not required to provide advance notice when there is no receipt of crude oil from a railroad car scheduled for a seven-day period.

(b) Twice per year, pipelines that transport crude oil must report to the department the following information about the crude oil transported by the pipeline through the state: The volume of crude oil, gravity of the crude oil as measured by standards developed by the American petroleum institute, type of crude oil, and the state or province of origin of the crude oil. This report must be submitted each year by July 31st for the period January 1st through June 30th and by January 31st for the period July 1st through December 31st.

(2) The department may share information provided by a facility through the advance notice system established in this section with the state emergency management division and any county, city, tribal, port, or local government emergency response agency upon request.

(3) The department must publish information collected under this section on a quarterly basis on the department's internet website. With respect to the information reported under subsection (1)(a) of this section, the information published by the department must be aggregated on a statewide basis by route through the state, by week, and by type of crude oil. The report may also include other information available to the department including, but not limited to, place of origin, modes of transport, number of railroad cars delivering crude oil, and number and volume of spills during transport and delivery.

(4) To further strengthen rail safety and the transportation of crude oil, the department must provide to the utilities and transportation commission data reported by facilities on the characteristics, volatility, vapor pressure, and volume of crude oil transported by rail, as required under subsection (1)(a) of this section.

(5) A facility providing advance notice under this section is not responsible for meeting advance notice time frame requirements under subsection (1) of this section in the event that the schedule of arrivals of railroad cars carrying crude oil changes during a seven-day period.

(6) Consistent with the requirements of chapter 42.56 RCW, the department and any state, local, tribal, or public agency that receives information provided under this section may not disclose any such information to the public or to nongovernmental entities that contains proprietary, commercial, or financial information unless that information is aggregated. The requirement for aggregating information does not apply when information is shared by the department with emergency response agencies as provided in subsection (2) of this section.

(7) The department shall adopt rules to implement this section. The advance notice system required in this section must be consistent with the oil transfer reporting system adopted by the department pursuant to RCW 88.46.165. [2019 c 354 § 2; 2019 c 289 § 7; 2015 c 274 § 8.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2019 c 289 § 7 and by 2019 c 354 § 2, each without reference to the other. Both amendments

are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Finding—Intent—2019 c 289:** See note following RCW 88.16.190.

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**RCW 90.56.569 Updates to the senate and house of representatives.** (1) The department must provide to the relevant policy and fiscal committees of the senate and house of representatives updates by December 31, 2019, and December 31, 2021, consistent with the requirements of RCW 43.01.036, as to the progress made in completing state and federal geographic response plans as needed in contingency plans required under RCW 90.56.060, 90.56.210, and 88.46.060.

(2) In its updates of geographic response plans, the department must address situations where oils, depending on their qualities, weathering, environmental factors, and method of discharge, may submerge or sink in water.

(3) All requirements in this section are subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for the specific purposes described. [2018 c 262 § 304; 2015 c 274 § 25.]

**Findings—Intent—Report—2018 c 262:** See notes following RCW 82.23B.010.

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**RCW 90.56.570 Periodic evaluation and update of planning standards for oil spill response equipment.** To the extent practicable and consistent with RCW 88.46.180, the department shall periodically evaluate and update planning standards for oil spill response equipment required under contingency plans required by this chapter in order to ensure access in the state to equipment that represents the best achievable protection to respond to a worst case spill and provide for continuous operation of oil spill response activities to the maximum extent practicable and without jeopardizing crew safety, as determined by the incident commander or the unified command. The department must coordinate evaluation and update planning requirements under this section with requirements under RCW 88.46.180 to eliminate duplication. [2015 c 274 § 28.]

**Effective date—2015 c 274:** See note following RCW 90.56.005.

**RCW 90.56.580 Crude oil vapor pressure—Maximum—Penalty.** (1)(a) A facility constructed or permitted after January 1, 2019, may not load or unload crude oil into or from a rail tank car unless the oil has a vapor pressure of less than nine pounds per square inch.

(b) A facility may not load or unload crude oil into or from a rail tank car unless the oil has a vapor pressure of less than nine pounds per square inch beginning two years after the volume of crude oil transported by rail to the facility for a calendar year as

reported under RCW 90.56.565 has increased more than ten percent above the volume reported for calendar year 2018.

(2) The director may impose a penalty of up to twenty-five hundred dollars per day per rail tank car or the equivalent volume of oil for violations of this section. Any penalty recovered pursuant to this section must be credited to the coastal protection fund created in RCW 90.48.390.

(3) This section does not: (a) Prohibit a railroad car carrying crude oil from entering Washington; (b) require a railroad car carrying crude oil to stop before entering Washington; or (c) require a railroad car carrying crude oil to be checked for vapor pressure before entering Washington. [2019 c 354 § 1.]

**RCW 90.56.900 Construction—Appeal not to stay order, rule, or regulation.** This chapter, being necessary for the general welfare, the public health, and the public safety of the state and its inhabitants, shall be liberally construed to effect their purposes. No rule, regulation, or order of the department shall be stayed pending appeal under this chapter. [1991 c 200 § 1107; 1971 ex.s. c 180 § 10. Formerly RCW 90.48.907.]

**RCW 90.56.901 Effective dates—1991 c 200.** (1) Sections 101 through 429, 501 through 706, 805 through 807, 810 through 817, and 901 through 1118 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and shall take effect immediately [May 15, 1991].

(2) Sections 801 through 804, 808, and 809 of this act shall take effect October 1, 1991. [1991 c 200 § 1119.]

**Chapter 90.58 RCW**  
**SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1971**

**Sections**

- 90.58.010 Short title.
- 90.58.020 Legislative findings—State policy enunciated—Use preference.
- 90.58.030 Definitions and concepts.
- 90.58.040 Program applicable to shorelines of the state.
- 90.58.045 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.
- 90.58.050 Program as cooperative between local government and state—Responsibilities differentiated.
- 90.58.060 Review and adoption of guidelines—Public hearings, notice of—Amendments.
- 90.58.065 Application of guidelines and master programs to agricultural activities.
- 90.58.070 Local governments to submit letters of intent—Department to act upon failure of local government.
- 90.58.080 Timetable for local governments to develop or amend master programs—Review of master programs—Grants.
- 90.58.090 Approval of master program or segments or amendments—Procedure—Departmental alternatives when shorelines of statewide significance—Later adoption of master program supersedes departmental program.
- 90.58.100 Programs as constituting use regulations—Duties when preparing programs and amendments thereto—Program contents.
- 90.58.110 Development of program within two or more adjacent local government jurisdictions—Development of program in segments, when.
- 90.58.120 Adoption of rules, programs, etc., subject to RCW 34.05.310 through 34.05.395—Public hearings, notice of—Public inspection after approval or adoption.
- 90.58.130 Involvement of all persons and entities having interest, means.
- 90.58.140 Development permits—Grounds for granting—Administration by local government, conditions—Applications—Notices—Rescission—Approval when permit for variance or conditional use.
- 90.58.143 Time requirements—Substantial development permits, variances, conditional use permits.
- 90.58.147 Substantial development permit—Exemption for projects to improve fish or wildlife habitat or fish passage.
- 90.58.150 Selective commercial timber cutting, when.
- 90.58.160 Prohibition against seabed mining for hard minerals and surface drilling for oil or gas, where.
- 90.58.170 Shorelines hearings board—Established—Members—Chair—Quorum for decision—Expenses of members.
- 90.58.175 Rules and regulations.
- 90.58.180 Review of granting, denying, or rescinding permits by shorelines hearings board—Board to act—Local government appeals to board—Grounds for declaring rule, regulation, or guideline invalid—Appeals to court.

- 90.58.185 Appeals involving single-family residences, involving penalties of fifteen thousand dollars or less, or other designated cases—Composition of board—Rules to expedite appeals.
- 90.58.190 Appeal of department's decision to adopt or amend a master program.
- 90.58.195 Shoreline master plan review—Local governments with coastal waters or coastal shorelines.
- 90.58.200 Rules and regulations.
- 90.58.210 Court actions to ensure against conflicting uses and to enforce—Civil penalty—Review.
- 90.58.220 General penalty.
- 90.58.230 Violators liable for damages resulting from violation—Attorney's fees and costs.
- 90.58.240 Additional authority granted department and local governments.
- 90.58.250 Intent—Department to cooperate with local governments—Grants for development of master programs.
- 90.58.260 State to represent its interest before federal agencies, interstate agencies and courts.
- 90.58.270 Nonapplication to certain structures, docks, developments, etc., placed in navigable waters—Nonapplication to certain rights of action, authority—Floating homes and floating on-water residences must be classified as a conforming preferred use.
- 90.58.280 Application to all state agencies, counties, public and municipal corporations.
- 90.58.290 Restrictions as affecting fair market value of property.
- 90.58.300 Department as regulating state agency—Special authority.
- 90.58.310 Designation of shorelines of statewide significance by legislature—Recommendation by director, procedure.
- 90.58.320 Height limitation respecting permits.
- 90.58.340 Use policies for land adjacent to shorelines, development of.
- 90.58.350 Nonapplication to treaty rights.
- 90.58.355 Persons, projects, and activities not required to obtain certain permits, variances, letters of exemption, or other local review.
- 90.58.356 Projects and activities not required to obtain certain permits, variances, letters of exemption, or other local review—Written notice, when required.
- 90.58.357 Maintenance activities performed by certain entities that do not require a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government—Notification.
- 90.58.360 Existing requirements for permits, certificates, etc., not obviated.
- 90.58.370 Processing of permits or authorizations for emergency water withdrawal and facilities to be expedited.
- 90.58.380 Adoption of wetland manual.
- 90.58.515 Watershed restoration projects—Exemption.
- 90.58.550 Oil or natural gas exploration in marine waters—Definitions—Application for permit—Requirements—Review—Enforcement.

- 90.58.560 Oil or natural gas exploration—Violations of RCW 90.58.550—Penalty—Appeal.
- 90.58.570 Consultation before responding to federal coastal zone management certificates.
- 90.58.580 Shoreline restoration projects—Relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations.
- 90.58.590 Local governments authorized to adopt moratoria—Requirements—Public hearing.
- 90.58.600 Conformance with chapter 43.97 RCW required.
- 90.58.610 Relationship between shoreline master programs and development regulations under growth management act governed by RCW 36.70A.480.
- 90.58.620 New or amended master programs—Authorized provisions.
- 90.58.630 Shoreline master programs—Impact of sea level rise and storm severity.
- 90.58.900 Liberal construction—1971 ex.s. c 286.
- 90.58.920 Effective date—1971 ex.s. c 286.

*Marine oil pollution—Baseline study program: RCW 43.21A.405 through 43.21A.420.*

**Chapter 90.58 RCW**  
**SHORELINE MANAGEMENT ACT OF 1971**

**Sections**

- 90.58.010 Short title.
- 90.58.020 Legislative findings—State policy enunciated—Use preference.
- 90.58.030 Definitions and concepts.
- 90.58.040 Program applicable to shorelines of the state.
- 90.58.045 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.
- 90.58.050 Program as cooperative between local government and state—Responsibilities differentiated.
- 90.58.060 Review and adoption of guidelines—Public hearings, notice of—Amendments.
- 90.58.065 Application of guidelines and master programs to agricultural activities.
- 90.58.070 Local governments to submit letters of intent—Department to act upon failure of local government.
- 90.58.080 Timetable for local governments to develop or amend master programs—Review of master programs—Grants.
- 90.58.090 Approval of master program or segments or amendments—Procedure—Departmental alternatives when shorelines of statewide significance—Later adoption of master program supersedes departmental program.
- 90.58.100 Programs as constituting use regulations—Duties when preparing programs and amendments thereto—Program contents.
- 90.58.110 Development of program within two or more adjacent local government jurisdictions—Development of program in segments, when.
- 90.58.120 Adoption of rules, programs, etc., subject to RCW 34.05.310 through 34.05.395—Public hearings, notice of—Public inspection after approval or adoption.
- 90.58.130 Involvement of all persons and entities having interest, means.
- 90.58.140 Development permits—Grounds for granting—Administration by local government, conditions—Applications—Notices—Rescission—Approval when permit for variance or conditional use.
- 90.58.143 Time requirements—Substantial development permits, variances, conditional use permits.
- 90.58.147 Substantial development permit—Exemption for projects to improve fish or wildlife habitat or fish passage.
- 90.58.150 Selective commercial timber cutting, when.
- 90.58.160 Prohibition against seabed mining for hard minerals and surface drilling for oil or gas, where.
- 90.58.170 Shorelines hearings board—Established—Members—Chair—Quorum for decision—Expenses of members.
- 90.58.175 Rules and regulations.
- 90.58.180 Review of granting, denying, or rescinding permits by shorelines hearings board—Board to act—Local government appeals to board—Grounds for declaring rule, regulation, or guideline invalid—Appeals to court.

- 90.58.185 Appeals involving single-family residences, involving penalties of fifteen thousand dollars or less, or other designated cases—Composition of board—Rules to expedite appeals.
- 90.58.190 Appeal of department's decision to adopt or amend a master program.
- 90.58.195 Shoreline master plan review—Local governments with coastal waters or coastal shorelines.
- 90.58.200 Rules and regulations.
- 90.58.210 Court actions to ensure against conflicting uses and to enforce—Civil penalty—Review.
- 90.58.220 General penalty.
- 90.58.230 Violators liable for damages resulting from violation—Attorney's fees and costs.
- 90.58.240 Additional authority granted department and local governments.
- 90.58.250 Intent—Department to cooperate with local governments—Grants for development of master programs.
- 90.58.260 State to represent its interest before federal agencies, interstate agencies and courts.
- 90.58.270 Nonapplication to certain structures, docks, developments, etc., placed in navigable waters—Nonapplication to certain rights of action, authority—Floating homes and floating on-water residences must be classified as a conforming preferred use.
- 90.58.280 Application to all state agencies, counties, public and municipal corporations.
- 90.58.290 Restrictions as affecting fair market value of property.
- 90.58.300 Department as regulating state agency—Special authority.
- 90.58.310 Designation of shorelines of statewide significance by legislature—Recommendation by director, procedure.
- 90.58.320 Height limitation respecting permits.
- 90.58.340 Use policies for land adjacent to shorelines, development of.
- 90.58.350 Nonapplication to treaty rights.
- 90.58.355 Persons, projects, and activities not required to obtain certain permits, variances, letters of exemption, or other local review.
- 90.58.356 Projects and activities not required to obtain certain permits, variances, letters of exemption, or other local review—Written notice, when required.
- 90.58.357 Maintenance activities performed by certain entities that do not require a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government—Notification.
- 90.58.360 Existing requirements for permits, certificates, etc., not obviated.
- 90.58.370 Processing of permits or authorizations for emergency water withdrawal and facilities to be expedited.
- 90.58.380 Adoption of wetland manual.
- 90.58.515 Watershed restoration projects—Exemption.
- 90.58.550 Oil or natural gas exploration in marine waters—Definitions—Application for permit—Requirements—Review—Enforcement.



- 90.58.560 Oil or natural gas exploration—Violations of RCW 90.58.550—Penalty—Appeal.
- 90.58.570 Consultation before responding to federal coastal zone management certificates.
- 90.58.580 Shoreline restoration projects—Relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations.
- 90.58.590 Local governments authorized to adopt moratoria—Requirements—Public hearing.
- 90.58.600 Conformance with chapter 43.97 RCW required.
- 90.58.610 Relationship between shoreline master programs and development regulations under growth management act governed by RCW 36.70A.480.
- 90.58.620 New or amended master programs—Authorized provisions.
- 90.58.630 Shoreline master programs—Impact of sea level rise and storm severity.
- 90.58.900 Liberal construction—1971 ex.s. c 286.
- 90.58.920 Effective date—1971 ex.s. c 286.

*Marine oil pollution—Baseline study program: RCW 43.21A.405 through 43.21A.420.*

**RCW 90.58.010 Short title.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Shoreline Management Act of 1971". [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 1.]

**RCW 90.58.020 Legislative findings—State policy enunciated—Use preference.** The legislature finds that the shorelines of the state are among the most valuable and fragile of its natural resources and that there is great concern throughout the state relating to their utilization, protection, restoration, and preservation. In addition it finds that ever increasing pressures of additional uses are being placed on the shorelines necessitating increased coordination in the management and development of the shorelines of the state. The legislature further finds that much of the shorelines of the state and the uplands adjacent thereto are in private ownership; that unrestricted construction on the privately owned or publicly owned shorelines of the state is not in the best public interest; and therefore, coordinated planning is necessary in order to protect the public interest associated with the shorelines of the state while, at the same time, recognizing and protecting private property rights consistent with the public interest. There is, therefore, a clear and urgent demand for a planned, rational, and concerted effort, jointly performed by federal, state, and local governments, to prevent the inherent harm in an uncoordinated and piecemeal development of the state's shorelines.

It is the policy of the state to provide for the management of the shorelines of the state by planning for and fostering all reasonable and appropriate uses. This policy is designed to insure the development of these shorelines in a manner which, while allowing for limited reduction of rights of the public in the navigable waters, will promote and enhance the public interest. This policy contemplates protecting against adverse effects to the public health, the land and its vegetation and wildlife, and the waters of the state and their

aquatic life, while protecting generally public rights of navigation and corollary rights incidental thereto.

The legislature declares that the interest of all of the people shall be paramount in the management of shorelines of statewide significance. The department, in adopting guidelines for shorelines of statewide significance, and local government, in developing master programs for shorelines of statewide significance, shall give preference to uses in the following order of preference which:

- (1) Recognize and protect the statewide interest over local interest;
- (2) Preserve the natural character of the shoreline;
- (3) Result in long term over short term benefit;
- (4) Protect the resources and ecology of the shoreline;
- (5) Increase public access to publicly owned areas of the shorelines;
- (6) Increase recreational opportunities for the public in the shoreline;
- (7) Provide for any other element as defined in RCW 90.58.100 deemed appropriate or necessary.

In the implementation of this policy the public's opportunity to enjoy the physical and aesthetic qualities of natural shorelines of the state shall be preserved to the greatest extent feasible consistent with the overall best interest of the state and the people generally. To this end uses shall be preferred which are consistent with control of pollution and prevention of damage to the natural environment, or are unique to or dependent upon use of the state's shoreline. Alterations of the natural condition of the shorelines of the state, in those limited instances when authorized, shall be given priority for single-family residences and their appurtenant structures, ports, shoreline recreational uses including but not limited to parks, marinas, piers, and other improvements facilitating public access to shorelines of the state, industrial and commercial developments which are particularly dependent on their location on or use of the shorelines of the state and other development that will provide an opportunity for substantial numbers of the people to enjoy the shorelines of the state. Alterations of the natural condition of the shorelines and shorelands of the state shall be recognized by the department. Shorelines and shorelands of the state shall be appropriately classified and these classifications shall be revised when circumstances warrant regardless of whether the change in circumstances occurs through man-made causes or natural causes. Any areas resulting from alterations of the natural condition of the shorelines and shorelands of the state no longer meeting the definition of "shorelines of the state" shall not be subject to the provisions of chapter 90.58 RCW.

Permitted uses in the shorelines of the state shall be designed and conducted in a manner to minimize, insofar as practical, any resultant damage to the ecology and environment of the shoreline area and any interference with the public's use of the water. [1995 c 347 § 301; 1992 c 105 § 1; 1982 1st ex.s. c 13 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 2.]

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law**  
—1995 c 347: See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**RCW 90.58.030 Definitions and concepts.** As used in this chapter, unless the context otherwise requires, the following definitions and concepts apply:

(1) Administration:

(a) "Department" means the department of ecology;

(b) "Director" means the director of the department of ecology;

(c) "Hearings board" means the shorelines hearings board established by this chapter;

(d) "Local government" means any county, incorporated city, or town which contains within its boundaries any lands or waters subject to this chapter;

(e) "Person" means an individual, partnership, corporation, association, organization, cooperative, public or municipal corporation, or agency of the state or local governmental unit however designated.

(2) Geographical:

(a) "Extreme low tide" means the lowest line on the land reached by a receding tide;

(b) "Floodway" means the area, as identified in a master program, that either: (i) Has been established in federal emergency management agency flood insurance rate maps or floodway maps; or (ii) consists of those portions of a river valley lying streamward from the outer limits of a watercourse upon which flood waters are carried during periods of flooding that occur with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually, said floodway being identified, under normal condition, by changes in surface soil conditions or changes in types or quality of vegetative ground cover condition, topography, or other indicators of flooding that occurs with reasonable regularity, although not necessarily annually. Regardless of the method used to identify the floodway, the floodway shall not include those lands that can reasonably be expected to be protected from flood waters by flood control devices maintained by or maintained under license from the federal government, the state, or a political subdivision of the state;

(c) "Ordinary high water mark" on all lakes, streams, and tidal water is that mark that will be found by examining the bed and banks and ascertaining where the presence and action of waters are so common and usual, and so long continued in all ordinary years, as to mark upon the soil a character distinct from that of the abutting upland, in respect to vegetation as that condition exists on June 1, 1971, as it may naturally change thereafter, or as it may change thereafter in accordance with permits issued by a local government or the department: PROVIDED, That in any area where the ordinary high water mark cannot be found, the ordinary high water mark adjoining salt water shall be the line of mean higher high tide and the ordinary high water mark adjoining fresh water shall be the line of mean high water;

(d) "Shorelands" or "shoreland areas" means those lands extending landward for two hundred feet in all directions as measured on a horizontal plane from the ordinary high water mark; floodways and contiguous floodplain areas landward two hundred feet from such floodways; and all wetlands and river deltas associated with the streams, lakes, and tidal waters which are subject to the provisions of this chapter; the same to be designated as to location by the department of ecology.

(i) Any county or city may determine that portion of a one-hundred-year-flood plain to be included in its master program as long

as such portion includes, as a minimum, the floodway and the adjacent land extending landward two hundred feet therefrom.

(ii) Any city or county may also include in its master program land necessary for buffers for critical areas, as defined in chapter 36.70A RCW, that occur within shorelines of the state, provided that forest practices regulated under chapter 76.09 RCW, except conversions to nonforestland use, on lands subject to the provisions of this subsection (2)(d)(ii) are not subject to additional regulations under this chapter;

(e) "Shorelines" means all of the water areas of the state, including reservoirs, and their associated shorelands, together with the lands underlying them; except (i) shorelines of statewide significance; (ii) shorelines on segments of streams upstream of a point where the mean annual flow is twenty cubic feet per second or less and the wetlands associated with such upstream segments; and (iii) shorelines on lakes less than twenty acres in size and wetlands associated with such small lakes;

(f) "Shorelines of statewide significance" means the following shorelines of the state:

(i) The area between the ordinary high water mark and the western boundary of the state from Cape Disappointment on the south to Cape Flattery on the north, including harbors, bays, estuaries, and inlets;

(ii) Those areas of Puget Sound and adjacent salt waters and the Strait of Juan de Fuca between the ordinary high water mark and the line of extreme low tide as follows:

(A) Nisqually Delta—from DeWolf Bight to Tatsolo Point,

(B) Birch Bay—from Point Whitehorn to Birch Point,

(C) Hood Canal—from Tala Point to Foulweather Bluff,

(D) Skagit Bay and adjacent area—from Brown Point to Yokeko Point, and

(E) Padilla Bay—from March Point to William Point;

(iii) Those areas of Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca and adjacent salt waters north to the Canadian line and lying seaward from the line of extreme low tide;

(iv) Those lakes, whether natural, artificial, or a combination thereof, with a surface acreage of one thousand acres or more measured at the ordinary high water mark;

(v) Those natural rivers or segments thereof as follows:

(A) Any west of the crest of the Cascade range downstream of a point where the mean annual flow is measured at one thousand cubic feet per second or more,

(B) Any east of the crest of the Cascade range downstream of a point where the annual flow is measured at two hundred cubic feet per second or more, or those portions of rivers east of the crest of the Cascade range downstream from the first three hundred square miles of drainage area, whichever is longer;

(vi) Those shorelands associated with (f)(i), (ii), (iv), and (v) of this subsection (2);

(g) "Shorelines of the state" are the total of all "shorelines" and "shorelines of statewide significance" within the state;

(h) "Wetlands" means areas that are inundated or saturated by surface water or groundwater at a frequency and duration sufficient to support, and that under normal circumstances do support, a prevalence of vegetation typically adapted for life in saturated soil conditions. Wetlands generally include swamps, marshes, bogs, and similar areas. Wetlands do not include those artificial wetlands intentionally

created from nonwetland sites, including, but not limited to, irrigation and drainage ditches, grass-lined swales, canals, detention facilities, wastewater treatment facilities, farm ponds, and landscape amenities, or those wetlands created after July 1, 1990, that were unintentionally created as a result of the construction of a road, street, or highway. Wetlands may include those artificial wetlands intentionally created from nonwetland areas to mitigate the conversion of wetlands.

(3) Procedural terms:

(a) "Development" means a use consisting of the construction or exterior alteration of structures; dredging; drilling; dumping; filling; removal of any sand, gravel, or minerals; bulkheading; driving of piling; placing of obstructions; or any project of a permanent or temporary nature which interferes with the normal public use of the surface of the waters overlying lands subject to this chapter at any state of water level;

(b) "Guidelines" means those standards adopted to implement the policy of this chapter for regulation of use of the shorelines of the state prior to adoption of master programs. Such standards shall also provide criteria to local governments and the department in developing master programs;

(c) "Master program" means the comprehensive use plan for a described area, and the use regulations together with maps, diagrams, charts, or other descriptive material and text, a statement of desired goals, and standards developed in accordance with the policies enunciated in RCW 90.58.020. "Comprehensive master program update" means a master program that fully achieves the procedural and substantive requirements of the department guidelines effective January 17, 2004, as now or hereafter amended;

(d) "State master program" is the cumulative total of all master programs approved or adopted by the department of ecology;

(e) "Substantial development" means any development of which the total cost or fair market value exceeds five thousand dollars, or any development which materially interferes with the normal public use of the water or shorelines of the state. The dollar threshold established in this subsection (3)(e) must be adjusted for inflation by the office of financial management every five years, beginning July 1, 2007, based upon changes in the consumer price index during that time period. "Consumer price index" means, for any calendar year, that year's annual average consumer price index, Seattle, Washington area, for urban wage earners and clerical workers, all items, compiled by the bureau of labor and statistics, United States department of labor. The office of financial management must calculate the new dollar threshold and transmit it to the office of the code reviser for publication in the Washington State Register at least one month before the new dollar threshold is to take effect. The following shall not be considered substantial developments for the purpose of this chapter:

(i) Normal maintenance or repair of existing structures or developments, including damage by accident, fire, or elements;

(ii) Construction of the normal protective bulkhead common to single-family residences;

(iii) Emergency construction necessary to protect property from damage by the elements;

(iv) Construction and practices normal or necessary for farming, irrigation, and ranching activities, including agricultural service roads and utilities on shorelands, and the construction and maintenance of irrigation structures including but not limited to head

gates, pumping facilities, and irrigation channels. A feedlot of any size, all processing plants, other activities of a commercial nature, alteration of the contour of the shorelands by leveling or filling other than that which results from normal cultivation, shall not be considered normal or necessary farming or ranching activities. A feedlot shall be an enclosure or facility used or capable of being used for feeding livestock hay, grain, silage, or other livestock feed, but shall not include land for growing crops or vegetation for livestock feeding and/or grazing, nor shall it include normal livestock wintering operations;

(v) Construction or modification of navigational aids such as channel markers and anchor buoys;

(vi) Construction on shorelands by an owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of a single-family residence for his own use or for the use of his or her family, which residence does not exceed a height of thirty-five feet above average grade level and which meets all requirements of the state agency or local government having jurisdiction thereof, other than requirements imposed pursuant to this chapter;

(vii) Construction of a dock, including a community dock, designed for pleasure craft only, for the private noncommercial use of the owner, lessee, or contract purchaser of single and multiple family residences. This exception applies if either: (A) In salt waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed two thousand five hundred dollars; or (B) in fresh waters, the fair market value of the dock does not exceed: (I) Twenty thousand dollars for docks that are constructed to replace existing docks, are of equal or lesser square footage than the existing dock being replaced, and are located in a county, city, or town that has updated its master program consistent with the master program guidelines in chapter 173-26 WAC as adopted in 2003; or (II) ten thousand dollars for all other docks constructed in fresh waters. However, if subsequent construction occurs within five years of completion of the prior construction, and the combined fair market value of the subsequent and prior construction exceeds the amount specified in either (e)(vii)(A) or (B) of this subsection (3), the subsequent construction shall be considered a substantial development for the purpose of this chapter. All dollar thresholds under (e)(vii)(B) of this subsection (3) must be adjusted for inflation by the office of financial management every five years, beginning July 1, 2018, based upon changes in the consumer price index during that time period. "Consumer price index" means, for any calendar year, that year's annual average consumer price index, Seattle, Washington area, for urban wage earners and clerical workers, all items, compiled by the bureau of labor and statistics, United States department of labor. The office of financial management must calculate the new dollar thresholds, rounded to the nearest hundred dollar, and transmit them to the office of the code reviser for publication in the Washington State Register at least one month before the new dollar thresholds are to take effect;

(viii) Operation, maintenance, or construction of canals, waterways, drains, reservoirs, or other facilities that now exist or are hereafter created or developed as a part of an irrigation system for the primary purpose of making use of system waters, including return flow and artificially stored groundwater for the irrigation of lands;

(ix) The marking of property lines or corners on state owned lands, when such marking does not significantly interfere with normal public use of the surface of the water;

(x) Operation and maintenance of any system of dikes, ditches, drains, or other facilities existing on September 8, 1975, which were created, developed, or utilized primarily as a part of an agricultural drainage or diking system;

(xi) Site exploration and investigation activities that are prerequisite to preparation of an application for development authorization under this chapter, if:

(A) The activity does not interfere with the normal public use of the surface waters;

(B) The activity will have no significant adverse impact on the environment including, but not limited to, fish, wildlife, fish or wildlife habitat, water quality, and aesthetic values;

(C) The activity does not involve the installation of a structure, and upon completion of the activity the vegetation and land configuration of the site are restored to conditions existing before the activity;

(D) A private entity seeking development authorization under this section first posts a performance bond or provides other evidence of financial responsibility to the local jurisdiction to ensure that the site is restored to preexisting conditions; and

(E) The activity is not subject to the permit requirements of RCW 90.58.550;

(xii) The process of removing or controlling an aquatic noxious weed, as defined in RCW 17.26.020, through the use of an herbicide or other treatment methods applicable to weed control that are recommended by a final environmental impact statement published by the department of agriculture or the department jointly with other state agencies under chapter 43.21C RCW;

(xiii) The external or internal retrofitting of an existing structure with the exclusive purpose of compliance with the Americans with disabilities act of 1990 (42 U.S.C. Sec. 12101 et seq.) or to otherwise provide physical access to the structure by individuals with disabilities. [2016 c 193 § 1; 2014 c 23 § 1. Prior: 2010 c 107 § 3; 2007 c 328 § 1; 2003 c 321 § 2; 2002 c 230 § 2; 1996 c 265 § 1; prior: 1995 c 382 § 10; 1995 c 255 § 5; 1995 c 237 § 1; 1987 c 474 § 1; 1986 c 292 § 1; 1982 1st ex.s. c 13 § 2; 1980 c 2 § 3; 1979 ex.s. c 84 § 3; 1975 1st ex.s. c 182 § 1; 1973 1st ex.s. c 203 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 3.]

**Intent—Retroactive application—Effective date—2010 c 107:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.480.

**Finding—Intent—2003 c 321:** "(1) The legislature finds that the final decision and order in *Everett Shorelines Coalition v. City of Everett and Washington State Department of Ecology*, Case No. 02-3-0009c, issued on January 9, 2003, by the central Puget Sound growth management hearings board was a case of first impression interpreting the addition of the shoreline management act into the growth management act, and that the board considered the appeal and issued its final order and decision without the benefit of shorelines guidelines to provide guidance on the implementation of the shoreline management act and the adoption of shoreline master programs.

(2) This act is intended to affirm the legislature's intent that:

(a) The shoreline management act be read, interpreted, applied, and implemented as a whole consistent with decisions of the shoreline[s] hearings board and Washington courts prior to the decision of the central Puget Sound growth management hearings board in *Everett Shorelines Coalition v. City of Everett and Washington State Department of Ecology*;

(b) The goals of the growth management act, including the goals and policies of the shoreline management act, set forth in RCW 36.70A.020 and included in RCW 36.70A.020 by RCW 36.70A.480, continue to be listed without an order of priority; and

(c) Shorelines of statewide significance may include critical areas as defined by RCW 36.70A.030(5), but that shorelines of statewide significance are not critical areas simply because they are shorelines of statewide significance.

(3) The legislature intends that critical areas within the jurisdiction of the shoreline management act shall be governed by the shoreline management act and that critical areas outside the jurisdiction of the shoreline management act shall be governed by the growth management act. The legislature further intends that the quality of information currently required by the shoreline management act to be applied to the protection of critical areas within shorelines of the state shall not be limited or changed by the provisions of the growth management act." [2003 c 321 § 1.]

**Finding—Intent—2002 c 230:** "The legislature finds that the dollar threshold for what constitutes substantial development under the shoreline management act has not been changed since 1986. The legislature recognizes that the effects of inflation have brought in many activities under the jurisdiction of chapter 90.58 RCW that would have been exempted under its original provisions. It is the intent of the legislature to modify the current dollar threshold for what constitutes substantial development under the shoreline management act, and to have this threshold readjusted on a five-year basis." [2002 c 230 § 1.]

**Effective date—1995 c 255:** See RCW 17.26.901.

**Severability—1986 c 292:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [1986 c 292 § 5.]

**Intent—1980 c 2; 1979 ex.s. c 84:** "The legislature finds that high tides and hurricane force winds on February 13, 1979, caused conditions resulting in the catastrophic destruction of the Hood Canal bridge on state route 104, a state highway on the federal-aid system; and, as a consequence, the state of Washington has sustained a sudden and complete failure of a major segment of highway system with a disastrous impact on transportation services between the counties of Washington's Olympic peninsula and the remainder of the state. The governor has by proclamation found that these conditions constitute an emergency. To minimize the economic loss and hardship to residents of the Puget Sound and Olympic peninsula regions, it is the intent of 1979 ex.s. c 84 to authorize the department of transportation to undertake immediately all necessary actions to restore interim transportation services across Hood Canal and Puget Sound and upon the



Kitsap and Olympic peninsulas and to design and reconstruct a permanent bridge at the site of the original Hood Canal bridge. The department of transportation is directed to proceed with such actions in an environmentally responsible manner that would meet the substantive objectives of the state environmental policy act and the shorelines management act, and shall consult with the department of ecology in the planning process. The exemptions from the state environmental policy act and the shorelines management act contained in RCW 43.21C.032 and 90.58.030 are intended to approve and ratify the timely actions of the department of transportation taken and to be taken to restore interim transportation services and to reconstruct a permanent Hood Canal bridge without procedural delays." [1980 c 2 § 1; 1979 ex.s. c 84 § 1.]

**RCW 90.58.040 Program applicable to shorelines of the state.**

The shoreline management program of this chapter shall apply to the shorelines of the state as defined in this chapter. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 4.]

**RCW 90.58.045 Environmental excellence program agreements—Effect on chapter.** Notwithstanding any other provision of law, any legal requirement under this chapter, including any standard, limitation, rule, or order is superseded and replaced in accordance with the terms and provisions of an environmental excellence program agreement, entered into under chapter 43.21K RCW. [1997 c 381 § 28.]

**Purpose—1997 c 381:** See RCW 43.21K.005.

**RCW 90.58.050 Program as cooperative between local government and state—Responsibilities differentiated.** This chapter establishes a cooperative program of shoreline management between local government and the state. Local government shall have the primary responsibility for initiating the planning required by this chapter and administering the regulatory program consistent with the policy and provisions of this chapter. The department shall act primarily in a supportive and review capacity with an emphasis on providing assistance to local government and on insuring compliance with the policy and provisions of this chapter. [1995 c 347 § 303; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 5.]

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**RCW 90.58.060 Review and adoption of guidelines—Public hearings, notice of—Amendments.** (1) The department shall periodically review and adopt guidelines consistent with RCW 90.58.020, containing the elements specified in RCW 90.58.100 for:

- (a) Development of master programs for regulation of the uses of shorelines; and
- (b) Development of master programs for regulation of the uses of shorelines of statewide significance.

(2) Before adopting or amending guidelines under this section, the department shall provide an opportunity for public review and comment as follows:

(a) The department shall mail copies of the proposal to all cities, counties, and federally recognized Indian tribes, and to any other person who has requested a copy, and shall publish the proposed guidelines in the Washington state register. Comments shall be submitted in writing to the department within sixty days from the date the proposal has been published in the register.

(b) The department shall hold at least four public hearings on the proposal in different locations throughout the state to provide a reasonable opportunity for residents in all parts of the state to present statements and views on the proposed guidelines. Notice of the hearings shall be published at least once in each of the three weeks immediately preceding the hearing in one or more newspapers of general circulation in each county of the state. If an amendment to the guidelines addresses an issue limited to one geographic area, the number and location of hearings may be adjusted consistent with the intent of this subsection to assure all parties a reasonable opportunity to comment on the proposed amendment. The department shall accept written comments on the proposal during the sixty-day public comment period and for seven days after the final public hearing.

(c) At the conclusion of the public comment period, the department shall review the comments received and modify the proposal consistent with the provisions of this chapter. The proposal shall then be published for adoption pursuant to the provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW.

(3) The department may adopt amendments to the guidelines not more than once each year. Such amendments shall be limited to: (a) Addressing technical or procedural issues that result from the review and adoption of master programs under the guidelines; or (b) issues of guideline compliance with statutory provisions. [2003 c 262 § 1; 1995 c 347 § 304; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 6.]

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law**  
—1995 c 347: See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**RCW 90.58.065 Application of guidelines and master programs to agricultural activities.** (1) The guidelines adopted by the department and master programs developed or amended by local governments according to RCW 90.58.080 shall not require modification of or limit agricultural activities occurring on agricultural lands. In jurisdictions where agricultural activities occur, master programs developed or amended after June 13, 2002, shall include provisions addressing new agricultural activities on land not meeting the definition of agricultural land, conversion of agricultural lands to other uses, and development not meeting the definition of agricultural activities. Nothing in this section limits or changes the terms of the \*current exception to the definition of substantial development in RCW 90.58.030(3)(e)(iv). This section applies only to this chapter, and shall not affect any other authority of local governments.

(2) For the purposes of this section:

(a) "Agricultural activities" means agricultural uses and practices including, but not limited to: Producing, breeding, or increasing agricultural products; rotating and changing agricultural

crops; allowing land used for agricultural activities to lie fallow in which it is plowed and tilled but left unseeded; allowing land used for agricultural activities to lie dormant as a result of adverse agricultural market conditions; allowing land used for agricultural activities to lie dormant because the land is enrolled in a local, state, or federal conservation program, or the land is subject to a conservation easement; conducting agricultural operations; maintaining, repairing, and replacing agricultural equipment; maintaining, repairing, and replacing agricultural facilities, provided that the replacement facility is no closer to the shoreline than the original facility; and maintaining agricultural lands under production or cultivation;

(b) "Agricultural products" includes but is not limited to horticultural, viticultural, floricultural, vegetable, fruit, berry, grain, hops, hay, straw, turf, sod, seed, and apiary products; feed or forage for livestock; Christmas trees; hybrid cottonwood and similar hardwood trees grown as crops and harvested within twenty years of planting; and livestock including both the animals themselves and animal products including but not limited to meat, upland finfish, poultry and poultry products, and dairy products;

(c) "Agricultural equipment" and "agricultural facilities" includes, but is not limited to: (i) The following used in agricultural operations: Equipment; machinery; constructed shelters, buildings, and ponds; fences; upland finfish rearing facilities; water diversion, withdrawal, conveyance, and use equipment and facilities including but not limited to pumps, pipes, tapes, canals, ditches, and drains; (ii) corridors and facilities for transporting personnel, livestock, and equipment to, from, and within agricultural lands; (iii) farm residences and associated equipment, lands, and facilities; and (iv) roadside stands and on-farm markets for marketing fruit or vegetables; and

(d) "Agricultural land" means those specific land areas on which agriculture activities are conducted.

(3) The department and local governments shall assure that local shoreline master programs use definitions consistent with the definitions in this section. [2002 c 298 § 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** "Current" first appears in chapter 298, Laws of 2002.

**Implementation—2002 c 298:** "The provisions of this act do not become effective until the earlier of either January 1, 2004, or the date the department of ecology amends or updates chapter 173-16 or 173-26 WAC." [2002 c 298 § 2.]

**RCW 90.58.070 Local governments to submit letters of intent—Department to act upon failure of local government.** (1) Local governments are directed with regard to shorelines of the state in their various jurisdictions to submit to the director of the department, within six months from June 1, 1971, letters stating that they propose to complete an inventory and develop master programs for these shorelines as provided for in RCW 90.58.080.

(2) If any local government fails to submit a letter as provided in subsection (1) of this section, or fails to adopt a master program for the shorelines of the state within its jurisdiction in accordance with the time schedule provided in this chapter, the department shall

carry out the requirements of RCW 90.58.080 and adopt a master program for the shorelines of the state within the jurisdiction of the local government. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 7.]

**RCW 90.58.080 Timetable for local governments to develop or amend master programs—Review of master programs—Grants. (Effective until July 1, 2025.)** (1) Local governments shall develop or amend a master program for regulation of uses of the shorelines of the state consistent with the required elements of the guidelines adopted by the department in accordance with the schedule established by this section.

(2)(a) Subject to the provisions of subsections (5) and (6) of this section, each local government subject to this chapter shall develop or amend its master program for the regulation of uses of shorelines within its jurisdiction according to the following schedule:

(i) On or before December 1, 2005, for the city of Port Townsend, the city of Bellingham, the city of Everett, Snohomish county, and Whatcom county;

(ii) On or before December 1, 2009, for King county and the cities within King county greater in population than ten thousand;

(iii) Except as provided by (a)(i) and (ii) of this subsection, on or before December 1, 2011, for Clallam, Clark, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom counties and the cities within those counties;

(iv) On or before December 1, 2012, for Cowlitz, Island, Lewis, Mason, San Juan, Skagit, and Skamania counties and the cities within those counties;

(v) On or before December 1, 2013, for Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Spokane, and Yakima counties and the cities within those counties; and

(vi) On or before December 1, 2014, for Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties and the cities within those counties.

(b) Nothing in this subsection (2) shall preclude a local government from developing or amending its master program prior to the dates established by this subsection (2).

(3)(a) Following approval by the department of a new or amended master program, local governments required to develop or amend master programs on or before December 1, 2009, as provided by subsection (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section, shall be deemed to have complied with the schedule established by subsection (2)(a)(iii) of this section and shall not be required to complete master program amendments until the applicable dates established by subsection (4)(b) of this section. Any jurisdiction listed in subsection (2)(a)(i) of this section that has a new or amended master program approved by the department on or after March 1, 2002, but before July 27, 2003, shall not be required to complete master program amendments until the applicable date provided by subsection (4)(b) of this section.

(b) Following approval by the department of a new or amended master program, local governments choosing to develop or amend master programs on or before December 1, 2009, shall be deemed to have complied with the schedule established by subsection (2)(a)(iii) through (vi) of this section and shall not be required to complete

master program amendments until the applicable dates established by subsection (4)(b) of this section.

(4)(a) Following the updates required by subsection (2) of this section, local governments shall conduct a review of their master programs at least once every 10 years as required by (b) of this subsection. Following the review required by this subsection (4), local governments shall, if necessary, revise their master programs. The purpose of the review is:

(i) To assure that the master program complies with applicable law and guidelines in effect at the time of the review; and

(ii) To assure consistency of the master program with the local government's comprehensive plan and development regulations adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW, if applicable, and other local requirements.

(b) Counties and cities shall take action to review and, if necessary, revise their master programs as required by (a) of this subsection as follows:

(i) On or before June 30, 2019, and every 10 years thereafter, for King, Pierce, and Snohomish counties and the cities within those counties;

(ii) On or before June 30, 2020, and every 10 years thereafter, for Clallam, Clark, Island, Jefferson, Kitsap, Mason, San Juan, Skagit, Thurston, and Whatcom counties and the cities within those counties;

(iii) On or before June 30, 2021, and every 10 years thereafter, for Benton, Chelan, Cowlitz, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Lewis, Skamania, Spokane, and Yakima counties and the cities within those counties; and

(iv) On or before June 30, 2022, and every 10 years thereafter, for Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties and the cities within those counties.

(5) In meeting the update requirements of subsection (2) of this section, local governments are encouraged to begin the process of developing or amending their master programs early and are eligible for grants from the department as provided by RCW 90.58.250, subject to available funding. Except for those local governments listed in subsection (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section, the deadline for completion of the new or amended master programs shall be two years after the date the grant is approved by the department. Subsequent master program review dates shall not be altered by the provisions of this subsection.

(6) In meeting the update requirements of subsection (2) of this section, the following shall apply:

(a) Grants to local governments for developing and amending master programs pursuant to the schedule established by this section shall be provided at least two years before the adoption dates specified in subsection (2) of this section. To the extent possible, the department shall allocate grants within the amount appropriated for such purposes to provide reasonable and adequate funding to local governments that have indicated their intent to develop or amend master programs during the biennium according to the schedule established by subsection (2) of this section. Any local government that applies for but does not receive funding to comply with the provisions of subsection (2) of this section may delay the development or amendment of its master program until the following biennium.

(b) Local governments with delayed compliance dates as provided in (a) of this subsection shall be the first priority for funding in subsequent biennia, and the development or amendment compliance deadline for those local governments shall be two years after the date of grant approval.

(c) Failure of the local government to apply in a timely manner for a master program development or amendment grant in accordance with the requirements of the department shall not be considered a delay resulting from the provisions of (a) of this subsection.

(7) In meeting the update requirements of subsection (2) of this section, all local governments subject to the requirements of this chapter that have not developed or amended master programs on or after March 1, 2002, shall, no later than December 1, 2014, develop or amend their master programs to comply with guidelines adopted by the department after January 1, 2003.

(8) In meeting the update requirements of subsection (2) of this section, local governments may be provided an additional year beyond the deadlines in this section to complete their master program or amendment. The department shall grant the request if it determines that the local government is likely to adopt or amend its master program within the additional year. [2023 c 80 § 1; 2011 c 353 § 13; 2007 c 170 § 1; 2003 c 262 § 2; 1995 c 347 § 305; 1974 ex.s. c 61 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 8.]

**Expiration date—2023 c 80 § 1:** "Section 1 of this act expires July 1, 2025." [2023 c 80 § 3.]

**Intent—2011 c 353:** See note following RCW 36.70A.130.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**RCW 90.58.080 Timetable for local governments to develop or amend master programs—Review of master programs—Grants. (Effective July 1, 2025.)** (1) Local governments shall develop or amend a master program for regulation of uses of the shorelines of the state consistent with the required elements of the guidelines adopted by the department in accordance with the schedule established by this section.

(2)(a) Subject to the provisions of subsections (5) and (6) of this section, each local government subject to this chapter shall develop or amend its master program for the regulation of uses of shorelines within its jurisdiction according to the following schedule:

(i) On or before December 1, 2005, for the city of Port Townsend, the city of Bellingham, the city of Everett, Snohomish county, and Whatcom county;

(ii) On or before December 1, 2009, for King county and the cities within King county greater in population than ten thousand;

(iii) Except as provided by (a)(i) and (ii) of this subsection, on or before December 1, 2011, for Clallam, Clark, Jefferson, King, Kitsap, Pierce, Snohomish, Thurston, and Whatcom counties and the cities within those counties;

(iv) On or before December 1, 2012, for Cowlitz, Island, Lewis, Mason, San Juan, Skagit, and Skamania counties and the cities within those counties;

(v) On or before December 1, 2013, for Benton, Chelan, Douglas, Grant, Kittitas, Spokane, and Yakima counties and the cities within those counties; and

(vi) On or before December 1, 2014, for Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Franklin, Garfield, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Wahkiakum, Walla Walla, and Whitman counties and the cities within those counties.

(b) Nothing in this subsection (2) shall preclude a local government from developing or amending its master program prior to the dates established by this subsection (2).

(3) (a) Following approval by the department of a new or amended master program, local governments required to develop or amend master programs on or before December 1, 2009, as provided by subsection (2) (a) (i) and (ii) of this section, shall be deemed to have complied with the schedule established by subsection (2) (a) (iii) of this section and shall not be required to complete master program amendments until the applicable dates established by subsection (4) (b) of this section. Any jurisdiction listed in subsection (2) (a) (i) of this section that has a new or amended master program approved by the department on or after March 1, 2002, but before July 27, 2003, shall not be required to complete master program amendments until the applicable date provided by subsection (4) (b) of this section.

(b) Following approval by the department of a new or amended master program, local governments choosing to develop or amend master programs on or before December 1, 2009, shall be deemed to have complied with the schedule established by subsection (2) (a) (iii) through (vi) of this section and shall not be required to complete master program amendments until the applicable dates established by subsection (4) (b) of this section.

(4) (a) Following the updates required by subsection (2) of this section, local governments shall conduct a review of their master programs at least once every 10 years as required by (b) of this subsection. Following the review required by this subsection (4), local governments shall, if necessary, revise their master programs. The purpose of the review is:

(i) To assure that the master program complies with applicable law and guidelines in effect at the time of the review; and

(ii) To assure consistency of the master program with the local government's comprehensive plan and development regulations adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW, if applicable, and other local requirements.

(b) Counties and cities shall take action to review and, if necessary, revise their master programs as required by (a) of this subsection as follows:

(i) On or before June 30, 2029, and every 10 years thereafter, for King, Kitsap, Pierce, and Snohomish counties and the cities within those counties;

(ii) On or before June 30, 2030, and every 10 years thereafter, for Clallam, Clark, Island, Jefferson, Lewis, Mason, San Juan, Skagit, Thurston, and Whatcom counties and the cities within those counties;

(iii) On or before June 30, 2031, and every 10 years thereafter, for Benton, Chelan, Cowlitz, Douglas, Franklin, Kittitas, Skamania, Spokane, Walla Walla, and Yakima counties and the cities within those counties; and

(iv) On or before June 30, 2032, and every 10 years thereafter, for Adams, Asotin, Columbia, Ferry, Garfield, Grant, Grays Harbor, Klickitat, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pacific, Pend Oreille, Stevens, Wahkiakum, and Whitman counties and the cities within those counties.

(5) In meeting the review requirements of subsection (4) of this section, local governments are encouraged to begin the process of developing or amending their master programs early and are eligible for grants from the department as provided by RCW 90.58.250, subject to available funding. Except for those local governments listed in subsection (2)(a)(i) and (ii) of this section, the deadline for completion of the new or amended master programs shall be two years after the date the grant is approved by the department. Subsequent master program review dates shall not be altered by the provisions of this subsection.

(6) In meeting the review requirements of subsection (4) of this section, the following shall apply:

(a) Grants to local governments for reviewing master programs pursuant to the schedule established by this section shall be provided at least two years before the adoption dates specified in subsection (4) of this section. To the extent possible, the department shall allocate grants within the amount appropriated for such purposes to provide reasonable and adequate funding to local governments that have indicated their intent to develop or amend master programs during the biennium according to the schedule established by subsection (4) of this section. Any local government that applies for but does not receive funding to comply with the provisions of subsection (4) of this section may delay the development or amendment of its master program until the following biennium.

(b) Local governments with delayed compliance dates as provided in (a) of this subsection shall be the first priority for funding in subsequent biennia, and the periodic review compliance deadline for those local governments shall be two years after the date of grant approval.

(c) Failure of the local government to apply in a timely manner for a master program development or amendment grant in accordance with the requirements of the department shall not be considered a delay resulting from the provisions of (a) of this subsection.

(7) In meeting the update requirements of subsection (2) of this section, all local governments subject to the requirements of this chapter that have not developed or amended master programs on or after March 1, 2002, shall, no later than December 1, 2014, develop or amend their master programs to comply with guidelines adopted by the department after January 1, 2003.

(8) In meeting the review requirements of subsection (4) of this section, local governments may be provided an additional year beyond the deadlines in this section to complete their master program or amendment. The department shall grant the request if it determines that the local government is likely to adopt or amend its master program within the additional year. [2023 c 80 § 2; 2020 c 113 § 2; 2011 c 353 § 13; 2007 c 170 § 1; 2003 c 262 § 2; 1995 c 347 § 305; 1974 ex.s. c 61 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 8.]

**Effective date—2023 c 80 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2025." [2023 c 80 § 4.]



**Effective date—2020 c 113 § 2:** "Section 2 of this act takes effect July 1, 2025." [2020 c 113 § 3.]

**Intent—2011 c 353:** See note following RCW 36.70A.130.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**RCW 90.58.090 Approval of master program or segments or amendments—Procedure—Departmental alternatives when shorelines of statewide significance—Later adoption of master program supersedes departmental program.** (1) A master program, segment of a master program, or an amendment to a master program shall become effective when approved by the department as provided in subsection (7) of this section. Within the time period provided in RCW 90.58.080, each local government shall have submitted a master program, either totally or by segments, for all shorelines of the state within its jurisdiction to the department for review and approval.

The department shall strive to achieve final action on a submitted master program within one hundred eighty days of receipt and shall post an annual assessment related to this performance benchmark on the agency website.

(2) Upon receipt of a proposed master program or amendment, the department shall:

(a) Provide notice to and opportunity for written comment by all interested parties of record as a part of the local government review process for the proposal and to all persons, groups, and agencies that have requested in writing notice of proposed master programs or amendments generally or for a specific area, subject matter, or issue. The comment period shall be at least thirty days, unless the department determines that the level of complexity or controversy involved supports a shorter period;

(b) In the department's discretion, conduct a public hearing during the thirty-day comment period in the jurisdiction proposing the master program or amendment;

(c) Within fifteen days after the close of public comment, request the local government to review the issues identified by the public, interested parties, groups, and agencies and provide a written response as to how the proposal addresses the identified issues;

(d) Within thirty days after receipt of the local government response pursuant to (c) of this subsection, make written findings and conclusions regarding the consistency of the proposal with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and the applicable guidelines, provide a response to the issues identified in (c) of this subsection, and either approve the proposal as submitted, recommend specific changes necessary to make the proposal approvable, or deny approval of the proposal in those instances where no alteration of the proposal appears likely to be consistent with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and the applicable guidelines. The written findings and conclusions shall be provided to the local government, and made available to all interested persons, parties, groups, and agencies of record on the proposal;

(e) If the department recommends changes to the proposed master program or amendment, within thirty days after the department mails the written findings and conclusions to the local government, the local government may:

(i) Agree to the proposed changes by written notice to the department; or

(ii) Submit an alternative proposal. If, in the opinion of the department, the alternative is consistent with the purpose and intent of the changes originally submitted by the department and with this chapter it shall approve the changes and provide notice to all recipients of the written findings and conclusions. If the department determines the proposal is not consistent with the purpose and intent of the changes proposed by the department, the department may resubmit the proposal for public and agency review pursuant to this section or reject the proposal.

(3) The department shall approve the segment of a master program relating to shorelines unless it determines that the submitted segments are not consistent with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and the applicable guidelines.

(4) The department shall approve the segment of a master program relating to critical areas as defined by \*RCW 36.70A.030(5) provided the master program segment is consistent with RCW 90.58.020 and applicable shoreline guidelines, and if the segment provides a level of protection of critical areas at least equal to that provided by the local government's critical areas ordinances adopted and thereafter amended pursuant to RCW 36.70A.060(2).

(5) The department shall approve those segments of the master program relating to shorelines of statewide significance only after determining the program provides the optimum implementation of the policy of this chapter to satisfy the statewide interest. If the department does not approve a segment of a local government master program relating to a shoreline of statewide significance, the department may develop and by rule adopt an alternative to the local government's proposal.

(6) In the event a local government has not complied with the requirements of RCW 90.58.070 it may thereafter upon written notice to the department elect to adopt a master program for the shorelines within its jurisdiction, in which event it shall comply with the provisions established by this chapter for the adoption of a master program for such shorelines.

Upon approval of such master program by the department it shall supersede such master program as may have been adopted by the department for such shorelines.

(7) A master program or amendment to a master program takes effect when and in such form as approved or adopted by the department. The effective date is fourteen days from the date of the department's written notice of final action to the local government stating the department has approved or rejected the proposal. For master programs adopted by rule, the effective date is governed by RCW 34.05.380. The department's written notice to the local government must conspicuously and plainly state that it is the department's final decision and that there will be no further modifications to the proposal.

(a) Shoreline master programs that were adopted by the department prior to July 22, 1995, in accordance with the provisions of this section then in effect, shall be deemed approved by the department in accordance with the provisions of this section that became effective on that date.

(b) The department shall maintain a record of each master program, the action taken on any proposal for adoption or amendment of the master program, and any appeal of the department's action. The

department's approved document of record constitutes the official master program.

(8) Promptly after approval or disapproval of a local government's shoreline master program or amendment, the department shall publish a notice consistent with RCW 36.70A.290 that the shoreline master program or amendment has been approved or disapproved. This notice must be filed for all shoreline master programs or amendments. If the notice is for a local government that does not plan under RCW 36.70A.040, the department must, on the day the notice is published, notify the legislative authority of the applicable local government by telephone or electronic means, followed by written communication as necessary, to ensure that the local government has received the full written decision of the approval or disapproval. [2011 c 353 § 14; 2011 c 277 § 2; 2003 c 321 § 3; 1997 c 429 § 50; 1995 c 347 § 306; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 9.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) RCW 36.70A.030 was alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k), changing subsection (5) to subsection (6). RCW 36.70A.030 was subsequently amended by 2023 c 332 § 2 and 2023 c 228 § 14, changing subsection (6) to subsection (11).

(2) This section was amended by 2011 c 277 § 2 and by 2011 c 353 § 14, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Intent—2011 c 353:** See note following RCW 36.70A.130.

**Finding—Intent—2003 c 321:** See note following RCW 90.58.030.

**Severability—1997 c 429:** See note following RCW 36.70A.3201.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**RCW 90.58.100 Programs as constituting use regulations—Duties when preparing programs and amendments thereto—Program contents.** (1)

The master programs provided for in this chapter, when adopted or approved by the department shall constitute use regulations for the various shorelines of the state. In preparing the master programs, and any amendments thereto, the department and local governments shall to the extent feasible:

(a) Utilize a systematic interdisciplinary approach which will insure the integrated use of the natural and social sciences and the environmental design arts;

(b) Consult with and obtain the comments of any federal, state, regional, or local agency having any special expertise with respect to any environmental impact;

(c) Consider all plans, studies, surveys, inventories, and systems of classification made or being made by federal, state, regional, or local agencies, by private individuals, or by organizations dealing with pertinent shorelines of the state;

(d) Conduct or support such further research, studies, surveys, and interviews as are deemed necessary;

(e) Utilize all available information regarding hydrology, geography, topography, ecology, economics, and other pertinent data;

(f) Employ, when feasible, all appropriate, modern scientific data processing and computer techniques to store, index, analyze, and manage the information gathered.

(2) The master programs shall include, when appropriate, the following:

(a) An economic development element for the location and design of industries, projects of statewide significance, transportation facilities, port facilities, tourist facilities, commerce and other developments that are particularly dependent on their location on or use of the shorelines of the state;

(b) A public access element making provision for public access to publicly owned areas;

(c) A recreational element for the preservation and enlargement of recreational opportunities, including but not limited to parks, tidelands, beaches, and recreational areas;

(d) A circulation element consisting of the general location and extent of existing and proposed major thoroughfares, transportation routes, terminals, and other public utilities and facilities, all correlated with the shoreline use element;

(e) A use element which considers the proposed general distribution and general location and extent of the use on shorelines and adjacent land areas for housing, business, industry, transportation, agriculture, natural resources, recreation, education, public buildings and grounds, and other categories of public and private uses of the land;

(f) A conservation element for the preservation of natural resources, including but not limited to scenic vistas, aesthetics, and vital estuarine areas for fisheries and wildlife protection;

(g) An historic, cultural, scientific, and educational element for the protection and restoration of buildings, sites, and areas having historic, cultural, scientific, or educational values;

(h) An element that gives consideration to the statewide interest in the prevention and minimization of flood damages; and

(i) Any other element deemed appropriate or necessary to effectuate the policy of this chapter.

(3) The master programs shall include such map or maps, descriptive text, diagrams and charts, or other descriptive material as are necessary to provide for ease of understanding.

(4) Master programs will reflect that state-owned shorelines of the state are particularly adapted to providing wilderness beaches, ecological study areas, and other recreational activities for the public and will give appropriate special consideration to same.

(5) Each master program shall contain provisions to allow for the varying of the application of use regulations of the program, including provisions for permits for conditional uses and variances, to insure that strict implementation of a program will not create unnecessary hardships or thwart the policy enumerated in RCW 90.58.020. Any such varying shall be allowed only if extraordinary circumstances are shown and the public interest suffers no substantial detrimental effect. The concept of this subsection shall be incorporated in the rules adopted by the department relating to the establishment of a permit system as provided in RCW 90.58.140(3).

(6) Each master program shall contain standards governing the protection of single-family residences and appurtenant structures against damage or loss due to shoreline erosion. The standards shall govern the issuance of substantial development permits for shoreline protection, including structural methods such as construction of

bulkheads, and nonstructural methods of protection. The standards shall provide for methods which achieve effective and timely protection against loss or damage to single-family residences and appurtenant structures due to shoreline erosion. The standards shall provide a preference for permit issuance for measures to protect single-family residences occupied prior to January 1, 1992, where the proposed measure is designed to minimize harm to the shoreline natural environment. [2009 c 421 § 9; 1997 c 369 § 7; 1995 c 347 § 307; 1992 c 105 § 2; 1991 c 322 § 32; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 10.]

**Effective date—2009 c 421:** See note following RCW 43.157.005.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**Findings—Intent—1991 c 322:** See note following RCW 86.12.200.

*Project of statewide significance—Defined: RCW 43.157.010.*

**RCW 90.58.110 Development of program within two or more adjacent local government jurisdictions—Development of program in segments, when.** (1) Whenever it shall appear to the director that a master program should be developed for a region of the shorelines of the state which includes lands and waters located in two or more adjacent local government jurisdictions, the director shall designate such region and notify the appropriate units of local government thereof. It shall be the duty of the notified units to develop cooperatively an inventory and master program in accordance with and within the time provided in RCW 90.58.080.

(2) At the discretion of the department, a local government master program may be adopted in segments applicable to particular areas so that immediate attention may be given to those areas of the shorelines of the state in most need of a use regulation. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 11.]

**RCW 90.58.120 Adoption of rules, programs, etc., subject to RCW 34.05.310 through 34.05.395—Public hearings, notice of—Public inspection after approval or adoption.** All rules, regulations, designations, and guidelines, issued by the department, and master programs and amendments adopted by the department pursuant to RCW 90.58.070(2) or \*90.58.090(4) shall be adopted or approved in accordance with the provisions of RCW 34.05.310 through 34.05.395 insofar as such provisions are not inconsistent with the provisions of this chapter. In addition:

(1) Prior to the adoption by the department of a master program, or portion thereof pursuant to RCW 90.58.070(2) or \*90.58.090(4), at least one public hearing shall be held in each county affected by a program or portion thereof for the purpose of obtaining the views and comments of the public. Notice of each such hearing shall be published at least once in each of the three weeks immediately preceding the hearing in one or more newspapers of general circulation in the county in which the hearing is to be held.

(2) All guidelines, regulations, designations, or master programs adopted or approved under this chapter shall be available for public

inspection at the office of the department or the appropriate county and city. The terms "adopt" and "approve" for purposes of this section, shall include modifications and rescission of guidelines. [1995 c 347 § 308; 1989 c 175 § 182; 1975 1st ex.s. c 182 § 2; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 12.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 90.58.090 was amended by 2003 c 321 § 3, changing subsection (4) to subsection (5).

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**RCW 90.58.130 Involvement of all persons and entities having interest, means.** To insure that all persons and entities having an interest in the guidelines and master programs developed under this chapter are provided with a full opportunity for involvement in both their development and implementation, the department and local governments shall:

(1) Make reasonable efforts to inform the people of the state about the shoreline management program of this chapter and in the performance of the responsibilities provided in this chapter, shall not only invite but actively encourage participation by all persons and private groups and entities showing an interest in shoreline management programs of this chapter; and

(2) Invite and encourage participation by all agencies of federal, state, and local government, including municipal and public corporations, having interests or responsibilities relating to the shorelines of the state. State and local agencies are directed to participate fully to insure that their interests are fully considered by the department and local governments. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 13.]

**RCW 90.58.140 Development permits—Grounds for granting—Administration by local government, conditions—Applications—Notices—Rescission—Approval when permit for variance or conditional use.** (1) A development shall not be undertaken on the shorelines of the state unless it is consistent with the policy of this chapter and, after adoption or approval, as appropriate, the applicable guidelines, rules, or master program.

(2) A substantial development shall not be undertaken on shorelines of the state without first obtaining a permit from the government entity having administrative jurisdiction under this chapter.

A permit shall be granted:

(a) From June 1, 1971, until such time as an applicable master program has become effective, only when the development proposed is consistent with: (i) The policy of RCW 90.58.020; and (ii) after their adoption, the guidelines and rules of the department; and (iii) so far as can be ascertained, the master program being developed for the area;

(b) After adoption or approval, as appropriate, by the department of an applicable master program, only when the development proposed is consistent with the applicable master program and this chapter.

(3) The local government shall establish a program, consistent with rules adopted by the department, for the administration and enforcement of the permit system provided in this section. The administration of the system so established shall be performed exclusively by the local government.

(4) Except as otherwise specifically provided in subsection (11) of this section, the local government shall require notification of the public of all applications for permits governed by any permit system established pursuant to subsection (3) of this section by ensuring that notice of the application is given by at least one of the following methods:

(a) Mailing of the notice to the latest recorded real property owners as shown by the records of the county assessor within at least three hundred feet of the boundary of the property upon which the substantial development is proposed;

(b) Posting of the notice in a conspicuous manner on the property upon which the project is to be constructed; or

(c) Any other manner deemed appropriate by local authorities to accomplish the objectives of reasonable notice to adjacent landowners and the public.

The notices shall include a statement that any person desiring to submit written comments concerning an application, or desiring to receive notification of the final decision concerning an application as expeditiously as possible after the issuance of the decision, may submit the comments or requests for decisions to the local government within thirty days of the last date the notice is to be published pursuant to this subsection. The local government shall forward, in a timely manner following the issuance of a decision, a copy of the decision to each person who submits a request for the decision.

If a hearing is to be held on an application, notices of such a hearing shall include a statement that any person may submit oral or written comments on an application at the hearing.

(5) The system shall include provisions to assure that construction pursuant to a permit will not begin or be authorized until twenty-one days from the date the permit decision was filed as provided in subsection (6) of this section; or until all review proceedings are terminated if the proceedings were initiated within twenty-one days from the date of filing as defined in subsection (6) of this section except as follows:

(a) In the case of any permit issued to the state of Washington, department of transportation, for the construction and modification of SR 90 (I-90) on or adjacent to Lake Washington, the construction may begin after thirty days from the date of filing, and the permits are valid until December 31, 1995;

(b) (i) In the case of any permit or decision to issue any permit to the state of Washington, department of transportation, for the replacement of the floating bridge and landings of the state route number 520 Evergreen Point bridge on or adjacent to Lake Washington, the construction may begin twenty-one days from the date of filing. Any substantial development permit granted for the floating bridge and landings is deemed to have been granted on the date that the local government's decision to grant the permit is issued. This authorization to construct is limited to only those elements of the floating bridge and landings that do not preclude the department of transportation's selection of a four-lane alternative for state route number 520 between Interstate 5 and Medina. Additionally, the Washington state department of transportation shall not engage in or

contract for any construction on any portion of state route number 520 between Interstate 5 and the western landing of the floating bridge until the legislature has authorized the imposition of tolls on the Interstate 90 floating bridge and/or other funding sufficient to complete construction of the state route number 520 bridge replacement and HOV program. For the purposes of this subsection (5)(b), the "western landing of the floating bridge" means the least amount of new construction necessary to connect the new floating bridge to the existing state route number 520 and anchor the west end of the new floating bridge;

(ii) Nothing in this subsection (5)(b) precludes the shorelines hearings board from concluding that the project or any element of the project is inconsistent with the goals and policies of the shoreline management act or the local shoreline master program;

(iii) This subsection (5)(b) applies retroactively to any appeals filed after January 1, 2012, and to any appeals filed on or after March 23, 2012, and expires June 30, 2014;

(c)(i) In the case of permits for projects addressing significant public safety risks, as defined by the department of transportation, it is not in the public interest to delay construction until all review proceedings are terminated. In the case of any permit issued under this chapter or decision to issue any permit under this chapter for a transportation project of the Washington state department of transportation, construction may begin twenty-one days after the date of filing if all components of the project achieve a no net loss of shoreline ecological functions, as defined by department guidelines adopted pursuant to RCW 90.58.060 and as determined through the following process:

(A) The department of transportation, as part of the permit review process, must provide the local government with an assessment of how the project affects shoreline ecological functions. The assessment must include specific actions for avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating impacts to shoreline ecological functions, developed in consultation with the department, that ensure there is no net loss of shoreline ecological functions; and

(B) The local government, after reviewing the assessment required in (c)(i)(A) of this subsection and prior to the final issuance of all appropriate shoreline permits and variances, must determine that the project will result in no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

(ii) Nothing in this subsection (5)(c) precludes the shorelines hearings board from concluding that the shoreline project or any element of the project is inconsistent with this chapter, the local shoreline master program, chapter 43.21C RCW and its implementing regulations, or the applicable shoreline regulations.

(iii) This subsection (5)(c) does not apply to permit decisions for the replacement of the floating bridge and landings of the state route number 520 Evergreen Point bridge on or adjacent to Lake Washington;

(d) Except as authorized in (b) and (c) of this subsection, construction may be commenced no sooner than thirty days after the date of the appeal of the board's decision is filed if a permit is granted by the local government and (i) the granting of the permit is appealed to the shorelines hearings board within twenty-one days of the date of filing, (ii) the hearings board approves the granting of the permit by the local government or approves a portion of the substantial development for which the local government issued the permit, and (iii) an appeal for judicial review of the hearings board



decision is filed pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW. The appellant may request, within ten days of the filing of the appeal with the court, a hearing before the court to determine whether construction pursuant to the permit approved by the hearings board or to a revised permit issued pursuant to the order of the hearings board should not commence. If, at the conclusion of the hearing, the court finds that construction pursuant to such a permit would involve a significant, irreversible damaging of the environment, the court shall prohibit the permittee from commencing the construction pursuant to the approved or revised permit until all review proceedings are final. Construction pursuant to a permit revised at the direction of the hearings board may begin only on that portion of the substantial development for which the local government had originally issued the permit, and construction pursuant to such a revised permit on other portions of the substantial development may not begin until after all review proceedings are terminated. In such a hearing before the court, the burden of proving whether the construction may involve significant irreversible damage to the environment and demonstrating whether such construction would or would not be appropriate is on the appellant;

(e) Except as authorized in (b) and (c) of this subsection, if the permit is for a substantial development meeting the requirements of subsection (11) of this section, construction pursuant to that permit may not begin or be authorized until twenty-one days from the date the permit decision was filed as provided in subsection (6) of this section.

If a permittee begins construction pursuant to (a), (b), (c), (d), or (e) of this subsection, the construction is begun at the permittee's own risk. If, as a result of judicial review, the courts order the removal of any portion of the construction or the restoration of any portion of the environment involved or require the alteration of any portion of a substantial development constructed pursuant to a permit, the permittee is barred from recovering damages or costs involved in adhering to such requirements from the local government that granted the permit, the hearings board, or any appellant or intervener.

(6) Any decision on an application for a permit under the authority of this section, whether it is an approval or a denial, shall, concurrently with the transmittal of the ruling to the applicant, be filed with the department and the attorney general. This shall be accomplished by return receipt requested mail. A petition for review of such a decision must be commenced within twenty-one days from the date of filing of the decision.

(a) With regard to a permit other than a permit governed by subsection (10) of this section, "date of filing" as used in this section refers to the date of actual receipt by the department of the local government's decision.

(b) With regard to a permit for a variance or a conditional use governed by subsection (10) of this section, "date of filing" means the date the decision of the department is transmitted by the department to the local government.

(c) When a local government simultaneously transmits to the department its decision on a shoreline substantial development with its approval of either a shoreline conditional use permit or variance, or both, "date of filing" has the same meaning as defined in (b) of this subsection.

(d) The department shall notify in writing the local government and the applicant of the date of filing by telephone or electronic

means, followed by written communication as necessary, to ensure that the applicant has received the full written decision.

(7) Applicants for permits under this section have the burden of proving that a proposed substantial development is consistent with the criteria that must be met before a permit is granted. In any review of the granting or denial of an application for a permit as provided in RCW 90.58.180 (1) and (2), the person requesting the review has the burden of proof.

(8) Any permit may, after a hearing with adequate notice to the permittee and the public, be rescinded by the issuing authority upon the finding that a permittee has not complied with conditions of a permit. If the department is of the opinion that noncompliance exists, the department shall provide written notice to the local government and the permittee. If the department is of the opinion that the noncompliance continues to exist thirty days after the date of the notice, and the local government has taken no action to rescind the permit, the department may petition the hearings board for a rescission of the permit upon written notice of the petition to the local government and the permittee if the request by the department is made to the hearings board within fifteen days of the termination of the thirty-day notice to the local government.

(9) The holder of a certification from the governor pursuant to chapter 80.50 RCW shall not be required to obtain a permit under this section.

(10) Any permit for a variance or a conditional use issued with approval by a local government under their approved master program must be submitted to the department for its approval or disapproval.

(11)(a) An application for a substantial development permit for a limited utility extension or for the construction of a bulkhead or other measures to protect a single-family residence and its appurtenant structures from shoreline erosion shall be subject to the following procedures:

(i) The public comment period under subsection (4) of this section shall be twenty days. The notice provided under subsection (4) of this section shall state the manner in which the public may obtain a copy of the local government decision on the application no later than two days following its issuance;

(ii) The local government shall issue its decision to grant or deny the permit within twenty-one days of the last day of the comment period specified in (a)(i) of this subsection; and

(iii) If there is an appeal of the decision to grant or deny the permit to the local government legislative authority, the appeal shall be finally determined by the legislative authority within thirty days.

(b) For purposes of this section, a limited utility extension means the extension of a utility service that:

(i) Is categorically exempt under chapter 43.21C RCW for one or more of the following: Natural gas, electricity, telephone, water, or sewer;

(ii) Will serve an existing use in compliance with this chapter; and

(iii) Will not extend more than twenty-five hundred linear feet within the shorelines of the state.

(12) A permit under this section is not required in order to dispose of dredged materials at a disposal site approved through the cooperative planning process referenced in RCW 79.105.500, provided the dredged material disposal proponent obtains a valid site use authorization from the dredged material management program office

within the department of natural resources. [2019 c 225 § 1; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 15 § 7; 2012 c 84 § 2; 2011 c 277 § 3; 2010 c 210 § 36; 1995 c 347 § 309; 1992 c 105 § 3; 1990 c 201 § 2; 1988 c 22 § 1; 1984 c 7 § 386; 1977 ex.s. c 358 § 1; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 51 § 1; 1975 1st ex.s. c 182 § 3; 1973 2nd ex.s. c 19 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 14.]

**Effective date—Findings—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 15:** See notes following RCW 47.01.485.

**Findings—2012 c 84:** "In adopting the shoreline management act in 1971, the legislature declared that it is the policy of the state to provide for the management of the shorelines of the state by planning for and fostering all reasonable and appropriate uses, to ensure the development of these shorelines in a manner that will promote and enhance the public interest, and to protect against adverse effects to the public health, the land and its vegetation and wildlife, and the waters of the state and their aquatic life, while protecting generally public rights of navigation and corollary rights incidental thereto. The legislature declares that the policies recognized in 1971 are still vital to the protection of shorelines of the state.

The legislature recognizes that the replacement of the Evergreen Point bridge affects shorelines of the state and shorelines of statewide significance. However, the legislature finds that the state route number 520 corridor, including the Evergreen Point bridge, is a critical component of the state highway system and of the Puget Sound region's transportation infrastructure and is essential to maintaining and improving the region's and the state's economy.

The legislature further finds that the Evergreen Point bridge and its approaches are in danger of structural failure and that it is highly likely that the bridge will sustain serious structural damage from an earthquake or windstorm over the next fifteen years. The floating span sustained serious damage during the 1993 storm, which required major repair and retrofit. Retrofitting the span has added weight, which causes the floating span to sit lower in the water, increasing the likelihood of waves breaking over the span and causing traffic hazards. The floating span cannot be further retrofitted to withstand severe windstorms. Recent storms have continued to cause damage to the floating span, including cracks in the pontoons that allow water to enter the pontoons.

The legislature further finds that replacement of the floating span and its approaches presents unique challenges in that it is subject to narrow windows in which work on Lake Washington can be performed because of weather and environmental constraints.

The legislature further finds that significant delays in replacing the floating span and east approach of the Evergreen Point bridge must be avoided in order to: Avoid the catastrophic loss of the bridge; protect the safety of the traveling public; prevent injury, loss of life, and property damage; and provide for a strong economy in the Puget Sound region and in Washington state. In the past, the legislature has only provided exemptions to the shoreline management act for bridges that have sunk, and it is the intent of the legislature to only allow this exemption to the automatic stay provision of the shoreline management act because the Evergreen Point floating bridge is in danger of further damage and sinking." [2012 c 84 § 1.]

**Effective date—2012 c 84:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [March 23, 2012]." [2012 c 84 § 3.]

**Intent—Effective dates—Application—Pending cases and rules—2010 c 210:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**Finding—Intent—1990 c 201:** "The legislature finds that delays in substantial development permit review for the extension of vital utility services to existing and lawful uses within the shorelines of the state have caused hardship upon existing residents without serving any of the purposes and policies of the shoreline management act. It is the intent of this act to provide a more expeditious permit review process for that limited category of utility extension activities only, while fully preserving safeguards of public review and appeal rights regarding permit applications and decisions." [1990 c 201 § 1.]

**RCW 90.58.143 Time requirements—Substantial development permits, variances, conditional use permits.** (1) The time requirements of this section shall apply to all substantial development permits and to any development authorized pursuant to a variance or conditional use permit authorized under this chapter. Upon a finding of good cause, based on the requirements and circumstances of the project proposed and consistent with the policy and provisions of the master program and this chapter, local government may adopt different time limits from those set forth in subsections (2) and (3) of this section as a part of action on a substantial development permit.

(2) Construction activities shall be commenced or, where no construction activities are involved, the use or activity shall be commenced within two years of the effective date of a substantial development permit. However, local government may authorize a single extension for a period not to exceed one year based on reasonable factors, if a request for extension has been filed before the expiration date and notice of the proposed extension is given to parties of record on the substantial development permit and to the department.

(3) Authorization to conduct construction activities shall terminate five years after the effective date of a substantial development permit. However, local government may authorize a single extension for a period not to exceed one year based on reasonable factors, if a request for extension has been filed before the expiration date and notice of the proposed extension is given to parties of record and to the department.

(4) The effective date of a substantial development permit shall be the date of filing as provided in RCW 90.58.140(6). The permit time periods in subsections (2) and (3) of this section do not include the time during which a use or activity was not actually pursued due to the pendency of administrative appeals or legal actions or due to the need to obtain any other government permits and approvals for the development that authorize the development to proceed, including all

reasonably related administrative or legal actions on any such permits or approvals. [1997 c 429 § 51; 1996 c 62 § 1.]

**Severability—1997 c 429:** See note following RCW 36.70A.3201.

**RCW 90.58.147 Substantial development permit—Exemption for projects to improve fish or wildlife habitat or fish passage.** (1) A public or private project that is designed to improve fish or wildlife habitat or fish passage shall be exempt from the substantial development permit requirements of this chapter when all of the following apply:

(a) The project has been approved by the department of fish and wildlife or, for forest practices hydraulic projects within the scope of RCW 77.55.181, the department of natural resources if the local government notification provisions of RCW 77.55.181 are satisfied;

(b) The project has received hydraulic project approval by the department of fish and wildlife pursuant to chapter 77.55 RCW or approval of a forest practices hydraulic project within the scope of RCW 77.55.181 from the department of natural resources if the local government notification provisions of RCW 77.55.181 are satisfied; and

(c) The local government has determined that the project is substantially consistent with the local shoreline master program. The local government shall make such determination in a timely manner and provide it by letter to the project proponent.

(2) Fish habitat enhancement projects that conform to the provisions of RCW 77.55.181 are determined to be consistent with local shoreline master programs.

(3) Public projects for the primary purpose of fish passage improvement or fish passage barrier removal are exempt from the substantial development permit requirements of this chapter. [2021 c 289 § 2; 2019 c 150 § 2; 2003 c 39 § 49; 1998 c 249 § 4; 1995 c 333 § 1.]

**Findings—Purpose—Report—Effective date—1998 c 249:** See notes following RCW 77.55.181.

**RCW 90.58.150 Selective commercial timber cutting, when.** With respect to timber situated within two hundred feet abutting landward of the ordinary high water mark within shorelines of statewide significance, the department or local government shall allow only selective commercial timber cutting, so that no more than thirty percent of the merchantable trees may be harvested in any ten year period of time: PROVIDED, That other timber harvesting methods may be permitted in those limited instances where the topography, soil conditions or silviculture practices necessary for regeneration render selective logging ecologically detrimental: PROVIDED FURTHER, That clear cutting of timber which is solely incidental to the preparation of land for other uses authorized by this chapter may be permitted. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 15.]

**RCW 90.58.160 Prohibition against seabed mining for hard minerals and surface drilling for oil or gas, where.** (1) Seabed mining for hard minerals and surface drilling for oil or gas is

prohibited in the waters of Puget Sound north to the Canadian boundary and the Strait of Juan de Fuca seaward from the ordinary high water mark and on all lands within one thousand feet landward from said mark.

(2) (a) For purposes of this section, "hard minerals" means natural deposits of valuable minerals including, but not limited to, metals and placer deposits of metals, nonmetallic minerals, gemstones, ores, sediments, gold, silver, copper, lead, iron, manganese, silica, chrome, platinum, tungsten, zirconium, titanium, garnet, and phosphorus.

(b) "Hard minerals" does not include rock, gravel, sand, silt, coal, or hydrocarbons. [2021 c 181 § 3; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 16.]

**RCW 90.58.170 Shorelines hearings board—Established—Members—Chair—Quorum for decision—Expenses of members.** A shorelines hearings board sitting as a quasi-judicial body is hereby established within the environmental and land use hearings office under \*RCW 43.21B.005. The shorelines hearings board shall be made up of six members: Three members shall be members of the pollution control hearings board; two members, one appointed by the association of Washington cities and one appointed by the association of county commissioners, both to serve at the pleasure of the associations; and the commissioner of public lands or his or her designee. The chair of the pollution control hearings board shall be the chair of the shorelines hearings board. Except as provided in RCW 90.58.185, a decision must be agreed to by at least four members of the board to be final. The members of the shorelines hearings board shall receive the compensation, travel, and subsistence expenses as provided in RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. [2013 c 23 § 614; 1994 c 253 § 1; 1988 c 128 § 76; 1979 ex.s. c 47 § 6; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 17.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 43.21B.005 was amended by 2010 c 210 § 4, changing the "environmental hearings office" to the "environmental and land use hearings office", effective July 1, 2011.

**Intent—1979 ex.s. c 47:** See note following RCW 43.21B.005.

**RCW 90.58.175 Rules and regulations.** The shorelines hearings board may adopt rules and regulations governing the administrative practice and procedure in and before the board. [1973 1st ex.s. c 203 § 3.]

**RCW 90.58.180 Review of granting, denying, or rescinding permits by shorelines hearings board—Board to act—Local government appeals to board—Grounds for declaring rule, regulation, or guideline invalid—Appeals to court.** (1) Any person aggrieved by the granting, denying, or rescinding of a permit on shorelines of the state pursuant to RCW 90.58.140 may seek review from the shorelines hearings board by filing a petition for review within twenty-one days of the date of filing of the decision as defined in RCW 90.58.140(6).

Within seven days of the filing of any petition for review with the board as provided in this section pertaining to a final decision of a local government, the petitioner shall serve copies of the petition on the department, the office of the attorney general, and

the local government. The department and the attorney general may intervene to protect the public interest and ensure that the provisions of this chapter are complied with at any time within fifteen days from the date of the receipt by the department or the attorney general of a copy of the petition for review filed pursuant to this section. The shorelines hearings board shall schedule review proceedings on the petition for review without regard as to whether the period for the department or the attorney general to intervene has or has not expired.

(2) The department or the attorney general may obtain review of any final decision granting a permit, or granting or denying an application for a permit issued by a local government by filing a written petition with the shorelines hearings board and the appropriate local government within twenty-one days from the date the final decision was filed as provided in RCW 90.58.140(6).

(3) The review proceedings authorized in subsections (1) and (2) of this section are subject to the provisions of chapter 34.05 RCW pertaining to procedures in adjudicative proceedings. Judicial review of such proceedings of the shorelines hearings board is governed by chapter 34.05 RCW. The board shall issue its decision on the appeal authorized under subsections (1) and (2) of this section within one hundred eighty days after the date the petition is filed with the board or a petition to intervene is filed by the department or the attorney general, whichever is later. The time period may be extended by the board for a period of thirty days upon a showing of good cause or may be waived by the parties.

(4) Any person may appeal any rules, regulations, or guidelines adopted or approved by the department within thirty days of the date of the adoption or approval. The board shall make a final decision within sixty days following the hearing held thereon.

(5) The board shall find the rule, regulation, or guideline to be valid and enter a final decision to that effect unless it determines that the rule, regulation, or guideline:

- (a) Is clearly erroneous in light of the policy of this chapter;
- or
- (b) Constitutes an implementation of this chapter in violation of constitutional or statutory provisions; or
- (c) Is arbitrary and capricious; or
- (d) Was developed without fully considering and evaluating all material submitted to the department during public review and comment;
- or
- (e) Was not adopted in accordance with required procedures.

(6) If the board makes a determination under subsection (5)(a) through (e) of this section, it shall enter a final decision declaring the rule, regulation, or guideline invalid, remanding the rule, regulation, or guideline to the department with a statement of the reasons in support of the determination, and directing the department to adopt, after a thorough consultation with the affected local government and any other interested party, a new rule, regulation, or guideline consistent with the board's decision.

(7) A decision of the board on the validity of a rule, regulation, or guideline shall be subject to review in superior court, if authorized pursuant to chapter 34.05 RCW. A petition for review of the decision of the shorelines hearings board on a rule, regulation, or guideline shall be filed within thirty days after the date of final decision by the shorelines hearings board. [2011 c 277 § 4; 2010 c 210 § 37; 2003 c 393 § 22; 1997 c 199 § 1; 1995 c 347 § 310; 1994 c

253 § 3; 1989 c 175 § 183; 1986 c 292 § 2; 1975-'76 2nd ex.s. c 51 § 2; 1975 1st ex.s. c 182 § 4; 1973 1st ex.s. c 203 § 2; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 18.]

**Intent—Effective dates—Application—Pending cases and rules—**  
**2010 c 210:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law**  
**—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**Severability—1986 c 292:** See note following RCW 90.58.030.

*Appeal under this chapter also subject of appeal under state  
environmental policy act: RCW 43.21C.075.*

**RCW 90.58.185 Appeals involving single-family residences,  
involving penalties of fifteen thousand dollars or less, or other  
designated cases—Composition of board—Rules to expedite appeals.** (1)

In the case of an appeal involving a single-family residence or appurtenance to a single-family residence, including a dock or pier designed to serve a single-family residence, appeals involving a penalty of fifteen thousand dollars or less, or other cases designated by the chair of the hearings board, the request for review may be heard by a panel of three board members, at least one and not more than two of whom shall be members of the pollution control hearings board. Two members of the three must agree to issue a final decision of the board. In designating appeals for review by panels of three hearings board members, the chair shall consider factors such as the complexity and precedential nature of the case and the efficiency and cost-effectiveness of using a short board versus a full board.

(2) The board shall define by rule alternative processes to expedite appeals, including those involving a single-family residence or appurtenance to a single-family residence, including a dock or pier designed to serve a single-family residence, or involving a penalty of fifteen thousand dollars or less. These alternatives may include: Mediation, upon agreement of all parties; submission of testimony by affidavit; or other forms that may lead to less formal and faster resolution of appeals. [2009 c 422 § 1; 2005 c 34 § 1; 1994 c 253 § 2.]

**RCW 90.58.190 Appeal of department's decision to adopt or amend  
a master program.** (1) The appeal of the department's decision to

adopt a master program or amendment pursuant to RCW 90.58.070(2) or 90.58.090(5) is governed by RCW 34.05.510 through 34.05.598.

(2) (a) The department's final decision to approve or reject a proposed master program or master program amendment by a local government planning under RCW 36.70A.040 shall be appealed to the growth management hearings board by filing a petition as provided in RCW 36.70A.290.

(b) If the appeal to the growth management hearings board concerns shorelines, the growth management hearings board shall review the proposed master program or amendment solely for compliance with



the requirements of this chapter, the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and the applicable guidelines, the internal consistency provisions of RCW 36.70A.070, 36.70A.040(4), 35.63.125, and 35A.63.105, and chapter 43.21C RCW as it relates to the adoption of master programs and amendments under chapter 90.58 RCW.

(c) If the appeal to the growth management hearings board concerns a shoreline of statewide significance, the board shall uphold the decision by the department unless the board, by clear and convincing evidence, determines that the decision of the department is noncompliant with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 or the applicable guidelines, or chapter 43.21C RCW as it relates to the adoption of master programs and amendments under this chapter.

(d) The appellant has the burden of proof in all appeals to the growth management hearings board under this subsection.

(e) Any party aggrieved by a final decision of the growth management hearings board under this subsection may appeal the decision to superior court as provided in RCW 36.70A.300.

(3) (a) The department's final decision to approve or reject a proposed master program or master program amendment by a local government not planning under RCW 36.70A.040 shall be appealed to the shorelines hearings board by filing a petition within thirty days of the date that the department publishes notice of its final decision under RCW 90.58.090(8).

(b) In an appeal relating to shorelines, the shorelines hearings board shall review the proposed master program or master program amendment and, after full consideration of the presentations of the parties, shall determine the validity of the local government's master program or amendment in light of the policy of RCW 90.58.020 and the applicable guidelines, and chapter 43.21C RCW as it relates to the adoption of master programs and amendments under this chapter.

(c) In an appeal relating to shorelines of statewide significance, the shorelines hearings board shall uphold the decision by the department unless the board determines, by clear and convincing evidence that the decision of the department is noncompliant with the policy of RCW 90.58.020 or the applicable guidelines, or chapter 43.21C RCW as it relates to the adoption of master programs and amendments under this chapter.

(d) Review by the shorelines hearings board shall be considered an adjudicative proceeding under chapter 34.05 RCW, the administrative procedure act. The appellant shall have the burden of proof in all such reviews.

(e) Whenever possible, the review by the shorelines hearings board shall be heard within the county where the land subject to the proposed master program or master program amendment is primarily located. The department and any party aggrieved by a final decision of the hearings board may appeal the decision to superior court as provided in chapter 34.05 RCW.

(4) A master program amendment shall become effective after the approval of the department or after the decision of the growth management hearings board or shorelines hearings board to uphold the master program or master program amendment, provided that either the growth management hearings board or the shorelines hearings board may remand the master program or master program amendment to the local government or the department for modification prior to the final adoption of the master program or master program amendment. [2012 c 172 § 1; 2011 c 277 § 5. Prior: 2010 c 211 § 14; 2010 c 210 § 38; 2003

c 321 § 4; 1995 c 347 § 311; 1989 c 175 § 184; 1986 c 292 § 3; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 19.]

**Effective date—Transfer of power, duties, and functions—2010 c 211:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.250.

**Intent—Effective dates—Application—Pending cases and rules—2010 c 210:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Finding—Intent—2003 c 321:** See note following RCW 90.58.030.

**Finding—Severability—Part headings and table of contents not law—1995 c 347:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.470.

**Effective date—1989 c 175:** See note following RCW 34.05.010.

**Severability—1986 c 292:** See note following RCW 90.58.030.

**RCW 90.58.195 Shoreline master plan review—Local governments with coastal waters or coastal shorelines.** (1) The department of ecology, in cooperation with other state agencies and coastal local governments, shall prepare and adopt ocean use guidelines and policies to be used in reviewing, and where appropriate, amending, shoreline master programs of local governments with coastal waters or coastal shorelines within their boundaries. These guidelines shall be finalized by April 1, 1990.

(2) After the department of ecology has adopted the guidelines required in subsection (1) of this section, counties, cities, and towns with coastal waters or coastal shorelines shall review their shoreline master programs to ensure that the programs conform with RCW 43.143.010 and 43.143.030 and with the department of ecology's ocean use guidelines. Amended master programs shall be submitted to the department of ecology for its approval under RCW 90.58.090 by June 30, 1991. [1989 1st ex.s. c 2 § 13.]

**RCW 90.58.200 Rules and regulations.** The department and local governments are authorized to adopt such rules as are necessary and appropriate to carry out the provisions of this chapter. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 20.]

**RCW 90.58.210 Court actions to ensure against conflicting uses and to enforce—Civil penalty—Review.** (1) Except as provided in RCW 43.05.060 through 43.05.080 and 43.05.150, the attorney general or the attorney for the local government shall bring such injunctive, declaratory, or other actions as are necessary to ensure that no uses are made of the shorelines of the state in conflict with the provisions and programs of this chapter, and to otherwise enforce the provisions of this chapter.

(2) Any person who shall fail to conform to the terms of a permit issued under this chapter or who shall undertake development on the shorelines of the state without first obtaining any permit required under this chapter shall also be subject to a civil penalty not to exceed one thousand dollars for each violation. Each permit violation

or each day of continued development without a required permit shall constitute a separate violation.

(3) The penalty provided for in this section shall be imposed by a notice in writing, either by certified mail with return receipt requested or by personal service, to the person incurring the same from the department or local government, describing the violation with reasonable particularity and ordering the act or acts constituting the violation or violations to cease and desist or, in appropriate cases, requiring necessary corrective action to be taken within a specific and reasonable time.

(4) The person incurring the penalty may appeal within thirty days from the date of receipt of the penalty. The term "date of receipt" has the same meaning as provided in RCW 43.21B.001. Any penalty imposed pursuant to this section by the department shall be subject to review by the shorelines hearings board. Any penalty imposed pursuant to this section by local government shall be subject to review by the local government legislative authority. Any penalty jointly imposed by the department and local government shall be appealed to the shorelines hearings board. [2010 c 210 § 39; 1995 c 403 § 637; 1986 c 292 § 4; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 21.]

**Intent—Effective dates—Application—Pending cases and rules—**  
**2010 c 210:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Findings—Short title—Intent—1995 c 403:** See note following RCW 34.05.328.

**Severability—1986 c 292:** See note following RCW 90.58.030.

**RCW 90.58.220 General penalty.** In addition to incurring civil liability under RCW 90.58.210, any person found to have wilfully engaged in activities on the shorelines of the state in violation of the provisions of this chapter or any of the master programs, rules, or regulations adopted pursuant thereto shall be guilty of a gross misdemeanor, and shall be punished by a fine of not less than twenty-five nor more than one thousand dollars or by imprisonment in the county jail for not more than ninety days, or by both such fine and imprisonment: PROVIDED, That the fine for the third and all subsequent violations in any five-year period shall be not less than five hundred nor more than ten thousand dollars: PROVIDED FURTHER, That fines for violations of RCW 90.58.550, or any rule adopted thereunder, shall be determined under RCW 90.58.560. [1983 c 138 § 3; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 22.]

**RCW 90.58.230 Violators liable for damages resulting from violation—Attorney's fees and costs.** Any person subject to the regulatory program of this chapter who violates any provision of this chapter or permit issued pursuant thereto shall be liable for all damage to public or private property arising from such violation, including the cost of restoring the affected area to its condition prior to violation. The attorney general or local government attorney shall bring suit for damages under this section on behalf of the state or local governments. Private persons shall have the right to bring suit for damages under this section on their own behalf and on the

behalf of all persons similarly situated. If liability has been established for the cost of restoring an area affected by a violation the court shall make provision to assure that restoration will be accomplished within a reasonable time at the expense of the violator. In addition to such relief, including money damages, the court in its discretion may award attorney's fees and costs of the suit to the prevailing party. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 23.]

**RCW 90.58.240 Additional authority granted department and local governments.** In addition to any other powers granted hereunder, the department and local governments may:

(1) Acquire lands and easements within shorelines of the state by purchase, lease, or gift, either alone or in concert with other governmental entities, when necessary to achieve implementation of master programs adopted hereunder;

(2) Accept grants, contributions, and appropriations from any agency, public or private, or individual for the purposes of this chapter;

(3) Appoint advisory committees to assist in carrying out the purposes of this chapter;

(4) Contract for professional or technical services required by it which cannot be performed by its employees. [1972 ex.s. c 53 § 1; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 24.]

**RCW 90.58.250 Intent—Department to cooperate with local governments—Grants for development of master programs.** (1) The legislature intends to eliminate the limits on state funding of shoreline master program development and amendment costs. The legislature further intends that the state will provide funding to local governments that is reasonable and adequate to accomplish the costs of developing and amending shoreline master programs consistent with the schedule established by RCW 90.58.080. Except as specifically described herein, nothing in chapter 262, Laws of 2003 is intended to alter the existing obligation, duties, and benefits provided by chapter 262, Laws of 2003 to local governments and the department.

(2) The department is directed to cooperate fully with local governments in discharging their responsibilities under this chapter. Funds shall be available for distribution to local governments on the basis of applications for preparation of master programs and the provisions of RCW 90.58.080(7). Such applications shall be submitted in accordance with regulations developed by the department. The department is authorized to make and administer grants within appropriations authorized by the legislature to any local government within the state for the purpose of developing a master shorelines program. [2003 c 262 § 3; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 25.]

**RCW 90.58.260 State to represent its interest before federal agencies, interstate agencies and courts.** The state, through the department of ecology and the attorney general, shall represent its interest before water resource regulation management, development, and use agencies of the United States, including among others, the federal power commission, environmental protection agency, corps of engineers, department of the interior, department of agriculture and the atomic

energy commission, before interstate agencies and the courts with regard to activities or uses of shorelines of the state and the program of this chapter. Where federal or interstate agency plans, activities, or procedures conflict with state policies, all reasonable steps available shall be taken by the state to preserve the integrity of its policies. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 26.]

**RCW 90.58.270 Nonapplication to certain structures, docks, developments, etc., placed in navigable waters—Nonapplication to certain rights of action, authority—Floating homes and floating on-water residences must be classified as a conforming preferred use.**

(1) Nothing in this section shall constitute authority for requiring or ordering the removal of any structures, improvements, docks, fills, or developments placed in navigable waters prior to December 4, 1969, and the consent and authorization of the state of Washington to the impairment of public rights of navigation, and corollary rights incidental thereto, caused by the retention and maintenance of said structures, improvements, docks, fills or developments are hereby granted: PROVIDED, That the consent herein given shall not relate to any structures, improvements, docks, fills, or developments placed on tidelands, shorelands, or beds underlying said waters which are in trespass or in violation of state statutes.

(2) Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering or abridging any private right of action, other than a private right which is based upon the impairment of public rights consented to in subsection (1) of this section.

(3) Nothing in this section shall be construed as altering or abridging the authority of the state or local governments to suppress or abate nuisances or to abate pollution.

(4) Subsection (1) of this section shall apply to any case pending in the courts of this state on June 1, 1971 relating to the removal of structures, improvements, docks, fills, or developments based on the impairment of public navigational rights.

(5) (a) A floating home permitted or legally established prior to January 1, 2011, must be classified as a conforming preferred use.

(b) For the purposes of this subsection:

(i) "Conforming preferred use" means that applicable development and shoreline master program regulations may only impose reasonable conditions and mitigation that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating homes and floating home moorages by rendering these actions impracticable.

(ii) "Floating home" means a single-family dwelling unit constructed on a float, that is moored, anchored, or otherwise secured in waters, and is not a vessel, even though it may be capable of being towed.

(6) (a) A floating on-water residence legally established prior to July 1, 2014, must be considered a conforming use and accommodated through reasonable shoreline master program regulations, permit conditions, or mitigation that will not effectively preclude maintenance, repair, replacement, and remodeling of existing floating on-water residences and their moorages by rendering these actions impracticable. A substantial development permit is not required when replacing or remodeling a floating on-water residence if the size of the existing residence is not materially exceeded. A substantial

development permit is required if the replacement or remodel of a floating on-water residence materially exceeds the size of the existing residence. All replacements and remodels which add one hundred twenty square feet or more to the living space must require on-board graywater containment or a wastewater connection that disposes of the graywater to a wastewater disposal system.

(b) For the purpose of this subsection, "floating on-water residence" means a vessel or any other floating structure other than a floating home, as defined under subsection (5) of this section: (i) That is designed or used primarily as a residence on the water and has detachable utilities; and (ii) whose owner or primary occupant has held an ownership interest in space in a marina, or has held a lease or sublease to use space in a marina, since a date prior to July 1, 2014. [2021 c 148 § 1; 2014 c 56 § 2; 2011 c 212 § 2; 1971 ex.s. c 286 § 27.]

**Finding—Intent—2014 c 56:** "(1) The legislature recognizes that all Washington residents benefit from the unique aesthetic, recreational, and economic opportunities that are derived from the state's aquatic resources, including its navigable waters and shoreline areas. The legislature also recognizes that, as affirmed in chapter 212, Laws of 2011, existing floating homes are an important cultural amenity and an element of the state's maritime history and economy. The 2011 legislation, which clarified the legal status of floating homes, was intended to ensure the vitality and long-term survival of existing floating single-family home communities.

(2) The legislature finds that further clarification of the status of other residential uses on water that meet specific requirements and share important cultural, historical, and economic commonalities with floating homes, is necessary.

(3) The legislature, therefore, intends to: Preserve the existence and vitality of current, floating on-water residential uses; establish greater clarity and regulatory uniformity for these uses; and respect the well-established authority of local governments to determine compliance with regulatory requirements applicable to their jurisdiction." [2014 c 56 § 1.]

**Finding—2011 c 212:** "The legislature recognizes that existing floating homes, as part of our state's existing houseboat communities, are an important cultural amenity and element of our maritime history. These surviving floating home communities are a linkage to the past, when our waterways were the focus of commerce, transport, and development. In order to ensure the vitality and long-term survival of these existing floating home communities, consistent with the legislature's goal of allowing their continued use, improvement, and replacement without undue burden, the legislature finds that it is necessary to clarify their legal status." [2011 c 212 § 1.]

**RCW 90.58.280 Application to all state agencies, counties, public and municipal corporations.** The provisions of this chapter shall be applicable to all agencies of state government, counties, and public and municipal corporations and to all shorelines of the state owned or administered by them. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 28.]

**RCW 90.58.290 Restrictions as affecting fair market value of property.** The restrictions imposed by this chapter shall be considered by the county assessor in establishing the fair market value of the property. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 29.]

**RCW 90.58.300 Department as regulating state agency—Special authority.** The department of ecology is designated the state agency responsible for the program of regulation of the shorelines of the state, including coastal shorelines and the shorelines of the inner tidal waters of the state, and is authorized to cooperate with the federal government and sister states and to receive benefits of any statutes of the United States whenever enacted which relate to the programs of this chapter. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 30.]

**RCW 90.58.310 Designation of shorelines of statewide significance by legislature—Recommendation by director, procedure.** Additional shorelines of the state shall be designated shorelines of statewide significance only by affirmative action of the legislature.

The director of the department may, however, from time to time, recommend to the legislature areas of the shorelines of the state which have statewide significance relating to special economic, ecological, educational, developmental, recreational, or aesthetic values to be designated as shorelines of statewide significance.

Prior to making any such recommendation the director shall hold a public hearing in the county or counties where the shoreline under consideration is located. It shall be the duty of the county commissioners of each county where such a hearing is conducted to submit their views with regard to a proposed designation to the director at such date as the director determines but in no event shall the date be later than sixty days after the public hearing in the county. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 31.]

**RCW 90.58.320 Height limitation respecting permits.** No permit shall be issued pursuant to this chapter for any new or expanded building or structure of more than thirty-five feet above average grade level on shorelines of the state that will obstruct the view of a substantial number of residences on areas adjoining such shorelines except where a master program does not prohibit the same and then only when overriding considerations of the public interest will be served. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 32.]

**RCW 90.58.340 Use policies for land adjacent to shorelines, development of.** All state agencies, counties, and public and municipal corporations shall review administrative and management policies, regulations, plans, and ordinances relative to lands under their respective jurisdictions adjacent to the shorelines of the state so as the [to] achieve a use policy on said land consistent with the policy of this chapter, the guidelines, and the master programs for the shorelines of the state. The department may develop recommendations for land use control for such lands. Local governments shall, in developing use regulations for such areas, take into consideration any recommendations developed by the department as well

as any other state agencies or units of local government. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 34.]

**RCW 90.58.350 Nonapplication to treaty rights.** Nothing in this chapter shall affect any rights established by treaty to which the United States is a party. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 35.]

**RCW 90.58.355 Persons, projects, and activities not required to obtain certain permits, variances, letters of exemption, or other local review.** Requirements to obtain a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government to implement this chapter do not apply to:

(1) Any person conducting a remedial action at a facility pursuant to a consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70A.305 RCW, or to the department of ecology when it conducts a remedial action under chapter 70A.305 RCW. The department must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the consent decree, order, or agreed order issued pursuant to chapter 70A.305 RCW, or during the department-conducted remedial action, through the procedures developed by the department pursuant to RCW 70A.305.090;

(2) Any person installing site improvements for stormwater treatment in an existing boatyard facility to meet requirements of a national pollutant discharge elimination system stormwater general permit. The department must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter through the review of engineering reports, site plans, and other documents related to the installation of boatyard stormwater treatment facilities;

(3) The department of transportation projects and activities that meet the conditions of RCW 90.58.356;

(4) Projects and activities undertaken by the department of fish and wildlife, a federally recognized Indian tribe, a public utility district, or a municipal utility that meet the conditions of RCW 90.58.357; or

(5) Actions taken on the Columbia river by the United States army corps of engineers, under the authority of United States Code Titles 33 and 42 and 33 C.F.R. Sec. 335, to maintain and improve federal navigation channels in accordance with federally mandated dredged material management and improvement project plans, provided the project: (a) Has undergone environmental review under both the national environmental policy act, 42 U.S.C. Sec. 4321-4370h and the state environmental policy act, chapter 43.21C RCW; and (b) has applied for federal clean water act section 401 water quality certifications issued by the department. [2023 c 305 § 2; 2021 c 299 § 1; 2020 c 20 § 1506; 2015 3rd sp.s. c 15 § 9; 2012 c 169 § 1; 1994 c 257 § 20.]

**Finding—2023 c 305:** "The legislature finds that fish hatchery programs require routine maintenance in order to keep them operational." [2023 c 305 § 1.]

**Finding—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 15:** See note following RCW 90.58.356.



**Severability—1994 c 257:** See note following RCW 36.70A.270.

**RCW 90.58.356 Projects and activities not required to obtain certain permits, variances, letters of exemption, or other local review—Written notice, when required.** (1) For purposes of this section, the following definitions apply:

(a) "Maintenance" means the preservation of the transportation facility, including surface, shoulders, roadsides, structures, and such traffic control devices as are necessary for safe and efficient utilization of the highway in a manner that substantially conforms to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original except to meet current engineering standards or environmental permit requirements.

(b) "Repair" means to restore a structure or development to a state comparable to its original condition including, but not limited to, restoring the development's size, shape, configuration, location, and external appearance, within a reasonable period after decay or partial destruction. Repair of a structure or development may not cause substantial adverse effects to shoreline resources or the shoreline environment. Replacement of a structure or development may be considered a repair if: Replacement is the common method of repair for the type of structure or development; the replacement structure or development is comparable to the original structure or development including, but not limited to, the size, shape, configuration, location, and external appearance of the original structure or development; and the replacement does not cause substantial adverse effects to shoreline resources or the shoreline environment.

(c) "Replacement" of any existing transportation facility means to replace in a manner that substantially conforms to the preexisting design, function, and location as the original except to meet current engineering standards or environmental permit requirements. Maintenance or replacement activities do not involve expansion of automobile lanes, and do not result in significant negative shoreline impact.

(2) The following department of transportation projects and activities do not require a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government:

(a) Maintenance, repair, or replacement that occurs within the roadway prism of a state highway as defined in RCW 46.04.560, the lease or ownership area of a state ferry terminal, or the lease or ownership area of a transit facility, including ancillary transportation facilities such as pedestrian paths, bicycle paths, or both, and bike lanes;

(b) Construction or installation of safety structures and equipment, including pavement marking, freeway surveillance and control systems, railroad protective devices not including grade separated crossings, grooving, glare screen, safety barriers, energy attenuators, and hazardous or dangerous tree removal;

(c) Maintenance occurring within the right-of-way; or

(d) Construction undertaken in response to unforeseen, extraordinary circumstances that is necessary to prevent a decline, lapse, or cessation of service from a lawfully established transportation facility.

(3) The department of transportation must provide written notification of projects and activities authorized under this section with a cost in excess of one million dollars before the design or plan is finalized to all agencies with jurisdiction, agencies with facilities or services that may be impacted, and adjacent property owners. [2015 3rd sp.s. c 15 § 10.]

**Finding—2015 3rd sp.s. c 15:** "To ensure that vital maintenance and minor safety upgrades to state transportation facilities are efficiently achieved while still protecting the shoreline environment, the legislature finds that it is in the public interest to exclude state highway maintenance and minor safety upgrade activities from local review and approval processes under the shoreline management act, as provided in RCW 90.58.355 and 90.58.356." [2015 3rd sp.s. c 15 § 8.]

**Effective date—Findings—Intent—2015 3rd sp.s. c 15:** See notes following RCW 47.01.485.

**RCW 90.58.357 Maintenance activities performed by certain entities that do not require a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government—Notification.** (1) The following maintenance activities undertaken by the department of fish and wildlife, a federally recognized Indian tribe, a public utility district, or a municipal utility, necessary to maintain the operation of fish hatcheries, including water intakes and discharges, fish ladders, water and power conveyances, weirs, and racks and traps used for fish collection, do not require a substantial development permit, conditional use permit, variance, letter of exemption, or other review conducted by a local government:

(a) Maintenance, repair, or replacement of equipment and components that support the larger hatchery facility and occur within the existing footprint of fish hatchery facilities;

(b) Construction or installation of safety structures and equipment;

(c) Maintenance occurring within existing water intake and outflow sites during times when fish presence is minimized; or

(d) Construction undertaken in response to unforeseen, extraordinary circumstances that is necessary to prevent a decline, lapse, or cessation of operation of a fish hatchery facility.

(2) The proponent of a project undertaken pursuant to this section must ensure compliance with the substantive requirements of this chapter for projects under this section. Projects undertaken under this section must not adversely affect public access or shoreline ecological functions.

(3) Prior to beginning a maintenance or repair project, the proponent of the project must provide written notification of projects authorized under this section to the local government with jurisdiction and to the department. [2023 c 305 § 3.]

**Finding—2023 c 305:** See note following RCW 90.58.355.

**RCW 90.58.360 Existing requirements for permits, certificates, etc., not obviated.** Nothing in this chapter shall obviate any requirement to obtain any permit, certificate, license, or approval from any state agency or local government. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 36.]

**RCW 90.58.370 Processing of permits or authorizations for emergency water withdrawal and facilities to be expedited.** All state and local agencies with authority under this chapter to issue permits or other authorizations in connection with emergency water withdrawals and facilities authorized under RCW 43.83B.410 shall expedite the processing of such permits or authorizations in keeping with the emergency nature of such requests and shall provide a decision to the applicant within fifteen calendar days of the date of application. [1989 c 171 § 11; 1987 c 343 § 5.]

**Severability—1989 c 171:** See note following RCW 43.83B.400.

**RCW 90.58.380 Adoption of wetland manual.** The department by rule shall adopt a manual for the delineation of wetlands under this chapter that implements and is consistent with the 1987 manual in use on January 1, 1995, by the United States army corps of engineers and the United States environmental protection agency. If the corps of engineers and the environmental protection agency adopt changes to or a different manual, the department shall consider those changes and may adopt rules implementing those changes. [1995 c 382 § 11.]

**RCW 90.58.515 Watershed restoration projects—Exemption.** Watershed restoration projects as defined in RCW 89.08.460 are exempt from the requirement to obtain a substantial development permit. Local government shall review the projects for consistency with the locally adopted shoreline master program in an expeditious manner and shall issue its decision along with any conditions within forty-five days of receiving a complete consolidated application form from the applicant. No fee may be charged for accepting and processing applications for watershed restoration projects as used in this section. [1995 c 378 § 16.]

**RCW 90.58.550 Oil or natural gas exploration in marine waters—Definitions—Application for permit—Requirements—Review—Enforcement.**

(1) Within this section the following definitions apply:

- (a) "Exploration activity" means reconnaissance or survey work related to gathering information about geologic features and formations underlying or adjacent to marine waters;
- (b) "Marine waters" include the waters of Puget Sound north to the Canadian border, the waters of the Strait of Juan de Fuca, the waters between the western boundary of the state and the ordinary high water mark, and related bays and estuaries;
- (c) "Vessel" includes ships, boats, barges, or any other floating craft.

(2) A person desiring to perform oil or natural gas exploration activities by vessel located on or within marine waters of the state shall first obtain a permit from the department of ecology. The

department may approve an application for a permit only if it determines that the proposed activity will not:

- (a) Interfere materially with the normal public uses of the marine waters of the state;
  - (b) Interfere with activities authorized by a permit issued under RCW 90.58.140(2);
  - (c) Injure the marine biota, beds, or tidelands of the waters;
  - (d) Violate water quality standards established by the department; or
  - (e) Create a public nuisance.
- (3) Decisions on an application under subsection (2) of this section are subject to review only by the pollution control hearings board under chapter 43.21B RCW.
- (4) This section does not apply to activities conducted by an agency of the United States or the state of Washington.
- (5) This section does not lessen, reduce, or modify RCW 90.58.160.
- (6) The department may adopt rules necessary to implement this section.
- (7) The attorney general shall enforce this section. [1983 c 138 § 1.]

*Ocean resources management act: Chapter 43.143 RCW.*

*Transport of petroleum products or hazardous substances: Chapter 88.40 RCW.*

**RCW 90.58.560 Oil or natural gas exploration—Violations of RCW 90.58.550—Penalty—Appeal.** (1) Except as provided in RCW 43.05.060 through 43.05.080 and 43.05.150, a person who violates RCW 90.58.550, or any rule adopted thereunder, is subject to a penalty in an amount of up to five thousand dollars a day for every such violation. Each and every such violation shall be a separate and distinct offense, and in case of a continuing violation, every day's continuance shall be and be deemed to be a separate and distinct violation. Every act of commission or omission which procures, aids or abets in the violation shall be considered a violation under the provisions of this section and subject to the penalty provided for in this section.

(2) The penalty shall be imposed by a notice in writing, either by certified mail with return receipt requested or by personal service, to the person incurring the penalty from the director or the director's representative describing such violation with reasonable particularity.

(3) Any person incurring any penalty under this section may appeal the penalty to the hearings board as provided for in chapter 43.21B RCW. Such appeals shall be filed within thirty days from the date of receipt of the penalty. Any penalty imposed under this section shall become due and payable thirty days after receipt of a notice imposing the same unless an appeal is filed. Whenever an appeal of any penalty incurred under this section is filed, the penalty shall become due and payable only upon completion of all review proceedings and the issuance of a final order confirming the penalty in whole or in part.

(4) If the amount of any penalty is not paid to the department within thirty days after it becomes due and payable, the attorney general, upon the request of the director, shall bring an action in

the name of the state of Washington in the superior court of Thurston county or of any county in which such violator may do business, to recover such penalty. In all such actions the procedure and rules of evidence shall be the same as an ordinary civil action except as otherwise provided in this chapter. All penalties recovered under this section shall be paid into the state treasury and credited to the general fund. [2010 c 210 § 40; 1995 c 403 § 638; 1983 c 138 § 2.]

**Intent—Effective dates—Application—Pending cases and rules—**  
**2010 c 210:** See notes following RCW 43.21B.001.

**Findings—Short title—Intent—1995 c 403:** See note following RCW 34.05.328.

**RCW 90.58.570 Consultation before responding to federal coastal zone management certificates.** The department of ecology shall consult with affected state agencies, local governments, Indian tribes, and the public prior to responding to federal coastal zone management consistency certifications for uses and activities occurring on the federal outer continental shelf. [1989 1st ex.s. c 2 § 15.]

**RCW 90.58.580 Shoreline restoration projects—Relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations.**

(1) The local government may grant relief from shoreline master program development standards and use regulations within urban growth areas when the following apply:

(a) A shoreline restoration project causes or would cause a landward shift in the ordinary high water mark, resulting in the following:

(i) (A) Land that had not been regulated under this chapter prior to construction of the restoration project is brought under shoreline jurisdiction; or

(B) Additional regulatory requirements apply due to a landward shift in required shoreline buffers or other regulations of the applicable shoreline master program; and

(ii) Application of shoreline master program regulations would preclude or interfere with use of the property permitted by local development regulations, thus presenting a hardship to the project proponent;

(b) The proposed relief meets the following criteria:

(i) The proposed relief is the minimum necessary to relieve the hardship;

(ii) After granting the proposed relief, there is net environmental benefit from the restoration project;

(iii) Granting the proposed relief is consistent with the objectives of the shoreline restoration project and consistent with the shoreline master program; and

(iv) Where a shoreline restoration project is created as mitigation to obtain a development permit, the project proponent required to perform the mitigation is not eligible for relief under this section; and

(c) The application for relief must be submitted to the department for written approval or disapproval. This review must occur during the department's normal review of a shoreline substantial

development permit, conditional use permit, or variance. If no such permit is required, then the department shall conduct its review when the local government provides a copy of a complete application and all supporting information necessary to conduct the review.

(i) Except as otherwise provided in subsection (2) of this section, the department shall provide at least twenty-days notice to parties that have indicated interest to the department in reviewing applications for relief under this section, and post the notice on their website.

(ii) The department shall act within thirty calendar days of close of the public notice period, or within thirty days of receipt of the proposal from the local government if additional public notice is not required.

(2) The public notice requirements of subsection (1)(c) of this section do not apply if the relevant shoreline restoration project was included in a shoreline master program or shoreline restoration plan as defined in WAC 173-26-201, as follows:

(a) The restoration plan has been approved by the department under applicable shoreline master program guidelines;

(b) The shoreline restoration project is specifically identified in the shoreline master program or restoration plan or is located along a shoreline reach identified in the shoreline master program or restoration plan as appropriate for granting relief from shoreline regulations; and

(c) The shoreline master program or restoration plan includes policies addressing the nature of the relief and why, when, and how it would be applied.

(3) A substantial development permit is not required on land within urban growth areas as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 that is brought under shoreline jurisdiction due to a shoreline restoration project creating a landward shift in the ordinary high water mark.

(4) The definitions in this subsection apply throughout this section unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(a) "Shoreline restoration project" means a project designed to restore impaired ecological function of a shoreline.

(b) "Urban growth areas" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 36.70A.030. [2009 c 405 § 2.]

**Finding—Intent—2009 c 405:** "The legislature finds that restoration of degraded shoreline conditions is important to the ecological function of our waters. However, restoration projects that shift the location of the shoreline can inadvertently create hardships for property owners, particularly in urban areas. Hardship may occur when a shoreline restoration project shifts shoreline management act regulations into areas that had not previously been regulated under the act or shifts the location of required shoreline buffers. The legislature intends to provide relief to property owners in such cases, while protecting the viability of shoreline restoration projects." [2009 c 405 § 1.]

**RCW 90.58.590 Local governments authorized to adopt moratoria—Requirements—Public hearing.** (1) Local governments may adopt moratoria or other interim official controls as necessary and appropriate to implement this chapter.

(2) (a) A local government adopting a moratorium or control under this section must:

(i) Hold a public hearing on the moratorium or control;

(ii) Adopt detailed findings of fact that include, but are not limited to justifications for the proposed or adopted actions and explanations of the desired and likely outcomes;

(iii) Notify the department of the moratorium or control immediately after its adoption. The notification must specify the time, place, and date of any public hearing required by this subsection;

(iv) Provide that all lawfully existing uses, structures, or other development shall continue to be deemed lawful conforming uses and may continue to be maintained, repaired, and redeveloped, so long as the use is not expanded, under the terms of the land use and shoreline rules and regulations in place at the time of the moratorium.

(b) The public hearing required by this section must be held within sixty days of the adoption of the moratorium or control.

(3) A moratorium or control adopted under this section may be effective for up to six months if a detailed work plan for remedying the issues and circumstances necessitating the moratorium or control is developed and made available for public review. A moratorium or control may be renewed for two six-month periods if the local government complies with subsection (2) (a) of this section before each renewal. If a moratorium or control is in effect on the date a proposed master program or amendment is submitted to the department, the moratorium or control must remain in effect until the department's final action under RCW 90.58.090; however, the moratorium expires six months after the date of submittal if the department has not taken final action.

(4) Nothing in this section may be construed to modify county and city moratoria powers conferred outside this chapter. [2009 c 444 § 2.]

**Intent—2009 c 444:** "The legislature recognizes that cities and counties have moratoria authority granted through constitutional and statutory provisions and that this authority, when properly exercised, is an important aspect of complying with environmental stewardship and protection requirements.

Recognizing the fundamental role and value of properly exercised moratoria, the legislature intends to establish new moratoria procedures and to affirm moratoria authority that local governments have and may exercise when implementing the shoreline management act, while recognizing the legitimate interests of existing shoreline-related developments during the period of interim moratoria." [2009 c 444 § 1.]

**RCW 90.58.600 Conformance with chapter 43.97 RCW required.** With respect to the National Scenic Area, as defined in the Columbia [River] Gorge National Scenic Area Act, P.L. 99-663, the exercise of any power or authority by a local government or the department of ecology pursuant to this chapter shall be subject to and in conformity with the requirements of chapter 43.97 RCW, including the management plan regulations and ordinances adopted by the Columbia River Gorge commission pursuant to the Compact. [1987 c 499 § 10.]

**RCW 90.58.610 Relationship between shoreline master programs and development regulations under growth management act governed by RCW 36.70A.480.** RCW 36.70A.480 governs the relationship between shoreline master programs and development regulations to protect critical areas that are adopted under chapter 36.70A RCW. [2010 c 107 § 4.]

**Intent—Retroactive application—Effective date—2010 c 107:** See notes following RCW 36.70A.480.

**RCW 90.58.620 New or amended master programs—Authorized provisions.** (1) New or amended master programs approved by the department on or after September 1, 2011, may include provisions authorizing:

(a) Residential structures and appurtenant structures that were legally established and are used for a conforming use, but that do not meet standards for the following to be considered a conforming structure: Setbacks, buffers, or yards; area; bulk; height; or density; and

(b) Redevelopment, expansion, change with the class of occupancy, or replacement of the residential structure if it is consistent with the master program, including requirements for no net loss of shoreline ecological functions.

(2) For purposes of this section, "appurtenant structures" means garages, sheds, and other legally established structures. "Appurtenant structures" does not include bulkheads and other shoreline modifications or overwater structures.

(3) Nothing in this section: (a) Restricts the ability of a master program to limit redevelopment, expansion, or replacement of overwater structures located in hazardous areas, such as floodplains and geologically hazardous areas; or (b) affects the application of other federal, state, or local government requirements to residential structures. [2011 c 323 § 2.]

**Findings—2011 c 323:** "(1) The legislature recognizes that there is concern from property owners regarding legal status of existing legally developed shoreline structures under updated shoreline master programs. Significant concern has been expressed by residential property owners during shoreline master program updates regarding the legal status of existing shoreline structures that may not meet current standards for new development.

(2) Engrossed House Bill No. 1653, enacted as chapter 107, Laws of 2010 clarified the status of existing structures in the shoreline area under the growth management act prior to the update of shoreline regulations. It is in the public interest to clarify the legal status of these structures that will apply after shoreline regulations are updated.

(3) Updated shoreline master programs must include provisions to ensure that expansion, redevelopment, and replacement of existing structures will result in no net loss of the ecological function of the shoreline. Classifying existing structures as legally conforming will not create a risk of degrading shoreline natural resources." [2011 c 323 § 1.]



**RCW 90.58.630 Shoreline master programs—Impact of sea level rise and storm severity.** The department shall update its shoreline master program guidelines to require shoreline master programs to address the impact of sea level rise and increased storm severity on people, property, and shoreline natural resources and the environment. [2023 c 228 § 11.]

**RCW 90.58.900 Liberal construction—1971 ex.s. c 286.** This chapter is exempted from the rule of strict construction, and it shall be liberally construed to give full effect to the objectives and purposes for which it was enacted. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 37.]

**RCW 90.58.920 Effective date—1971 ex.s. c 286.** This chapter is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health and safety, the support of the state government, and its existing institutions. This 1971 act shall take effect on June 1, 1971. The director of ecology is authorized to immediately take such steps as are necessary to insure that this 1971 act is implemented on its effective date. [1971 ex.s. c 286 § 41.]

**Chapter 90.64 RCW**  
**DAIRY NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

**Sections**

- 90.64.005 Findings.
- 90.64.010 Definitions.
- 90.64.017 Registration of dairy producers—Information required—  
Information to producers regarding chapter.
- 90.64.020 Concentrated dairy animal feeding operation—Designation—  
Permit.
- 90.64.023 Inspection program.
- 90.64.026 Dairy nutrient management plans—Elements—Approval—  
Timelines—Certification.
- 90.64.028 Appeals from denial of plan approval or certification—  
Dairy producer-requested hearings—Extension of  
timelines.
- 90.64.030 Investigation of dairy farms—Report of findings—  
Corrective action—Violations of water quality laws—  
Waivers—Penalties.
- 90.64.040 Appeal from actions and orders of the department.
- 90.64.050 Duties of department—Annual report to commission.
- 90.64.070 Duties of conservation district.
- 90.64.080 Duties of conservation commission.
- 90.64.100 Parties' liability.
- 90.64.102 Recordkeeping violations—Civil penalty.
- 90.64.110 Rules.
- 90.64.120 Department's authority under federal law or chapter 90.48  
RCW not affected.
- 90.64.130 Database.
- 90.64.150 Livestock nutrient management account.
- 90.64.170 Livestock nutrient management program—Review of statutory  
authority—Recommendations for statutory changes—  
Prerequisite to administering federal program.
- 90.64.180 Protocol for monitoring waters near dairies and CAFOs.
- 90.64.190 Information subject to public records disclosure—Rules.
- 90.64.200 Inspecting and investigating conditions relating to the  
pollution of waters of the state—Access denied—  
Application for search warrant.
- 90.64.800 Reports to the legislature.
- 90.64.900 Effective date—1998 c 262.
- 90.64.901 Transfer of powers, duties, and functions to the  
department of agriculture.

**Chapter 90.64 RCW**  
**DAIRY NUTRIENT MANAGEMENT**

**Sections**

- 90.64.005 Findings.
- 90.64.010 Definitions.
- 90.64.017 Registration of dairy producers—Information required—  
Information to producers regarding chapter.
- 90.64.020 Concentrated dairy animal feeding operation—Designation—  
Permit.
- 90.64.023 Inspection program.
- 90.64.026 Dairy nutrient management plans—Elements—Approval—  
Timelines—Certification.
- 90.64.028 Appeals from denial of plan approval or certification—  
Dairy producer-requested hearings—Extension of  
timelines.
- 90.64.030 Investigation of dairy farms—Report of findings—  
Corrective action—Violations of water quality laws—  
Waivers—Penalties.
- 90.64.040 Appeal from actions and orders of the department.
- 90.64.050 Duties of department—Annual report to commission.
- 90.64.070 Duties of conservation district.
- 90.64.080 Duties of conservation commission.
- 90.64.100 Parties' liability.
- 90.64.102 Recordkeeping violations—Civil penalty.
- 90.64.110 Rules.
- 90.64.120 Department's authority under federal law or chapter 90.48  
RCW not affected.
- 90.64.130 Database.
- 90.64.150 Livestock nutrient management account.
- 90.64.170 Livestock nutrient management program—Review of statutory  
authority—Recommendations for statutory changes—  
Prerequisite to administering federal program.
- 90.64.180 Protocol for monitoring waters near dairies and CAFOs.
- 90.64.190 Information subject to public records disclosure—Rules.
- 90.64.200 Inspecting and investigating conditions relating to the  
pollution of waters of the state—Access denied—  
Application for search warrant.
- 90.64.800 Reports to the legislature.
- 90.64.900 Effective date—1998 c 262.
- 90.64.901 Transfer of powers, duties, and functions to the  
department of agriculture.

**RCW 90.64.005 Findings.** The legislature finds that there is a need to establish a clear and understandable process that provides for the proper and effective management of dairy nutrients that affect the quality of surface or ground waters in the state of Washington. The legislature finds that there is a need for a program that will provide a stable and predictable business climate upon which dairy farms may base future investment decisions.

The legislature finds that federal regulations require a permit program for dairies with over seven hundred head of mature cows and, other specified dairy farms that directly discharge into waters or are otherwise significant contributors of pollution. The legislature finds

that significant work has been ongoing over a period of time and that the intent of this chapter is to take the consensus that has been developed and place it into statutory form.

It is also the intent of this chapter to establish an inspection and technical assistance program for dairy farms to address the discharge of pollution to surface and ground waters of the state that will lead to water quality compliance by the industry. A further purpose is to create a balanced program involving technical assistance, regulation, and enforcement with coordination and oversight of the program by a \*committee composed of industry, agency, and other representatives. Furthermore, it is the objective of this chapter to maintain the administration of the water quality program as it relates to dairy operations at the state level.

It is also the intent of this chapter to recognize the existing working relationships between conservation districts, the conservation commission, and the department of ecology in protecting water quality of the state. A further purpose of this chapter is to provide statutory recognition of the coordination of the functions of conservation districts, the conservation commission, and the department of ecology pertaining to development of dairy waste management plans for the protection of water quality. [1998 c 262 § 1; 1993 c 221 § 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

**RCW 90.64.010 Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "\*Advisory and oversight committee" means a balanced committee of agency, dairy farm, and interest group representatives convened to provide oversight and direction to the dairy nutrient management program.

(2) "Bypass" means the intentional diversion of waste streams from any portion of a treatment facility.

(3) "Catastrophic" means a tornado, hurricane, earthquake, flood, or other extreme condition that causes an overflow from a required waste retention structure.

(4) "Certification" means:

(a) The acknowledgment by a local conservation district that a dairy producer has constructed or otherwise put in place the elements necessary to implement his or her dairy nutrient management plan; and

(b) The acknowledgment by a dairy producer that he or she is managing dairy nutrients as specified in his or her approved dairy nutrient management plan.

(5) "Chronic" means a series of wet weather events that precludes the proper operation of a dairy nutrient management system that is designed for the current herd size.

(6) "Conservation commission" or "commission" means the conservation commission under chapter 89.08 RCW.

(7) "Conservation districts" or "district" means a subdivision of state government organized under chapter 89.08 RCW.

(8) "Concentrated dairy animal feeding operation" means a dairy animal feeding operation subject to regulation under this chapter

which the director designates under RCW 90.64.020 or meets the following criteria:

(a) Has more than seven hundred mature dairy cows, whether milked or dry cows, that are confined; or

(b) Has more than two hundred head of mature dairy cattle, whether milked or dry cows, that are confined and either:

(i) From which pollutants are discharged into navigable waters through a man-made ditch, flushing system, or other similar man-made device; or

(ii) From which pollutants are discharged directly into surface or ground waters of the state that originate outside of and pass over, across, or through the facility or otherwise come into direct contact with the animals confined in the operation.

(9) "Dairy animal feeding operation" means a lot or facility where the following conditions are met:

(a) Dairy animals that have been, are, or will be stabled or confined and fed for a total of forty-five days or more in any twelve-month period; and

(b) Crops, vegetation forage growth, or postharvest residues are not sustained in the normal growing season over any portion of the lot or facility. Two or more dairy animal feeding operations under common ownership are considered, for the purposes of this chapter, to be a single dairy animal feeding operation if they adjoin each other or if they use a common area for land application of wastes.

(10) "Dairy farm" means any farm that is licensed to produce milk under chapter 15.36 RCW.

(11) "Dairy nutrient" means any organic waste produced by dairy cows or a dairy farm operation.

(12) "Dairy nutrient management plan" means a plan meeting the requirements established under RCW 90.64.026.

(13) "Dairy producer" means a person who owns or operates a dairy farm.

(14) "Department" means the department of ecology under chapter 43.21A RCW.

(15) "Director" means the director of the department of ecology, or his or her designee.

(16) "Upset" means an exceptional incident in which there is an unintentional and temporary noncompliance with technology-based permit effluent limitations because of factors beyond the reasonable control of the dairy. An upset does not include noncompliance to the extent caused by operational error, improperly designed treatment facilities, inadequate treatment facilities, lack of preventive maintenance, or careless or improper operation.

(17) "Violation" means the following acts or omissions:

(a) A discharge of pollutants into the waters of the state, except those discharges that are due to a chronic or catastrophic event, or to an upset as provided in 40 C.F.R. Sec. 122.41, or to a bypass as provided in 40 C.F.R. Sec. 122.41, and that occur when:

(i) A dairy producer has a current national pollutant discharge elimination system permit with a wastewater system designed, operated, and maintained for the current herd size and that contains all process-generated wastewater plus average annual precipitation minus evaporation plus contaminated stormwater runoff from a twenty-five year, twenty-four hour rainfall event for that specific location, and the dairy producer has complied with all permit conditions, including dairy nutrient management plan conditions for appropriate land application practices; or

(ii) A dairy producer does not have a national pollutant discharge elimination system permit, but has complied with all of the elements of a dairy nutrient management plan that: Prevents the discharge of pollutants to waters of the state, is commensurate with the dairy producer's current herd size, and is approved and certified under RCW 90.64.026;

(b) Failure to register as required under RCW 90.64.017;

(c) (i) Until July 1, 2011, failure to keep for a period of three years all records necessary to show that applications of nutrients to the land were within acceptable agronomic rates, unless otherwise required by law; and

(ii) Beginning July 1, 2011, failure to keep for a period of five years all records necessary to show that applications of nutrients to the land were within acceptable agronomic rates;

(d) The lack of an approved dairy nutrient management plan by July 1, 2002; or

(e) The lack of a certified dairy nutrient management plan for a dairy farm after December 31, 2003. [2009 c 143 § 2; 1998 c 262 § 2; 1993 c 221 § 2.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

**RCW 90.64.017 Registration of dairy producers—Information required—Information to producers regarding chapter.** (1) Every dairy producer licensed under chapter 15.36 RCW shall register with the department by September 1, 1998, and shall reregister with the department by September 1st of every even-numbered year. Every dairy producer licensed after September 1, 1998, shall register with the department within sixty days of licensing. The purpose of registration is to provide and update baseline information for the dairy nutrient management program.

(2) To facilitate registration, the department shall obtain from the food safety and animal health division of the department of agriculture a current list of all licensed dairy producers in the state and mail a registration form to each licensed dairy producer no later than July 15, 1998.

(3) At a minimum, the form shall require the following information as of the date the form is completed:

(a) The name and address of the operator of the dairy farm;

(b) The name and address of the dairy farm;

(c) The telephone number of the dairy farm;

(d) The number of cows in the dairy farm;

(e) The number of young stock in the dairy farm;

(f) The number of acres owned and rented in the dairy farm;

(g) Whether the dairy producer, to the best of his or her knowledge, has a plan for managing dairy nutrient discharges that is commensurate with the size of his or her herd, and whether the plan is being fully implemented; and

(h) If the fields where dairy nutrients are being applied belong to someone other than the dairy producer whose farm operation generated the nutrients, the name, address, and telephone number of the owners of the property accepting the dairy nutrients.

(4) In the mailing to dairy producers containing the registration form, the department shall also provide clear and comprehensive information regarding the requirements of this chapter.

(5) The department shall require the registrant to provide only information that is not already available from other sources accessible to the department, such as dairy licensing information. [1998 c 262 § 3.]

**RCW 90.64.020 Concentrated dairy animal feeding operation—**

**Designation—Permit.** (1) The director of the department of ecology may designate any dairy animal feeding operation as a concentrated dairy animal feeding operation upon determining that it is a significant contributor of pollution to the surface or ground waters of the state. In making this designation the director shall consider the following factors:

(a) The size of the animal feeding operation and the amount of wastes reaching waters of the state;

(b) The location of the animal feeding operation relative to waters of the state;

(c) The means of conveyance of animal wastes and process waters into the waters of the state;

(d) The slope, vegetation, rainfall, and other factors affecting the likelihood or frequency of discharge of animal wastes and process wastewaters into the waters of the state; and

(e) Other relevant factors as established by the department by rule.

(2) A notice of intent to apply for a permit shall not be required from a concentrated dairy animal feeding operation designated under this section until the director has conducted an on-site inspection of the operation and determined that the operation should and could be regulated under the permit program. [1993 c 221 § 3.]

**RCW 90.64.023 Inspection program.** (1) By October 1, 1998, the department shall initiate an inspection program of all dairy farms in the state. The purpose of the inspections is to:

(a) Survey for evidence of violations;

(b) Identify corrective actions for actual or imminent discharges that violate or could violate the state's water quality standards;

(c) Monitor the development and implementation of dairy nutrient management plans; and

(d) Identify dairy producers who would benefit from technical assistance programs.

(2) Local conservation district employees may, at their discretion, accompany department inspectors on any scheduled inspection of dairy farms except random, unannounced inspections.

(3) Follow-up inspections shall be conducted by the department to ensure that corrective and other actions as identified in the course of initial inspections are being carried out. The department shall also conduct such additional inspections as are necessary to ensure compliance with state and federal water quality requirements, provided that all licensed dairy farms shall be inspected once within two years of the start of this program. The department, in consultation with the \*advisory and oversight committee established in section 8 of this

act, shall develop performance-based criteria to determine the frequency of inspections.

(4) Dairy farms shall be prioritized for inspection based on the development of criteria that include, but are not limited to, the following factors:

(a) Existence or implementation of a dairy nutrient management plan;

(b) Proximity to impaired waters of the state; and

(c) Proximity to all other waters of the state. The criteria developed to implement this subsection (4) shall be reviewed by the \*advisory and oversight committee. [1998 c 262 § 5.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

**RCW 90.64.026 Dairy nutrient management plans—Elements—Approval—Timelines—Certification.**

(1) Except for those producers who already have a certified dairy nutrient management plan as required under the terms and conditions of an individual or general national pollutant discharge elimination system permit, all dairy producers licensed under chapter 15.36 RCW, regardless of size, shall prepare a dairy nutrient management plan. If at any time a dairy nutrient management plan fails to prevent the discharge of pollutants to waters of the state, it shall be required to be updated.

(2) By November 1, 1998, the conservation commission, in conjunction with the \*advisory and oversight committee established under section 8 of this act shall develop a document clearly describing the elements that a dairy nutrient management plan must contain to gain local conservation district approval.

(3) In developing the elements that an approved dairy nutrient management plan must contain, the commission may authorize the use of other methods and technologies than those developed by the natural resources conservation service when such alternatives have been evaluated by the \*advisory and oversight committee. Alternative methods and technologies shall meet the standards and specifications of:

(a) The natural resources conservation service as modified by the geographically based standards developed under \*\*RCW 90.64.140; or

(b) A professional engineer with expertise in the area of dairy nutrient management.

(4) In evaluating alternative technologies and methods, the principal objectives of the \*committee's evaluation shall be determining:

(a) Whether there is a substantial likelihood that, once implemented, the alternative technologies and methods would not violate water quality requirements;

(b) Whether more cost-effective methods can be successfully implemented in some or all categories of dairy operations; and

(c) Whether the technologies and methods approved or provided by the natural resources conservation service for use by confined animal feeding operations are necessarily required for other categories of dairy operations.

In addition, the \*committee shall encourage the conservation commission and the conservation districts to apply in dairy nutrient management plans technologies and methods that are appropriate to the



needs of the specific type of operation and the specific farm site and to avoid imposing requirements that are not necessary for the specific dairy producer to achieve compliance with water quality requirements.

(5) Such plans shall be submitted for approval to the local conservation district where the dairy farm is located, and shall be approved by conservation districts no later than by July 1, 2002. The conservation commission, in conjunction with conservation districts, shall develop a statewide schedule of plan development and approval to ensure adequate resources are available to have all plans approved by July 1, 2002.

(6) If a dairy producer leases land for dairy production from an owner who has prohibited the development of capital improvements, such as storage lagoons, on the leased property, the dairy producer shall indicate in his or her dairy nutrient management plan that such improvements are prohibited by the landowner and shall describe other methods, such as land application, that will be employed by the dairy producer to manage dairy nutrients.

(7) Notwithstanding the timelines in this section, any dairy farm licensed after September 1, 1998, shall have six months from the date of licensing to develop a dairy nutrient management plan and another eighteen months to fully implement that plan.

(8) If a plan contains the elements identified in subsection (2) of this section, a conservation district shall approve the plan no later than ninety days after receiving the plan. If the plan does not contain the elements identified in subsection (2) of this section, the local conservation district shall notify the dairy producer in writing of modifications needed in the plan no later than ninety days after receiving the plan. The dairy producer shall provide a revised plan that includes the needed modifications within ninety days of the date of the local conservation district notification. If the dairy producer does not agree with, or otherwise takes exception to, the modifications requested by the local conservation district, the dairy producer may initiate the appeals process described in RCW 90.64.028 within thirty days of receiving the letter of notification.

(9) An approved plan shall be certified by a conservation district and a dairy producer when the elements necessary to implement the plan have been constructed or otherwise put in place, and are being used as designed and intended. A certification form shall be developed by the conservation commission for use statewide and shall provide for a signature by both a conservation district representative and a dairy producer. Certification forms shall be signed by December 31, 2003, and a copy provided to the department for recording in the database established in RCW 90.64.130.

(10) The ability of dairy producers to comply with the planning requirements of this chapter depends, in many cases, on the availability of federal and state funding to support technical assistance provided by local conservation districts. Dairy producers shall not be held responsible for noncompliance with the planning requirements of this chapter if conservation districts are unable to perform their duties under this chapter because of insufficient funding. [1998 c 262 § 6.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

\*\* (2) RCW 90.64.140 was repealed by 2009 c 143 § 3.

**RCW 90.64.028 Appeals from denial of plan approval or certification—Dairy producer-requested hearings—Extension of timelines.** (1) Conservation district decisions pertaining to denial of approval or denial of certification of a dairy nutrient management plan; modification or amendment of a plan; conditions contained in a plan; application of any dairy nutrient management practices, standards, methods, and technologies to a particular dairy farm; and the failure to adhere to plan review and approval timelines identified in RCW 90.64.026 are appealable under this chapter. Department actions pertaining to water quality violations are appealable under chapter 90.48 RCW.

In addition, a dairy producer who is constrained from complying with the planning requirements of this chapter because of financial hardship or local permitting delays may request a hearing before the conservation commission and may request an extension of up to one year beyond the approval and certification dates prescribed in this chapter for plan approval and certification.

(2) Within thirty days of receiving a local conservation district notification regarding any of the decisions identified in subsection (1) of this section, a dairy producer who disagrees with any of these decisions may request an informal hearing before the conservation commission or may appeal directly to the pollution control hearings board. The commission shall issue a written decision no later than thirty days after the informal hearing.

(3) If the conservation commission reverses the decision of the conservation district, the conservation district may appeal this reversal to the pollution control hearings board according to the procedure in chapter 43.21B RCW within thirty days of receipt of the commission's decision.

(4) When an appeals process is initiated under this section, the length of time extending from the start of the appeals process to its conclusion shall be added onto the timelines provided in this chapter for plan development, approval, and certification only if an appeal is heard by the pollution control hearings board. [1998 c 262 § 7.]

**RCW 90.64.030 Investigation of dairy farms—Report of findings—Corrective action—Violations of water quality laws—Waivers—Penalties.** (1) Under the inspection program established in RCW 90.64.023, the department may investigate a dairy farm to determine whether the operation is discharging pollutants or has a record of discharging pollutants into surface or ground waters of the state. Upon concluding an investigation, the department shall make a written report of its findings, including the results of any water quality measurements, photographs, or other pertinent information, and provide a copy of the report to the dairy producer within twenty days of the investigation.

(2) The department shall investigate a written complaint filed with the department within three working days and shall make a written report of its findings including the results of any water quality measurements, photographs, or other pertinent information. Within twenty days of receiving a written complaint, a copy of the findings shall be provided to the dairy producer subject to the complaint, and to the complainant if the person gave his or her name and address to the department at the time the complaint was filed.

(3) The department may consider past complaints against the same dairy farm from the same person and the results of its previous inspections, and has the discretion to decide whether to conduct an inspection if:

(a) The same or a similar complaint or complaints have been filed against the same dairy farm within the immediately preceding six-month period; and

(b) The department made a determination that the activity that was the subject of the prior complaint was not a violation.

(4) If the decision of the department is not to conduct an inspection, it shall document the decision and the reasons for the decision within twenty days. The department shall provide the decision to the complainant if the name and address were provided to the department, and to the dairy producer subject to the complaint, and the department shall place the decision in the department's administrative records.

(5) The report of findings of any inspection conducted as the result of either an oral or a written complaint shall be placed in the department's administrative records. Only findings of violations shall be entered into the database identified in RCW 90.64.130.

(6) A dairy farm that is determined to be a significant contributor of pollution based on actual water quality tests, photographs, or other pertinent information is subject to the provisions of this chapter and to the enforcement provisions of chapters 43.05 and 90.48 RCW, including civil penalties levied under RCW 90.48.144.

(7) If the department determines that an unresolved water quality problem from a dairy farm requires immediate corrective action, the department shall notify the producer and the district in which the problem is located. When corrective actions are required to address such unresolved water quality problems, the department shall provide copies of all final dairy farm inspection reports and documentation of all formal regulatory and enforcement actions taken by the department against that particular dairy farm to the local conservation district and to the appropriate dairy farm within twenty days.

(8) For a violation of water quality laws that is a first offense for a dairy producer, the penalty may be waived to allow the producer to come into compliance with water quality laws. The department shall record all legitimate violations and subsequent enforcement actions.

(9) A discharge, including a stormwater discharge, to surface waters of the state shall not be considered a violation of this chapter, chapter 90.48 RCW, or chapter 173-201A WAC, and shall therefore not be enforceable by the department of ecology or a third party, if at the time of the discharge, a violation is not occurring under RCW 90.64.010 (17). In addition, a dairy producer shall not be held liable for violations of this chapter, chapter 90.48 RCW, chapter 173-201A WAC, or the federal clean water act due to the discharge of dairy nutrients to waters of the state resulting from spreading these materials on lands other than where the nutrients were generated, when the nutrients are spread by persons other than the dairy producer or the dairy producer's agent.

(10) As provided under RCW 7.48.305, agricultural activities associated with the management of dairy nutrients are presumed to be reasonable and shall not be found to constitute a nuisance unless the activity has a substantial adverse effect on public health and safety.

(11) This section specifically acknowledges that if a holder of a general or individual national pollutant discharge elimination system

permit complies with the permit and the dairy nutrient management plan conditions for appropriate land application practices, the permit provides compliance with the federal clean water act and acts as a shield against citizen or agency enforcement for any additions of pollutants to waters of the state or of the United States as authorized by the permit.

(12) A dairy producer who fails to have an approved dairy nutrient management plan by July 1, 2002, or a certified dairy nutrient management plan by December 31, 2003, and for which no appeals have been filed with the pollution control hearings board, is in violation of this chapter. Each month beyond these deadlines that a dairy producer is out of compliance with the requirement for either plan approval or plan certification shall be considered separate violations of chapter 90.64 RCW that may be subject to penalties. Such penalties may not exceed one hundred dollars per month for each violation up to a combined total of five thousand dollars. The department has discretion in imposing penalties for failure to meet deadlines for plan approval or plan certification if the failure to comply is due to lack of state funding for implementation of the program. Failure to register as required in RCW 90.64.017 shall subject a dairy producer to a maximum penalty of one hundred dollars. Penalties shall be levied by the department. [2011 c 103 § 3; 2003 c 325 § 3; 2002 c 327 § 1; 1998 c 262 § 11; 1993 c 221 § 4.]

**Purpose—2011 c 103:** See note following RCW 15.26.120.

**Intent—Finding—2003 c 325:** "A livestock nutrient management program is essential to ensuring a healthy and productive livestock industry in Washington state. The goal of the program must be to provide clear guidance to livestock farms as to their responsibilities under state and federal law to protect water quality while maintaining a healthy business climate for these farms. The program should develop reasonable financial assistance resources, educational and technical assistance to meet these responsibilities, and provide for periodic inspection and enforcement actions to ensure compliance with state and federal water quality laws. The legislature intends that by 2006, there will be a fully functioning state program for concentrated animal feeding operations in the state, and that this program will be a single program for all livestock sectors.

The legislature finds that a livestock nutrient management program is necessary to address the federal rule changes with which livestock operations must comply. Furthermore, budgetary conditions demand efficient and effective governance. In addition, many of the existing requirements and goals for dairy farms will be completed by December 2003, and revisions will be needed." [2003 c 325 § 1.]

**RCW 90.64.040 Appeal from actions and orders of the department.**

Enforcement actions and administrative orders issued by the department of ecology may be appealed to the pollution control hearings board in accordance with the provisions of chapter 43.21B RCW. [1993 c 221 § 5.]

**RCW 90.64.050 Duties of department—Annual report to commission.**

(1) The department has the following duties:

- (a) Identify existing or potential water quality problems resulting from dairy farms through implementation of the inspection program in RCW 90.64.023;
  - (b) Inspect a dairy farm upon the request of a dairy producer;
  - (c) Receive, process, and verify complaints concerning discharge of pollutants from all dairy farms;
  - (d) Determine if a dairy-related water quality problem requires immediate corrective action under the Washington state water pollution control laws, chapter 90.48 RCW, or the Washington state water quality standards adopted under chapter 90.48 RCW. The department shall maintain the lead enforcement responsibility;
  - (e) Administer and enforce national pollutant discharge elimination system permits for operators of concentrated dairy animal feeding operations, where required by federal regulations and state laws or upon request of a dairy producer;
  - (f) Participate on the \*advisory and oversight committee;
  - (g) Encourage communication and cooperation between local department personnel and the appropriate conservation district personnel;
  - (h) Require the use of dairy nutrient management plans as required under this chapter for entities required to plan under this chapter; and
  - (i) Provide to the commission and the \*advisory and oversight committee an annual report of dairy farm inspection and enforcement activities.
- (2) The department may not delegate its responsibilities in enforcement. [1998 c 262 § 12; 1993 c 221 § 6.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

**RCW 90.64.070 Duties of conservation district.** (1) The conservation district has the following duties:

- (a) Provide technical assistance to the department in identifying and correcting existing water quality problems resulting from dairy farms through implementation of the inspection program in RCW 90.64.023;
- (b) Immediately refer complaints received from the public regarding discharge of pollutants to the department;
- (c) Encourage communication and cooperation between the conservation district personnel and local department personnel;
- (d) Provide technical assistance to dairy producers in developing and implementing a dairy nutrient management plan; and
- (e) Review, approve, and certify dairy nutrient management plans that meet the minimum standards developed under this chapter.

(2) The district's capability to carry out its responsibilities under this chapter is contingent upon the availability of funding and resources to implement a dairy nutrient management program. [1998 c 262 § 13; 1993 c 221 § 8.]

**RCW 90.64.080 Duties of conservation commission.** (1) The conservation commission has the following duties:

(a) Provide assistance as may be appropriate to the conservation districts in the discharge of their responsibilities as management agencies in dairy nutrient management program implementation;

(b) Provide coordination for conservation district programs at the state level through special arrangements with appropriate federal and state agencies, including oversight of the review, approval, and certification of dairy nutrient management plans;

(c) Inform conservation districts of activities and experiences of other conservation districts relative to agricultural water quality protection, and facilitate an interchange of advice, experience, and cooperation between the districts;

(d) Provide an informal hearing for disputes between dairy producers and local conservation districts pertaining to: (i) Denial of approval or denial of certification of dairy nutrient management plans; (ii) modification or amendment of plans; (iii) conditions contained in plans; (iv) application of any dairy nutrient management practices, standards, methods, and technologies to a particular dairy farm; and (v) the failure to adhere to the plan review and approval timelines identified in RCW 90.64.026. An informal hearing may also provide an opportunity for dairy producers who are constrained from timely compliance with the planning requirements of this chapter because of financial hardship or local permitting delays to petition for additional time to comply;

(e) Encourage communication between the conservation district personnel and local department personnel;

(f) Accept nominations and appoint members to serve on the \*advisory and oversight committee with advice of the Washington association of conservation districts and the department;

(g) Provide a cochair to the \*advisory and oversight committee;

(h) Report to the legislature by December 1st of each year until 2003 on the status of dairy nutrient management planning and on the technical assistance provided to dairy producers in carrying out the requirements of this chapter; and

(i) Work with the department to provide communication outreach to representatives of agricultural and environmental organizations to receive feedback on implementation of this chapter.

(2) The commission's capability to carry out its responsibilities under this chapter is contingent upon the availability of funding and resources to implement a dairy nutrient management program. [1998 c 262 § 14; 1993 c 221 § 9.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

**RCW 90.64.100 Parties' liability.** A party acting under this chapter is not liable for another party's actions under this chapter. [1993 c 221 § 11.]

**RCW 90.64.102 Recordkeeping violations—Civil penalty.** (1) Except as provided in chapter 43.05 RCW, the department of agriculture may impose a civil penalty on a dairy producer in an amount of not more than five thousand dollars for failure to comply with recordkeeping requirements in RCW 90.64.010(17)(c). The aggregate

amount of the civil penalties issued under this section shall not exceed five thousand dollars in a calendar year.

(2) In determining the amount of the civil penalty to be levied, the department of agriculture shall take into consideration:

(a) The gravity and magnitude of the violation;

(b) Whether the violation was repeated or is continuous;

(c) Whether the cause of the violation was an unavoidable accident, negligence, or an intentional act;

(d) The violator's efforts to correct the violation; and

(e) The immediacy and extent to which the violation threatens the public health or safety or harms the environment.

(3) The department of agriculture may establish by rule a graduated civil penalty schedule that includes the factors listed in this section. [2010 c 84 § 1.]

**RCW 90.64.110 Rules.** The department may adopt rules as necessary to implement this chapter. [1993 c 221 § 12.]

**RCW 90.64.120 Department's authority under federal law or chapter 90.48 RCW not affected.** (1) Nothing in this chapter shall affect the department of ecology's authority or responsibility to administer or enforce the national pollutant discharge elimination system permits for operators of concentrated dairy animal feeding operations, where required by federal regulations or to administer the provisions of chapter 90.48 RCW.

(2) Unless the department of ecology delegates its authority under chapter 90.48 RCW to the department of agriculture pursuant to RCW 90.48.260, and until any such delegation of authority receives federal approval, the transfer specified in RCW 90.64.901 shall not preclude the department of ecology from taking action related to animal feeding operations or concentrated animal feeding operations to protect water quality pursuant to its authority in chapter 90.48 RCW. Before taking such actions, the department of ecology shall notify the department of agriculture. [2003 c 325 § 4; 1993 c 221 § 13.]

~~Intent—Finding—2003 c 325:~~ See note following RCW 90.64.030.

**RCW 90.64.130 Database.** (1) By October 1, 1998, the department, in consultation with the \*advisory and oversight committee, shall develop and maintain a database to account for the implementation of this chapter.

(2) The database shall track registrations; inspection dates and results, including findings of violations; regulatory and enforcement actions; and the status of dairy nutrient management plans. In addition, the number of dairy farm inspections by inspector shall be tallied by month. A summary of database information shall be provided quarterly to the \*advisory and oversight committee.

(3) Any information entered into the database by the department about any aspect of a particular dairy operation may be reviewed by the affected dairy producer upon request. The department shall correct any information in the database upon a showing that the information is faulty or inaccurate. Complaints that have been filed with the department and determined to be unfounded, invalid, or without merit

shall not be recorded in the database. Appeals of decisions related to dairy nutrient management plans to the pollution control hearings board or to any court shall be recorded, as well as the decisions of those bodies. [1998 c 262 § 9.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

**RCW 90.64.150 Livestock nutrient management account.** The livestock nutrient management account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from monetary penalties levied pursuant to violations of this chapter must be deposited into the account. Expenditures from the account may be used only to provide grants for research or education proposals that assist livestock operations to achieve compliance with state and federal water quality laws. The director of agriculture shall accept and prioritize research proposals and education proposals. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures. [2003 c 325 § 5; 1998 c 262 § 15.]

**Intent—Finding—2003 c 325:** See note following RCW 90.64.030.

**RCW 90.64.170 Livestock nutrient management program—Review of statutory authority—Recommendations for statutory changes—Prerequisite to administering federal program.** (1) The legislature finds that a livestock nutrient management program is essential to protecting the quality of the waters of the state and ensuring a healthy and productive livestock industry.

(2) The departments of agriculture and ecology shall examine their current statutory authorities and provide the legislature with recommendations for statutory changes to fully implement a livestock nutrient management program within the department of agriculture for concentrated animal feeding operations, animal feeding operations, and dairies, as authorized in RCW 90.48.260, \*90.64.813, and 90.64.901. In developing recommended statutory changes, the departments shall consult with the livestock nutrient management program development and oversight committee created in \*RCW 90.64.813. The recommendations must be submitted to the legislature by the departments of agriculture and ecology prior to applying to the environmental protection agency for delegated authority to administer the CAFO portion of the national pollutant discharge elimination system permit program under the federal clean water act.

(3) For purposes of chapter 510, Laws of 2005, animal feeding operations (AFOs) and concentrated animal feeding operations (CAFOs) have the same meaning as defined in 40 C.F.R. 122.23.

(4) This section applies to all operations that meet the definition of an AFO. This section does not apply to true pasture and rangeland operations that do not meet the definition of AFO, however, such operations may have confinement areas that may qualify as an AFO. [2005 c 510 § 1.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 90.64.813 expired June 30, 2006.



**RCW 90.64.180 Protocol for monitoring waters near dairies and CAFOs.** (1) The department of ecology shall develop and maintain a standard protocol for water quality monitoring of the waters of the state within the vicinity of dairies and CAFOs. The protocol shall include sampling methods and procedures and identify the water quality constituents to be monitored.

(2) The department of ecology shall submit the initial protocol developed according to this section to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2005. [2005 c 510 § 3.]

**RCW 90.64.190 Information subject to public records disclosure—Rules.** This section applies to dairies, AFOs, and CAFOs, not required to apply for a permit. Information in plans, records, and reports obtained by state and local agencies from livestock producers under chapter 510, Laws of 2005 regarding (1) number of animals; (2) volume of livestock nutrients generated; (3) number of acres covered by the plan or used for land application of livestock nutrients; (4) livestock nutrients transferred to other persons; and (5) crop yields shall be disclosable in response to a request for public records under chapter 42.56 RCW only in ranges that provide meaningful information to the public while ensuring confidentiality of business information. The department of agriculture shall adopt rules to implement this section in consultation with affected state and local agencies. [2006 c 209 § 14; 2005 c 510 § 4.]

**RCW 90.64.200 Inspecting and investigating conditions relating to the pollution of waters of the state—Access denied—Application for search warrant.** The director of agriculture may enter at all reasonable times in or upon dairy farms for the purpose of inspecting and investigating conditions relating to the pollution of any waters of the state.

If the director of agriculture or the director's duly appointed agent is denied access to a dairy farm, he or she may apply to a court of competent jurisdiction for a search warrant authorizing access to the property and facilities at a reasonable time for purposes of conducting tests and inspections, taking samples, and examining records. To show that access is denied, the director of agriculture shall file with the court an affidavit or declarations containing a description of his or her attempts to notify and locate the owner or the owner's agent and to secure consent. Upon application, the court may issue a search warrant for the purposes requested. [2009 c 143 § 1.]

**RCW 90.64.800 Reports to the legislature.** The department, in conjunction with the conservation commission and \*advisory and oversight committee, shall report to the legislature by December 1st of each year until 2003, on progress made in implementing chapter 262, Laws of 1998. At a minimum, the reports shall include data on inspections, the status of dairy nutrient planning, compliance with water quality standards, and enforcement actions. The report shall also provide recommendations on how implementation of chapter 262, Laws of 1998 could be facilitated for dairy producers and generally improved.

The conservation commission shall include in the report to the legislature filed December 1, 1999, an evaluation of whether the fiscal resources available to the commission, to conservation districts, and to Washington State University dairy nutrient management experts are adequate to fund the technical assistance teams established under \*\*RCW 90.64.140 and to develop and certify plans as required by the schedule established in RCW 90.64.026. If the funding is insufficient, the report shall include an estimate of the amount of funding necessary to accomplish the schedule contained in RCW 90.64.026. [1998 c 262 § 17.]

**Reviser's note:** \*(1) The dairy nutrient management program advisory and oversight committee was created in section 8, chapter 262, Laws of 1998, which was vetoed.

\*\* (2) RCW 90.64.140 was repealed by 2009 c 143 § 3.

**RCW 90.64.900 Effective date—1998 c 262.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 1, 1998]. [1998 c 262 § 22.]

**RCW 90.64.901 Transfer of powers, duties, and functions to the department of agriculture.** (1) All powers, duties, and functions of the department of ecology pertaining to chapter 90.64 RCW are transferred to the department of agriculture. All references to the director of ecology or the department of ecology in the Revised Code of Washington shall be construed to mean the director of agriculture or the department of agriculture when referring to the functions transferred in this section.

(2) (a) All reports, documents, surveys, books, records, files, papers, or written material in the possession of the department of ecology pertaining to the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall be delivered to the custody of the department of agriculture. All cabinets, furniture, office equipment, motor vehicles, and other tangible property employed by the department of ecology in carrying out the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall be made available to the department of agriculture. All funds, credits, or other assets held in connection with the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall be assigned to the department of agriculture.

(b) Any appropriations made to the department of ecology for carrying out the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall, on July 1, 2003, be transferred and credited to the department of agriculture.

(c) Whenever any question arises as to the transfer of any funds, books, documents, records, papers, files, equipment, or other tangible property used or held in the exercise of the powers and the performance of the duties and functions transferred, the director of financial management shall make a determination as to the proper allocation and certify the same to the state agencies concerned.

(3) All rules and all pending business before the department of ecology pertaining to the powers, functions, and duties transferred shall be continued and acted upon by the department of agriculture. All existing contracts and obligations shall remain in full force and shall be performed by the department of agriculture.

(4) The transfer of the powers, duties, and functions of the department of ecology shall not affect the validity of any act performed before July 1, 2003.

(5) If apportionments of budgeted funds are required because of the transfers directed by this section, the director of financial management shall certify the apportionments to the agencies affected, the state auditor, and the state treasurer. Each of these shall make the appropriate transfer and adjustments in funds and appropriation accounts and equipment records in accordance with the certification. [2003 c 325 § 6.]

**Effective date—2003 c 325 §§ 2 and 6:** "Sections 2 and 6 of this act are necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and take effect July 1, 2003." [2003 c 325 § 9.]

**Intent—Finding—2003 c 325:** See note following RCW 90.64.030.

**Chapter 90.66 RCW**  
**FAMILY FARM WATER ACT**

**Sections**

- 90.66.010 Short title.
- 90.66.020 Prior existing rights to withdraw and use public waters not affected.
- 90.66.030 Public policy enunciated—Maximum benefit from use of public waters—Irrigation.
- 90.66.040 Definitions.
- 90.66.050 Classes of permits for withdrawal of public waters for irrigation purposes—Conditions—Requirements.
- 90.66.060 Withdrawal of water under family farm permit—Conditioned upon complying with definition of family farm—Suspension of permit, procedures, time.
- 90.66.065 Transfers or change in purpose of family farm permits.
- 90.66.070 Transfer of property entitled to water under permit—Rights—Requirements.
- 90.66.080 Rules and regulations—Decisions, review.
- 90.66.900 Liberal construction—Initiative Measure No. 59.

**Chapter 90.66 RCW  
FAMILY FARM WATER ACT**

**Sections**

- 90.66.010 Short title.
- 90.66.020 Prior existing rights to withdraw and use public waters not affected.
- 90.66.030 Public policy enunciated—Maximum benefit from use of public waters—Irrigation.
- 90.66.040 Definitions.
- 90.66.050 Classes of permits for withdrawal of public waters for irrigation purposes—Conditions—Requirements.
- 90.66.060 Withdrawal of water under family farm permit—Conditioned upon complying with definition of family farm—Suspension of permit, procedures, time.
- 90.66.065 Transfers or change in purpose of family farm permits.
- 90.66.070 Transfer of property entitled to water under permit—Rights—Requirements.
- 90.66.080 Rules and regulations—Decisions, review.
- 90.66.900 Liberal construction—Initiative Measure No. 59.

**RCW 90.66.010 Short title.** This chapter shall be known and may be cited as the "Family Farm Water Act". [1979 c 3 § 1 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**RCW 90.66.020 Prior existing rights to withdraw and use public waters not affected.** Nothing in this chapter shall affect any right to withdraw and use public waters if such rights were in effect prior to \*the effective date of the act, and nothing herein shall modify the priority of any such existing right. [1979 c 3 § 2 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**\*Reviser's note:** "The effective date of the act" [1979 c 3 (Initiative Measure No. 59)], consisting of RCW 90.66.010 through 90.66.080, 90.66.900, and 90.66.910, is "thirty days after the election at which it is approved" as mandated by Article II, section 1(d) of the Washington Constitution. Initiative Measure No. 59 was approved by the voters at the election November 8, 1977, and was so certified by the governor on December 8, 1977.

**RCW 90.66.030 Public policy enunciated—Maximum benefit from use of public waters—Irrigation.** The people of the state of Washington recognize that it is in the public interest to conserve and use wisely the public surface and ground waters of the state in a manner that will assure the maximum benefit to the greatest possible number of its citizens. The maximum benefit to the greatest number of citizens through the use of water for the irrigation of agricultural lands will result from providing for the use of such water on family farms. To assure that future permits issued for the use of public waters for irrigation of agricultural lands will be made on the basis of deriving such maximum benefits, in addition to any other requirements in the law, all permits for the withdrawal of public waters for the purpose of irrigating agricultural lands after \*the effective date of this act

shall be issued in accord with the provisions of this chapter. [1979 c 3 § 3 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**\*Reviser's note:** "the effective date of this act," see note following RCW 90.66.020.

**RCW 90.66.040 Definitions.** For the purposes of this chapter, the following definitions shall be applicable:

(1) "Family farm" means a geographic area including not more than six thousand acres of irrigated agricultural lands, whether contiguous or noncontiguous, the controlling interest in which is held by a person having a controlling interest in no more than six thousand acres of irrigated agricultural lands in the state of Washington which are irrigated under rights acquired after December 8, 1977.

(2) "Person" means any individual, corporation, partnership, limited partnership, organization, or other entity whatsoever, whether public or private. The term "person" shall include as one person all corporate or partnership entities with a common ownership of more than one-half of the assets of each of any number of such entities.

(3) "Controlling interest" means a property interest that can be transferred to another person, the percentage interest so transferred being sufficient to effect a change in control of the landlord's rights and benefits. Ownership of property held in trust shall not be deemed a controlling interest where no part of the trust has been established through expenditure or assignment of assets of the beneficiary of the trust and where the rights of the family farm permit which is a part of the trust cannot be transferred to another by the beneficiary of the trust under terms of the trust. Each trust of a separate donor origin shall be treated as a separate entity and the administration of property under trust shall not represent a controlling interest on the part of the trust officer.

(4) "Department" means the department of ecology of the state of Washington.

(5) "Application", "permit" and "public waters" shall have the meanings attributed to these terms in chapters 90.03 and 90.44 RCW.

(6) "Public water entity" means any public or governmental entity with authority to administer and operate a system to supply water for irrigation of agricultural lands.

(7) "Transfer" means a transfer, change, or amendment to part or all of a water right authorized under RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.390, or 90.44.100 or chapter 90.80 RCW.

(8) "Withdraw" means to withdraw groundwater or to divert surface water. [2001 c 237 § 24; 1979 c 3 § 4 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.66.050 Classes of permits for withdrawal of public waters for irrigation purposes—Conditions—Requirements.** After \*the effective date of this act, all permits issued for the withdrawal of public waters for the purpose of irrigating agricultural lands shall

be classified as follows and issued with the conditions set forth in this chapter:

(1) "Family farm permits". Such permits shall limit the use of water withdrawn for irrigation of agricultural lands to land qualifying as a family farm.

(2) "Family farm development permits". Such permits may be issued to persons without any limit on the number of acres to be irrigated during a specified period of time permitted for the development of such land into family farms and the transfer of the controlling interest of such irrigated lands to persons qualifying for family farm permits. The initial period of time allowed for development and transfer of such lands to family farm status shall not exceed ten years. Such time limit may be extended by the department for not to exceed an additional ten years upon a showing to the department that an additional period of time is needed for orderly development and transfer of controlling interests to persons who can qualify for family farm permits.

(3) "Publicly owned land permits". Such permits shall be issued only to governmental entities permitting the irrigation of publicly owned lands.

(4) "Public water entity permits". Such permits may be issued to public water entities under provisions requiring such public water entity, with respect to delivery of water for use in the irrigation of agricultural lands, to make water deliveries under the same provisions as would apply if separate permits were issued for persons eligible for family farm permits, permits to develop family farms, or for the irrigation of publicly owned land: PROVIDED, HOWEVER, That such provisions shall not apply with respect to water deliveries on federally authorized reclamation projects if such federally authorized projects provide for acreage limitations in water delivery contracts. [1979 c 3 § 5 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**\*Reviser's note:** "the effective date of this act," see note following RCW 90.66.020.

**RCW 90.66.060 Withdrawal of water under family farm permit—Conditioned upon complying with definition of family farm—Suspension of permit, procedures, time.** (1) Except as provided in subsections (2) and (3) of this section, the right to withdraw water for use for the irrigation of agricultural lands under authority of a family farm permit shall have no time limit and shall be conditioned upon the land being irrigated complying with the definition of a family farm as defined at the time the permit is issued.

(2) If the acquisition by any person of land and water rights by gift, devise, bequest, or by way of bona fide satisfaction of a debt, would otherwise cause land being irrigated pursuant to a family farm permit to lose its status as a family farm, such acquisition shall be deemed to have no effect upon the status of family farm water permits pertaining to land held or acquired by the person acquiring such land and water rights if all lands held or acquired are again in compliance with the definition of a family farm within five years from the date of such acquisition.

(3) For family farm permits under this chapter, if the department determines that water is being withdrawn for use on land not in conformity with the definition of a family farm, the department shall notify the holder of such family farm permit by personal service of

such fact and the permit shall be suspended two years from the date of receipt of notice unless the person having a controlling interest in said land satisfies the department that such land is again in conformity with the definition of a family farm. The department may, upon a showing of good cause and reasonable effort to attain compliance on the part of the person having the controlling interest in such land, extend the two year period prior to suspension. If conformity is not achieved prior to five years from the date of notice the rights of withdrawal shall be canceled. [2001 c 237 § 25; 1979 c 3 § 6 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.66.065 Transfers or change in purpose of family farm permits.** (1) Transfers of water rights established as family farm permits under this chapter may be approved as authorized under this section and under RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.390, or 90.44.100 or chapter 90.80 RCW as appropriate.

(2) A family farm permit may be transferred:

(a) For use for agricultural irrigation purposes as limited by RCW 90.66.060 (1) and (2);

(b) To any purpose of use that is a beneficial use of water if the transfer is made exclusively under a lease agreement, except that transfers for the use of water for agricultural irrigation purposes shall be limited as provided by RCW 90.66.060 (1) and (2);

(c) To any purpose of use that is a beneficial use of water if the water right is for the use of water at a location that is, at the time the transfer is approved, within the boundaries of an urban growth area designated under chapter 36.70A RCW or, in counties not planning under chapter 36.70A RCW, within a city or town or within areas designated for urban growth in comprehensive plans prepared under chapter 36.70 RCW, except that transfers for the use of water for agricultural irrigation purposes shall be limited as provided by RCW 90.66.060 (1) and (2).

(3) If a portion of the water governed by a water right established under the authority of a family farm permit is made surplus to the beneficial uses exercised under the right through the implementation of practices or technologies, including but not limited to conveyance practices or technologies, that are more water-use efficient than those under which the right was perfected, the right to use the surplus water may be transferred to any purpose of use that is a beneficial use of water. Nothing in this subsection authorizes: A transfer of the portion of a water right that is necessary for the production of crops historically grown under the right; or a transfer of a water right or a portion of a water right that has not been perfected through beneficial use before the transfer. Water right transfers approved under this subsection must be consistent with the provisions of RCW 90.03.380(1).

(4) Before a change in purpose of a family farm water permit to municipal supply purpose or domestic purpose may be authorized, the public water system that is receiving the family farm water permit must be meeting the water conservation requirements of its current



water system plan approved by the department of health or its small water system management program.

(5) The place of use for a water right transferred under the authority of this section shall remain within: The water resource inventory area containing the place of use for the water right before the transfer; or the urban growth area or contiguous urban growth areas of the place of use for the water right before the transfer if the urban growth area or contiguous urban growth areas cross boundaries of water resource inventory areas.

(6) The authority granted by this section to transfer or alter the purpose of use of a water right established under the authority of a family farm permit shall not be construed as limiting in any manner the authority granted by RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.390, or 90.44.100 to alter other elements of such a water right. [2001 c 237 § 23.]

**Intent—2001 c 237:** "It is the intent of the legislature to help preserve the agricultural economy of the state by allowing changes of family farm water permits from agricultural irrigation to other agricultural purposes. Within the urbanizing areas of the state, the legislature recognizes the need to allow water from family farms to be converted to other purposes as the use of the land changes consistent with adopted land use plans. The legislature also intends to allow farmers to benefit from water conservation projects and from temporary leases of their family farm water permits. Water conservation and water leases will also allow farmers to contribute to instream flows and other purposes. However, outside of urbanizing areas, the legislature intends to preserve farmlands by ensuring that the quantity of water needed to grow the crops historically grown remains with the farm. In addition, to help retain family farms within the state, the legislature intends to allow family farms of a large enough size to be economically viable under modern agricultural market conditions." [2001 c 237 § 22.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**RCW 90.66.070 Transfer of property entitled to water under permit—Rights—Requirements.** (1) At any time that the holder of a family farm development permit or a publicly owned land permit shall transfer the controlling interest of all or any portion of the land entitled to water under such permit to a person who can qualify to receive water for irrigation of such land under a family farm permit, the department shall, upon request, issue a family farm permit to such person under the same conditions as would have been applicable if such request had been made at the time of the granting of the original family farm development permit. If the permit under which water is available is held by a public water entity prior to the transfer of the controlling interest to a person who qualifies for a family farm permit, such entity shall continue delivery of water to such land without any restriction on the length of time of delivery not applicable generally to all its water customers.

(2) The issuance of a family farm permit secured through the acquisition of land and water rights from the holder of a family farm development permit, or from the holder of a publicly owned land permit, where water delivery prior to the transfer is from a public

water entity, may be conditioned upon the holder of the family farm permit issued continuing to receive water through the facilities of the public water entity. [1979 c 3 § 7 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**RCW 90.66.080 Rules and regulations—Decisions, review.** The department is hereby empowered to promulgate such rules as may be necessary to carry out the provisions of this chapter. Decisions of the department, other than rule making, shall be subject to review in accordance with chapter 43.21B RCW. [1979 c 3 § 8 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

*Pollution control hearings board of the state: Chapter 43.21B RCW.*

**RCW 90.66.900 Liberal construction—Initiative Measure No. 59.** This chapter is exempted from the rule of strict construction and it shall be liberally construed to give full effect to the objectives and purposes for which it was enacted. [1979 c 3 § 9 (Initiative Measure No. 59, approved November 8, 1977).]

**Chapter 90.71 RCW**  
**PUGET SOUND WATER QUALITY PROTECTION**

**Sections**

- 90.71.010 Definitions.
- 90.71.060 Puget Sound assessment and monitoring program.
- 90.71.110 Puget Sound scientific research account.
- 90.71.200 Findings—Intent.
- 90.71.210 Puget Sound partnership—Created.
- 90.71.220 Leadership council—Membership.
- 90.71.230 Leadership council—Powers and duties.
- 90.71.240 Executive director—Appointment—Authority.
- 90.71.250 Ecosystem coordination board—Membership—Duties.
- 90.71.260 Development of the action agenda—Integration of watershed programs and ecosystem-level plans.
- 90.71.270 Science panel—Creation—Membership.
- 90.71.280 Science panel—Duties.
- 90.71.290 Science panel—Strategic science program—Puget Sound science update—Quadrennial science work plan.
- 90.71.300 Action agenda—Goals and objectives.
- 90.71.310 Action agenda—Development—Elements revision and updates.
- 90.71.320 Action agenda—Biennial budget requests.
- 90.71.330 Funding from partnership—Accountability.
- 90.71.340 Fiscal accountability—Fiscal incentives and disincentives for implementation of the action agenda.
- 90.71.350 Accountability for achieving and implementing action agenda—Noncompliance.
- 90.71.360 Limitations on authority.
- 90.71.370 Report to the governor and legislature—State of the Sound report—Review of programs.
- 90.71.380 Assessment of basin-wide restoration progress.
- 90.71.390 Performance audits of the partnership.
- 90.71.400 Puget Sound recovery account.
- 90.71.410 Lake Whatcom phosphorus loading demonstration program.
- 90.71.420 Report to the legislature.
- 90.71.430 Environmental justice obligations of the Puget Sound partnership.
- 90.71.904 Transfer of powers, duties, and functions—References to chair of the Puget Sound action team.
- 90.71.907 Effective date—2007 c 341.

**Chapter 90.71 RCW**  
**PUGET SOUND WATER QUALITY PROTECTION**

**Sections**

- 90.71.010 Definitions.
- 90.71.060 Puget Sound assessment and monitoring program.
- 90.71.110 Puget Sound scientific research account.
- 90.71.200 Findings—Intent.
- 90.71.210 Puget Sound partnership—Created.
- 90.71.220 Leadership council—Membership.
- 90.71.230 Leadership council—Powers and duties.
- 90.71.240 Executive director—Appointment—Authority.
- 90.71.250 Ecosystem coordination board—Membership—Duties.
- 90.71.260 Development of the action agenda—Integration of watershed programs and ecosystem-level plans.
- 90.71.270 Science panel—Creation—Membership.
- 90.71.280 Science panel—Duties.
- 90.71.290 Science panel—Strategic science program—Puget Sound science update—Quadrennial science work plan.
- 90.71.300 Action agenda—Goals and objectives.
- 90.71.310 Action agenda—Development—Elements revision and updates.
- 90.71.320 Action agenda—Biennial budget requests.
- 90.71.330 Funding from partnership—Accountability.
- 90.71.340 Fiscal accountability—Fiscal incentives and disincentives for implementation of the action agenda.
- 90.71.350 Accountability for achieving and implementing action agenda—Noncompliance.
- 90.71.360 Limitations on authority.
- 90.71.370 Report to the governor and legislature—State of the Sound report—Review of programs.
- 90.71.380 Assessment of basin-wide restoration progress.
- 90.71.390 Performance audits of the partnership.
- 90.71.400 Puget Sound recovery account.
- 90.71.410 Lake Whatcom phosphorus loading demonstration program.
- 90.71.420 Report to the legislature.
- 90.71.430 Environmental justice obligations of the Puget Sound partnership.
- 90.71.904 Transfer of powers, duties, and functions—References to chair of the Puget Sound action team.
- 90.71.907 Effective date—2007 c 341.

**RCW 90.71.010 Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Action agenda" means the comprehensive schedule of projects, programs, and other activities designed to achieve a healthy Puget Sound ecosystem that is authorized and further described in RCW 90.71.300 and 90.71.310.

(2) "Action area" means the geographic areas delineated as provided in RCW 90.71.260.

(3) "Benchmarks" means measurable interim milestones or achievements established to demonstrate progress towards a goal, objective, or outcome.

(4) "Board" means the ecosystem coordination board.

(5) "Council" means the leadership council.

(6) "Environmental indicator" means a physical, biological, or chemical measurement, statistic, or value that provides a proximate gauge, or evidence of, the state or condition of Puget Sound.

(7) "Implementation strategies" means the strategies incorporated on a quadrennial basis in the action agenda developed under RCW 90.71.310.

(8) "Nearshore" means the area beginning at the crest of coastal bluffs and extending seaward through the marine photics zone, and to the head of tide in coastal rivers and streams. "Nearshore" also means both shoreline and estuaries.

(9) "Panel" means the Puget Sound science panel.

(10) "Partnership" means the Puget Sound partnership.

(11) "Puget Sound" means Puget Sound and related inland marine waters, including all salt waters of the state of Washington inside the international boundary line between Washington and British Columbia, and lying east of the junction of the Pacific Ocean and the Strait of Juan de Fuca, and the rivers and streams draining to Puget Sound as mapped by water resource inventory areas 1 through 19 in WAC 173-500-040 as it exists on July 1, 2007.

(12) "Puget Sound partner" means an entity that has been recognized by the partnership, as provided in RCW 90.71.340, as having consistently achieved outstanding progress in implementing the 2020 action agenda.

(13) "Watershed groups" means all groups sponsoring or administering watershed programs, including but not limited to local governments, private sector entities, watershed planning units, watershed councils, shellfish protection areas, regional fishery enhancement groups, marine resources committees including those working with the Northwest straits commission, nearshore groups, and watershed lead entities.

(14) "Watershed programs" means and includes all watershed-level plans, programs, projects, and activities that relate to or may contribute to the protection or restoration of Puget Sound waters. Such programs include jurisdiction-wide programs regardless of whether more than one watershed is addressed. [2017 c 54 § 1; 2007 c 341 § 2; 1996 c 138 § 2.]

**RCW 90.71.060 Puget Sound assessment and monitoring program.** In addition to other powers and duties specified in this chapter, the panel, with the approval of the council, shall guide the implementation and coordination of a Puget Sound assessment and monitoring program. [2007 c 341 § 22; 1996 c 138 § 7.]

**RCW 90.71.110 Puget Sound scientific research account.** The Puget Sound scientific research account is created in the state treasury. All gifts, grants, federal moneys, or appropriations made to the account must be deposited into the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only for research programs and projects selected pursuant to the process developed and overseen by the Puget Sound science panel as provided in RCW 90.71.280(1)(c). [2009 c 99 § 1; 2007 c 345 § 3.]

**Findings—2007 c 345:** "Although research about conditions in Puget Sound have been studied during the past several decades, the legislature finds that there is no coordinated, focused, comprehensive Puget Sound science program capable of setting research priorities for Puget Sound science. The legislature finds that environmental problems in Puget Sound are complex and that research is needed to provide information that can guide protective and restorative actions, and to explore and understand the impacts of a changing environment. The legislature also finds that there is no predictable funding process for Puget Sound research projects, including the aquatic rehabilitation zone one. The legislature declares that the state needs a process to focus the scientific effort on the Puget Sound ecosystem and to distribute research funds." [2007 c 345 § 1.]

**RCW 90.71.200 Findings—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) Puget Sound, including Hood Canal, and the waters that flow to it are a national treasure and a unique resource. Residents enjoy a way of life centered around these waters that depends upon clean and healthy marine and freshwater resources.

(b) Puget Sound is in serious decline, and Hood Canal is in a serious crisis. This decline is indicated by loss of and damage to critical habit, rapid decline in species populations, increases in aquatic nuisance species, numerous toxics contaminated sites, urbanization and attendant stormwater drainage, closure of beaches to shellfish harvest due to disease risks, low-dissolved oxygen levels causing death of marine life, and other phenomena. If left unchecked, these conditions will worsen.

(c) Puget Sound must be restored and protected in a more coherent and effective manner. The current system is highly fragmented. Immediate and concerted action is necessary by all levels of government working with the public, nongovernmental organizations, and the private sector to ensure a thriving natural system that exists in harmony with a vibrant economy.

(d) Leadership, accountability, government transparency, thoughtful and responsible spending of public funds, and public involvement will be integral to the success of efforts to restore and protect Puget Sound.

(2) The legislature therefore creates a new Puget Sound partnership to coordinate and lead the effort to restore and protect Puget Sound, and intends that all governmental entities, including federal and state agencies, tribes, cities, counties, ports, and special purpose districts, support and help implement the partnership's restoration efforts. The legislature further intends that the partnership will:

(a) Define a strategic action agenda prioritizing necessary actions, both basin-wide and within specific areas, and creating an approach that addresses all of the complex connections among the land, water, web of species, and human needs. The action agenda will be based on science and include clear, measurable goals for the recovery of Puget Sound by 2020;

(b) Determine accountability for performance, oversee the efficiency and effectiveness of money spent, educate and engage the public, and track and report results to the legislature, the governor, and the public;

(c) Not have regulatory authority, nor authority to transfer the responsibility for, or implementation of, any state regulatory program, unless otherwise specifically authorized by the legislature.

(3) It is the goal of the state that the health of Puget Sound be restored by 2020. [2007 c 341 § 1.]

**RCW 90.71.210 Puget Sound partnership—Created.** An agency of state government, to be known as the Puget Sound partnership, is created to oversee the restoration of the environmental health of Puget Sound by 2020. The agency shall consist of a leadership council, an executive director, an ecosystem coordination board, and a Puget Sound science panel. [2007 c 341 § 3.]

**RCW 90.71.220 Leadership council—Membership.** (1) The partnership shall be led by a leadership council composed of seven members appointed by the governor, with the advice and consent of the senate. The governor shall appoint members who are publicly respected and influential, are interested in the environmental and economic prosperity of Puget Sound, and have demonstrated leadership qualities. The governor shall designate one of the seven members to serve as chair and a vice chair shall be selected annually by the membership of the council.

(2) The initial members shall be appointed as follows:

(a) Three of the initial members shall be appointed for a term of two years;

(b) Two of the initial members shall be appointed for a term of three years; and

(c) Two of the initial members shall be appointed for a term of four years.

(3) The initial members' successors shall be appointed for terms of four years each, except that any person chosen to fill a vacancy shall be appointed only for the unexpired term of the member whom he or she succeeds.

(4) Members of the council are eligible for reappointment.

(5) Any member of the council may be removed by the governor for cause.

(6) Members whose terms expire shall continue to serve until reappointed or replaced by a new member.

(7) A majority of the council constitutes a quorum for the transaction of business.

(8) Council decisions and actions require majority vote approval of all councilmembers. [2007 c 341 § 4.]

**RCW 90.71.230 Leadership council—Powers and duties.** (1) The leadership council shall have the power and duty to:

(a) Provide leadership and have responsibility for the functions of the partnership, including adopting, revising, and guiding the implementation of the action agenda, allocating funds for Puget Sound recovery, providing progress and other reports, setting strategic priorities and benchmarks, adopting and applying accountability measures, and making appointments to the board and panel;

(b) Adopt rules, in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW;

(c) Create subcommittees and advisory committees as appropriate to assist the council;

(d) Enter into, amend, and terminate contracts with individuals, corporations, or research institutions to effectuate the purposes of this chapter;

(e) Make grants to governmental and nongovernmental entities to effectuate the purposes of this chapter;

(f) Receive such gifts, grants, and endowments, in trust or otherwise, for the use and benefit of the partnership to effectuate the purposes of this chapter;

(g) Promote extensive public awareness, education, and participation in Puget Sound protection and recovery;

(h) Work collaboratively with the Hood Canal coordinating council established in chapter 90.88 RCW on Hood Canal-specific issues;

(i) Maintain complete and consolidated financial information to ensure that all funds received and expended to implement the action agenda have been accounted for; and

(j) Such other powers and duties as are necessary and appropriate to carry out the provisions of this chapter.

(2) The council may delegate functions to the chair and to the executive director, however the council may not delegate its decisional authority regarding developing or amending the action agenda.

(3) The council shall work closely with existing organizations and all levels of government to ensure that the action agenda and its implementation are scientifically sound, efficient, and achieve necessary results to accomplish recovery of Puget Sound to health by 2020.

(4) The council shall support, engage, and foster collaboration among watershed groups to assist in the recovery of Puget Sound.

(5) When working with federally recognized Indian tribes to develop and implement the action agenda, the council shall conform to the procedures and standards required in a government-to-governmental relationship with tribes under the 1989 Centennial Accord between the state of Washington and the sovereign tribal governments in the state of Washington.

(6) Members of the council shall be compensated in accordance with RCW 43.03.220 and be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. [2007 c 341 § 5.]

**RCW 90.71.240 Executive director—Appointment—Authority. (1)**

The partnership shall be administered by an executive director who serves as a communication link between all levels of government, the private sector, tribes, nongovernmental organizations, the council, the board, and the panel. The executive director shall be accountable to the council and the governor for effective communication, actions, and results.

(2) The executive director shall be appointed by and serve at the pleasure of the governor, in consultation with the council. The governor shall consider the recommendations of the council when appointing the executive director.

(3) The executive director shall have complete charge of and supervisory powers over the partnership, subject to the guidance from the council.



(4) The executive director shall employ a staff, who shall be state employees under Title 41 RCW.

(5) Upon approval of the council, the executive director may take action to create a private nonprofit entity, which may take the form of a nonprofit corporation, to assist the partnership in restoring Puget Sound by:

(a) Raising money and other resources through charitable giving, donations, and other appropriate mechanisms;

(b) Engaging and educating the public regarding Puget Sound's health, including efforts and opportunities to restore Puget Sound ecosystems; and

(c) Performing other similar activities as directed by the partnership. [2007 c 341 § 6.]

**RCW 90.71.250 Ecosystem coordination board—Membership—Duties.**

(1) The council shall convene the ecosystem coordination board not later than October 1, 2007.

(2) The board shall consist of the following:

(a) One representative from the geographic area of each of the action areas specified in RCW 90.71.260, appointed by the council. The council shall solicit nominations from, at a minimum, counties, cities, and watershed groups;

(b) Two members representing general business interests, one of whom shall represent in-state general small business interests, both appointed by the council;

(c) Two members representing environmental interests, appointed by the council;

(d) Three representatives of tribal governments located in Puget Sound, invited by the governor to participate as members of the board;

(e) One representative each from counties, cities, and port districts, appointed by the council from nominations submitted by statewide associations representing such local governments;

(f) Three representatives of state agencies with environmental management responsibilities in Puget Sound, representing the interests of all state agencies, one of whom shall be the commissioner of public lands or his or her designee; and

(g) Three representatives of federal agencies with environmental management responsibilities in Puget Sound, representing the interests of all federal agencies and invited by the governor to participate as members of the board.

(3) The president of the senate shall appoint two senators, one from each major caucus, as legislative liaisons to the board. The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint two representatives, one from each major caucus, as legislative liaisons to the board.

(4) The board shall elect one of its members as chair, and one of its members as vice chair.

(5) The board shall advise and assist the council in carrying out its responsibilities in implementing this chapter, including development and implementation of the action agenda. The board's duties include:

(a) Assisting cities, counties, ports, tribes, watershed groups, and other governmental and private organizations in the compilation of local programs for consideration for inclusion in the action agenda as provided in RCW 90.71.260;

(b) Upon request of the council, reviewing and making recommendations regarding activities, projects, and programs proposed for inclusion in the action agenda, including assessing existing ecosystem scale management, restoration and protection plan elements, activities, projects, and programs for inclusion in the action agenda;

(c) Seeking public and private funding and the commitment of other resources for plan implementation;

(d) Assisting the council in conducting public education activities regarding threats to Puget Sound and about local implementation strategies to support the action agenda; and

(e) Recruiting the active involvement of and encouraging the collaboration and communication among governmental and nongovernmental entities, the private sector, and citizens working to achieve the recovery of Puget Sound.

(6) Members of the board, except for federal and state employees, shall be reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060. [2007 c 341 § 7.]

**RCW 90.71.260 Development of the action agenda—Integration of watershed programs and ecosystem-level plans.** (1) The partnership shall develop the action agenda in part upon the foundation of existing watershed programs that address or contribute to the health of Puget Sound. To ensure full consideration of these watershed programs in a timely manner to meet the required date for adoption of the action agenda, the partnership shall rely largely upon local watershed groups, tribes, cities, counties, special purpose districts, and the private sector, who are engaged in developing and implementing these programs.

(2) The partnership shall organize this work by working with these groups in the following geographic action areas of Puget Sound, which collectively encompass all of the Puget Sound basin and include the areas draining to the marine waters in these action areas:

- (a) Strait of Juan de Fuca;
- (b) The San Juan Islands;
- (c) Whidbey Island;
- (d) North central Puget Sound;
- (e) South central Puget Sound;
- (f) South Puget Sound; and
- (g) Hood Canal.

(3) The council shall define the geographic delineations of these action areas based upon the common issues and interests of the entities in these action areas, and upon the characteristics of the Sound's physical structure, and the water flows into and within the Sound.

(4) The executive director, working with the board representatives from each action area, shall invite appropriate tribes, local governments, and watershed groups to convene for the purpose of compiling the existing watershed programs relating or contributing to the health of Puget Sound. The participating groups should work to identify the applicable local plan elements, projects, and programs, together with estimated budget, timelines, and proposed funding sources, that are suitable for adoption into the action agenda. This may include a prioritization among plan elements, projects, and programs.

(5) The partnership may provide assistance to watershed groups in those action areas that are developing and implementing programs included within the action agenda, and to improve coordination among the groups to improve and accelerate the implementation of the action agenda.

(6) The executive director, working with the board, shall also compile and assess ecosystem scale management, restoration, and protection plans for the Puget Sound basin.

(a) At a minimum, the compilation shall include the Puget Sound nearshore estuary project, clean-up plans for contaminated aquatic lands and shorelands, aquatic land management plans, state resource management plans, habitat conservation plans, and recovery plans for salmon, orca, and other species in Puget Sound that are listed under the federal endangered species act.

(b) The board should work to identify and assess applicable ecosystem scale plan elements, projects, and programs, together with estimated budget, timelines, and proposed funding sources, that are suitable for adoption into the action agenda.

(c) When the board identifies conflicts or disputes among ecosystem scale projects or programs, the board may convene the agency managers in an attempt to reconcile the conflicts with the objective of advancing the protection and recovery of Puget Sound.

(d) If it determines that doing so will increase the likelihood of restoring Puget Sound by 2020, the partnership may explore the utility of federal assurances under the endangered species act, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq., and shall confer with the federal services administering that act.

(7) The executive director shall integrate and present the proposed elements from watershed programs and ecosystem-level plans to the council for consideration for inclusion in the action agenda not later than July 1, 2008. [2007 c 341 § 8.]

**RCW 90.71.270 Science panel—Creation—Membership.** (1) The council shall appoint a nine-member Puget Sound science panel to provide independent, nonrepresentational scientific advice to the council and expertise in identifying environmental indicators and benchmarks for incorporation into the action agenda.

(2) In establishing the panel, the council shall request the Washington academy of sciences, created in chapter 70A.40 RCW, to nominate fifteen scientists with recognized expertise in fields of science essential to the recovery of Puget Sound. Nominees should reflect the full range of scientific and engineering disciplines involved in Puget Sound recovery. At a minimum, the Washington academy of sciences shall consider making nominations from scientists associated with federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, the business and environmental communities, members of the K-12, college, and university communities, and members of the board. The solicitation should be to all sectors, and candidates may be from all public and private sectors. Persons nominated by the Washington academy of sciences must disclose any potential conflicts of interest, and any financial relationship with any leadership councilmember, and disclose sources of current financial support and contracts relating to Puget Sound recovery.

(3) The panel shall select a chair and a vice chair. Panel members shall serve four-year terms, except that the council shall

determine initial terms of two, three, and four years to provide for staggered terms. The council shall determine reappointments and select replacements or additional members of the panel. No panel member may serve longer than twelve years.

(4) The executive director shall designate a lead staff scientist to coordinate panel actions, and administrative staff to support panel activities. The legislature intends to provide ongoing funding for staffing of the panel to ensure that it has sufficient capacity to provide independent scientific advice.

(5) The executive director of the partnership and the science panel shall explore a shared state and federal responsibility for the staffing and administration of the panel. In the event that a federally sponsored Puget Sound recovery office is created, the council may propose that such office provide for staffing and administration of the panel.

(6) The panel shall assist the council in developing and revising the action agenda, making recommendations to the action agenda, and making recommendations to the council for updates or revisions.

(7) Members of the panel shall be reimbursed for travel expenses under RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060, and based upon the availability of funds, the council may contract with members of the panel for compensation for their services under \*chapter 39.29 RCW. If appointees to the panel are employed by the federal, state, tribal, or local governments, the council may enter into interagency personnel agreements. [2020 c 20 § 1507; 2007 c 341 § 9.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Chapter 39.29 RCW was repealed by 2012 c 224 § 29, effective January 1, 2013. See chapter 39.26 RCW.

**RCW 90.71.280 Science panel—Duties.** (1) The panel shall:

(a) Assist the council, board, and executive director in carrying out the obligations of the partnership, including preparing and updating the action agenda;

(b) As provided in RCW 90.71.290, assist the partnership in developing an ecosystem level strategic science program that:

(i) Addresses monitoring, modeling, data management, and research; and

(ii) Identifies science gaps and recommends research priorities;

(c) Develop and provide oversight of a competitive peer-reviewed process for soliciting, strategically prioritizing, and funding research and modeling projects;

(d) Develop and implement an appropriate process for peer review of monitoring, research, and modeling conducted as part of the strategic science program;

(e) Provide input to the executive director in developing quadrennial implementation strategies; and

(f) Offer an ecosystem-wide perspective on the science work being conducted in Puget Sound and by the partnership.

(2) The panel should collaborate with other scientific groups and consult other scientists in conducting its work. To the maximum extent possible, the panel should seek to integrate the state-sponsored Puget Sound science program with the Puget Sound science activities of federal agencies, including working toward an integrated research agenda and Puget Sound science work plan.

(3) By July 31, 2008, the panel shall identify environmental indicators measuring the health of Puget Sound, and recommend

environmental benchmarks that need to be achieved to meet the goals of the action agenda. The council shall confer with the panel on incorporating the indicators and benchmarks into the action agenda. [2017 c 54 § 2; 2009 c 99 § 2; 2007 c 341 § 10.]

**RCW 90.71.290 Science panel—Strategic science program—Puget Sound science update—Quadrennial science work plan.**

(1) The strategic science program shall be developed by the panel with assistance and staff support provided by the executive director. The science program may include:

(a) Continuation of the Puget Sound assessment and monitoring program, as provided in RCW 90.71.060, as well as other monitoring or modeling programs deemed appropriate by the executive director;

(b) Development of a monitoring program, in addition to the provisions of RCW 90.71.060, including baselines, protocols, guidelines, and quantifiable performance measures, to be recommended as an element of the action agenda;

(c) Recommendations regarding data collection and management to facilitate easy access and use of data by all participating agencies and the public; and

(d) A list of critical research needs.

(2) The strategic science program may not become an official document until a majority of the members of the council votes for its adoption.

(3) A Puget Sound science update shall be developed by the panel with assistance and staff support provided by the executive director. The panel shall submit the initial update to the executive director by April 2010, and subsequent updates as necessary to reflect new scientific understandings. The update shall:

(a) Describe the current scientific understanding of various physical attributes of Puget Sound;

(b) Serve as the scientific basis for the selection of environmental indicators measuring the health of Puget Sound; and

(c) Serve as the scientific basis for the status and trends of those environmental indicators.

(4) The executive director shall provide the Puget Sound science update to the Washington academy of sciences, the governor, and appropriate legislative committees, and include:

(a) A summary of information in existing updates; and

(b) Changes adopted in subsequent updates and in the state of the Sound reports produced pursuant to RCW 90.71.370.

(5) A quadrennial science work plan shall be developed by the panel, with assistance and staff support provided by the executive director, and approved by the council. The quadrennial science work plan shall include, at a minimum:

(a) Identification of recommendations from scientific and technical reports relating to Puget Sound;

(b) A description of the Puget Sound science-related activities being conducted by various entities in the region, including studies, models, monitoring, research, and other appropriate activities;

(c) A description of whether the ongoing work addresses the recommendations and, if not, identification of necessary actions to fill gaps;

(d) Identification of specific quadrennial science work actions to be done over the course of the work plan, and how these actions address science needs in Puget Sound; and

(e) Recommendations for improvements to the ongoing science work in Puget Sound. [2017 c 54 § 3; 2007 c 341 § 11.]

**RCW 90.71.300 Action agenda—Goals and objectives.** (1) The action agenda shall consist of the goals and objectives in this section, implementation strategies to meet measurable outcomes, benchmarks, and identification of responsible entities. By 2020, the action agenda shall strive to achieve the following goals:

(a) A healthy human population supported by a healthy Puget Sound that is not threatened by changes in the ecosystem;

(b) A quality of human life that is sustained by a functioning Puget Sound ecosystem;

(c) Healthy and sustaining populations of native species in Puget Sound, including a robust food web;

(d) A healthy Puget Sound where freshwater, estuary, nearshore, marine, and upland habitats are protected, restored, and sustained;

(e) An ecosystem that is supported by groundwater levels as well as river and streamflow levels sufficient to sustain people, fish, and wildlife, and the natural functions of the environment;

(f) Fresh and marine waters and sediments of a sufficient quality so that the waters in the region are safe for drinking, swimming, shellfish harvest and consumption, and other human uses and enjoyment, and are not harmful to the native marine mammals, fish, birds, and shellfish of the region.

(2) The action agenda shall be developed and implemented to achieve the following objectives:

(a) Protect existing habitat and prevent further losses;

(b) Restore habitat functions and values;

(c) Significantly reduce toxics entering Puget Sound fresh and marine waters;

(d) Significantly reduce nutrients and pathogens entering Puget Sound fresh and marine waters;

(e) Improve water quality and habitat by managing stormwater runoff;

(f) Provide water for people, fish and wildlife, and the environment;

(g) Protect ecosystem biodiversity and recover imperiled species; and

(h) Build and sustain the capacity for action. [2007 c 341 § 12.]

**RCW 90.71.310 Action agenda—Development—Elements revision and updates.** (1) The council shall develop a science-based action agenda that leads to the recovery of Puget Sound by 2020 and achievement of the goals and objectives established in RCW 90.71.300. The action agenda shall:

(a) Address all geographic areas of Puget Sound including upland areas and tributary rivers and streams that affect Puget Sound;

(b) Describe the problems affecting Puget Sound's health using supporting scientific data, and provide a summary of the historical environmental health conditions of Puget Sound so as to determine past

levels of pollution and restorative actions that have established the current health conditions of Puget Sound;

(c) Meet the goals and objectives described in RCW 90.71.300, including measurable outcomes for each goal and objective specifically describing what will be achieved, how it will be quantified, and how progress towards outcomes will be measured. The action agenda shall include near-term and long-term benchmarks designed to ensure continuous progress needed to reach the goals, objectives, and designated outcomes by 2020. The council shall consult with the panel in developing these elements of the plan;

(d) Identify and prioritize the strategies and actions necessary to restore and protect Puget Sound and to achieve the goals and objectives described in RCW 90.71.300;

(e) Identify the agency, entity, or person responsible for completing the necessary strategies and actions, and potential sources of funding;

(f) Include prioritized actions identified through the assembled proposals from each of the seven action areas and the identification and assessment of ecosystem scale programs as provided in RCW 90.71.260;

(g) Include specific actions to address aquatic rehabilitation zone one, as defined in RCW 90.88.010;

(h) Incorporate any additional goals adopted by the council; and

(i) Incorporate appropriate actions to carry out the quadrennial science work plan created in RCW 90.71.290.

(2) In developing the action agenda and any subsequent revisions, the council shall, when appropriate, incorporate the following:

(a) Water quality, water quantity, sediment quality, watershed, marine resource, and habitat restoration plans created by governmental agencies, watershed groups, and marine and shoreline groups. The council shall consult with the board in incorporating these plans;

(b) Recovery plans for salmon, orca, and other species in Puget Sound listed under the federal endangered species act;

(c) Existing plans and agreements signed by the governor, the commissioner of public lands, other state officials, or by federal agencies;

(d) Appropriate portions of the Puget Sound water quality management plan existing on July 1, 2007.

(3) Until the action agenda is adopted, the existing Puget Sound management plan and the 2007-09 Puget Sound biennial plan shall remain in effect. The existing Puget Sound management plan shall also continue to serve as the comprehensive conservation and management plan for the purposes of the national estuary program described in section 320 of the federal clean water act, until replaced by the action agenda and approved by the United States environmental protection agency as the new comprehensive conservation and management plan.

(4) The council shall adopt the action agenda by December 1, 2008. The council shall revise the action agenda as needed, and revise the implementation strategies every four years using an adaptive management process informed by tracking actions and monitoring results in Puget Sound. In revising the action agenda and the implementation strategies, the council shall consult the panel and the board and provide opportunity for public review and comment. Quadrennial updates shall:

(a) Contain a detailed description of prioritized actions necessary in the quadrennial time period to achieve the goals,

objectives, outcomes, and benchmarks of progress identified in the action agenda;

(b) Identify the agency, entity, or person responsible for completing the necessary action; and

(c) Establish quadrennial benchmarks for near-term actions.

(5) The action agenda shall be organized and maintained in a single document to facilitate public accessibility to the plan. [2017 c 54 § 4; 2008 c 329 § 926; 2007 c 341 § 13.]

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 329:** See notes following RCW 28B.105.110.

**RCW 90.71.320 Action agenda—Biennial budget requests.** (1)

State agencies responsible for implementing elements of the action agenda shall:

(a) Provide to the partnership by June 1st of each even-numbered year their estimates of the actions and the budget resources needed for the forthcoming biennium to implement their portion of the action agenda; and

(b) Work with the partnership in the development of biennial budget requests to achieve consistency with the action agenda to be submitted to the governor for consideration in the governor's biennial budget request. The agencies shall seek the concurrence of the partnership in the proposed funding levels and sources included in this proposed budget.

(2) If a state agency submits an amount different from that developed in subsection (1) (a) of this section as part of its biennial budget request, the partnership and state agency shall jointly identify the differences and the reasons for these differences and present this information to the office of financial management by October 1st of each even-numbered year. [2007 c 341 § 14.]

**RCW 90.71.330 Funding from partnership—Accountability.** (1) Any

funding made available directly to the partnership from the Puget Sound recovery account created in RCW 90.71.400 and used by the partnership for loans, grants, or funding transfers to other entities shall be prioritized according to the action agenda developed pursuant to RCW 90.71.310.

(2) The partnership shall condition, with interagency agreements, any grants or funding transfers to other entities from the Puget Sound recovery account to ensure accountability in the expenditure of the funds and to ensure that the funds are used by the recipient entity in the manner determined by the partnership to be the most consistent with the priorities of the action agenda. Any conditions placed on federal funding under this section shall incorporate and be consistent with requirements under signed agreements between the entity and the federal government.

(3) If the partnership finds that the provided funding was not used as instructed in the interagency agreement, the partnership may suspend or further condition future funding to the recipient entity.

(4) The partnership shall require any entity that receives funds for implementing the action agenda to publicly disclose and account for expenditure of those funds. [2007 c 341 § 15.]



**RCW 90.71.340 Fiscal accountability—Fiscal incentives and disincentives for implementation of the action agenda.** (1) The legislature intends that fiscal incentives and disincentives be used as accountability measures designed to achieve consistency with the action agenda by:

(a) Ensuring that projects and activities in conflict with the action agenda are not funded;

(b) Aligning environmental investments with strategic priorities of the action agenda; and

(c) Using state grant and loan programs to encourage consistency with the action agenda.

(2) The council shall adopt measures to ensure that funds appropriated for implementation of the action agenda and identified by proviso or specifically referenced in the omnibus appropriations act pursuant to RCW 43.88.030(1)(g) are expended in a manner that will achieve the intended results. In developing such performance measures, the council shall establish criteria for the expenditure of the funds consistent with the responsibilities and timelines under the action agenda, and require reporting and tracking of funds expended. The council may adopt other measures, such as requiring interagency agreements regarding the expenditure of provided or specifically referenced Puget Sound funds.

(3) The partnership shall work with other state agencies providing grant and loan funds or other financial assistance for projects and activities that impact the health of the Puget Sound ecosystem under chapters 43.155, 70A.305, 70A.135, 77.85, 79.105, 79A.15, 89.08, and 90.50A RCW to, within the authorities of the programs, develop consistent funding criteria that prohibits funding projects and activities that are in conflict with the action agenda.

(4) The partnership shall develop a process and criteria by which entities that consistently achieve outstanding progress in implementing the action agenda are designated as Puget Sound partners. State agencies shall work with the partnership to revise their grant, loan, or other financial assistance allocation criteria to create a preference for entities designated as Puget Sound partners for funds allocated to the Puget Sound basin, pursuant to RCW 43.155.070, 70A.305.180, 70A.305.190, 70A.305.200, 70A.135.070, 77.85.130, 79.105.150, 79A.15.040, 89.08.520, and 90.50A.040. This process shall be developed on a timeline that takes into consideration state grant and loan funding cycles.

(5) Any entity that receives state funds to implement actions required in the action agenda shall report biennially to the council on progress in completing the action and whether expected results have been achieved within the time frames specified in the action agenda. [2020 c 20 § 1508; 2007 c 341 § 16.]

**RCW 90.71.350 Accountability for achieving and implementing action agenda—Noncompliance.** (1) The council is accountable for achieving the action agenda. The legislature intends that all governmental entities within Puget Sound will exercise their existing authorities to implement the applicable provisions of the action agenda.

(2) The partnership shall involve the public and implementing entities to develop standards and processes by which the partnership will determine whether implementing entities are taking actions

consistent with the action agenda and achieving the outcomes identified in the action agenda. Among these measures, the council may hold management conferences with implementing entities to review and assess performance in undertaking implementation strategies with a particular focus on compliance with and enforcement of existing laws. Where the council identifies an inconsistency with the action agenda, the council shall offer support and assistance to the entity with the objective of remedying the inconsistency. The results of the conferences shall be included in the state of the Sound report required under RCW 90.71.370.

(3) In the event the council determines that an entity is in substantial noncompliance with the action agenda, it shall provide notice of this finding and supporting information to the entity. The council or executive director shall thereafter meet and confer with the entity to discuss the finding and, if appropriate, develop a corrective action plan. If no agreement is reached, the council shall hold a public meeting to present its findings and the proposed corrective action plan. If the entity is a state agency, the meeting shall include representatives of the governor's office and office of financial management. If the entity is a local government, the meeting shall be held in the jurisdiction and electoral representatives from the jurisdictions shall be invited to attend. If, after this process, the council finds that substantial noncompliance continues, the council shall issue written findings and document its conclusions. The council may recommend to the governor that the entity be ineligible for state financial assistance until the substantial noncompliance is remedied. Instances of noncompliance shall be included in the state of the Sound report required under RCW 90.71.370.

(4) The council shall provide a forum for addressing and resolving problems, conflicts, or a substantial lack of progress in a specific area that it has identified in the implementation of the action agenda, or that citizens or implementing entities bring to the council. The council may use conflict resolution mechanisms such as but not limited to, technical and financial assistance, facilitated discussions, and mediation to resolve the conflict. Where the parties and the council are unable to resolve the conflict, and the conflict significantly impairs the implementation of the action agenda, the council shall provide its analysis of the conflict and recommendations resolution to the governor, the legislature, and to those entities with jurisdictional authority to resolve the conflict.

(5) When the council or an implementing entity identifies a statute, rule, ordinance or policy that conflicts with or is an impediment to the implementation of the action agenda, or identifies a deficiency in existing statutory authority to accomplish an element of the action agenda, the council shall review the matter with the implementing entities involved. The council shall evaluate the merits of the conflict, impediment, or deficiency, and make recommendations to the legislature, governor, agency, local government or other appropriate entity for addressing and resolving the conflict.

(6) The council may make recommendations to the governor and appropriate committees of the senate and house of representatives for local or state administrative or legislative actions to address barriers it has identified to successfully implementing the action agenda. [2007 c 341 § 17.]

**RCW 90.71.360 Limitations on authority.** (1) The partnership shall not have regulatory authority nor authority to transfer the responsibility for, or implementation of, any state regulatory program, unless otherwise specifically authorized by the legislature.

(2) The action agenda may not create a legally enforceable duty to review or approve permits, or to adopt plans or regulations. The action agenda may not authorize the adoption of rules under chapter 34.05 RCW creating a legally enforceable duty applicable to the review or approval of permits or to the adoption of plans or regulations. No action of the partnership may alter the forest practices rules adopted pursuant to chapter 76.09 RCW, or any associated habitat conservation plan. Any changes in forest practices identified by the processes established in this chapter as necessary to fully recover the health of Puget Sound by 2020 may only be realized through the processes established in RCW 76.09.370 and other designated processes established in Title 76 RCW. Nothing in this subsection or subsection (1) of this section limits the accountability provisions of this chapter.

(3) Nothing in this chapter limits or alters the existing legal authority of local governments, nor does it create a legally enforceable duty upon local governments. When a local government proposes to take an action inconsistent with the action agenda, it shall inform the council and identify the reasons for taking the action. If a local government chooses to take an action inconsistent with the action agenda or chooses not to take action required by the action agenda, it will be subject to the accountability measures in this chapter which can be used at the discretion of the council.  
[2007 c 341 § 18.]

**RCW 90.71.370 Report to the governor and legislature—State of the Sound report—Review of programs.** (1) By December 1, 2008, and by September 1st of each even-numbered year beginning in 2010, the council must provide to the governor and the appropriate fiscal committees of the senate and house of representatives its recommendations for the funding necessary to implement the action agenda in the succeeding biennium. The recommendations must:

(a) Identify the funding needed by action agenda element;  
(b) Address funding responsibilities among local, state, and federal governments, as well as nongovernmental funding; and  
(c) Address funding needed to support the work of the partnership, the panel, the ecosystem work group, and entities assisting in coordinating local efforts to implement the plan.

(2) In the 2008 report required under subsection (1) of this section, the council must include recommendations for projected funding needed through 2020 to implement the action agenda; funding needs for science panel staff; identify methods to secure stable and sufficient funding to meet these needs; and include proposals for new sources of funding to be dedicated to Puget Sound protection and recovery. In preparing the science panel staffing proposal, the council must consult with the panel.

(3) By November 1st of each odd-numbered year beginning in 2009, the council must produce a state of the Sound report that includes, at a minimum:

(a) An assessment of progress by state and nonstate entities in implementing the action agenda, including accomplishments in the use of state funds for action agenda implementation;

(b) A description of actions by implementing entities that are inconsistent with the action agenda and steps taken to remedy the inconsistency;

(c) The comments by the panel on progress in implementing the plan, as well as findings arising from the assessment and monitoring program;

(d) A review of citizen concerns provided to the partnership and the disposition of those concerns;

(e) A review of the expenditures of funds to state agencies for the implementation of programs affecting the protection and recovery of Puget Sound, and an assessment of whether the use of the funds is consistent with the action agenda; and

(f) An identification of all funds provided to the partnership, and recommendations as to how future state expenditures for all entities, including the partnership, could better match the priorities of the action agenda.

(4) (a) The council must review state programs that fund facilities and activities that may contribute to action agenda implementation. By November 1, 2009, the council must provide initial recommendations regarding program changes to the governor and appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the senate and house of representatives. By November 1, 2010, the council must provide final recommendations regarding program changes, including proposed legislation to implement the recommendation, to the governor and appropriate fiscal and policy committees of the senate and house of representatives.

(b) The review in this subsection must be conducted with the active assistance and collaboration of the agencies administering these programs, and in consultation with local governments and other entities receiving funding from these programs:

(i) Water pollution control facilities financing, chapter 70A.135 RCW;

(ii) The water pollution control revolving fund, chapter 90.50A RCW;

(iii) The public works assistance account, chapter 43.155 RCW;

(iv) The aquatic lands enhancement account, RCW 79.105.150;

(v) The model toxics control operating, capital, and stormwater accounts and clean-up program, chapter 70A.305 RCW;

(vi) The acquisition of habitat conservation and outdoor recreation land, chapter 79A.15 RCW;

(vii) The salmon recovery funding board, RCW 77.85.110 through 77.85.150;

(viii) The community economic revitalization board, chapter 43.160 RCW;

(ix) Other state financial assistance to water quality-related projects and activities; and

(x) Water quality financial assistance from federal programs administered through state programs or provided directly to local governments in the Puget Sound basin.

(c) The council's review must include but not be limited to:

(i) Determining the level of funding and types of projects and activities funded through the programs that contribute to implementation of the action agenda;

(ii) Evaluating the procedures and criteria in each program for determining which projects and activities to fund, and their relationship to the goals and priorities of the action agenda;

(iii) Assessing methods for ensuring that the goals and priorities of the action agenda are given priority when program funding decisions are made regarding water quality-related projects and activities in the Puget Sound basin and habitat-related projects and activities in the Puget Sound basin;

(iv) Modifying funding criteria so that projects, programs, and activities that are inconsistent with the action agenda are ineligible for funding;

(v) Assessing ways to incorporate a strategic funding approach for the action agenda within the outcome-focused performance measures required by RCW 43.41.270 in administering natural resource-related and environmentally based grant and loan programs.

(5) During the 2009-2011 fiscal biennium, the council's review must result in a ranking of projects affecting the protection and recovery of the Puget Sound basin that are proposed in the governor's capital budget submitted under RCW 43.88.060. The ranking must include recommendations for reallocation of total requested funds for Puget Sound basin projects to achieve the greatest positive outcomes for protection and recovery of Puget Sound and must be submitted to the appropriate fiscal committees of the legislature no later than February 1, 2011.

(6) During the 2011-2013 fiscal biennium, the council must by November 1, 2012, produce the state of the Sound report as defined in subsection (3) of this section. [2020 c 20 § 1509; 2019 c 422 § 412; 2011 1st sp.s. c 50 § 977; 2010 1st sp.s. c 36 § 6013; 2009 c 479 § 74; 2008 c 329 § 927; 2007 c 341 § 19.]

**Effective date—Intent—2019 c 422:** See notes following RCW 82.21.010.

**Effective dates—2011 1st sp.s. c 50:** See note following RCW 15.76.115.

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 36:** See note following RCW 43.155.050.

**Effective date—2009 c 479:** See note following RCW 2.56.030.

**Severability—Effective date—2008 c 329:** See notes following RCW 28B.105.110.

**RCW 90.71.380 Assessment of basin-wide restoration progress.** By December 1, 2010, and subject to available funding, the Washington academy of sciences shall conduct an assessment of basin-wide restoration progress. The assessment shall include, but not be limited to, a determination of the extent to which implementation of the action agenda is making progress toward the action agenda goals, and a determination of whether the environmental indicators and benchmarks included in the action agenda accurately measure and reflect progress toward the action agenda goals. [2007 c 341 § 20.]

**RCW 90.71.390 Performance audits of the partnership.** (1) The joint legislative audit and review committee shall conduct two performance audits of the partnership, with the first audit to be completed by December 1, 2011, and the second to be completed by December 1, 2016.

(2) The audit shall include but not be limited to:

(a) A determination of the extent to which funds expended by the partnership or provided in biennial budget acts expressly for implementing the action agenda have contributed toward meeting the scientific benchmarks and the recovery goals of the action agenda;

(b) A determination of the efficiency and effectiveness of the partnership's oversight of action agenda implementation, based upon the achievement of the objectives as measured by the established environmental indicators and benchmarks; and

(c) Any recommendations for improvements in the partnership's performance and structure, and to provide accountability for action agenda results by action entities.

(3) The partnership may use the audits as the basis for developing changes to the action agenda, and may submit any recommendations requiring legislative policy or budgetary action to the governor and to the appropriate committees of the senate and house of representatives. [2007 c 341 § 21.]

**RCW 90.71.400 Puget Sound recovery account.** The Puget Sound recovery account is created in the state treasury. To the account shall be deposited such funds as the legislature directs or appropriates to the account. Federal grants, gifts, or other financial assistance received by the Puget Sound partnership and other state agencies from nonstate sources for the specific purpose of recovering Puget Sound may be deposited into the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used for the protection and recovery of Puget Sound. [2007 c 341 § 23.]

**RCW 90.71.410 Lake Whatcom phosphorus loading demonstration program.** (1) The partnership shall assist the city of Bellingham and Whatcom county to implement a demonstration program regarding phosphorus loading into Lake Whatcom. The partnership shall assist the city and county to secure funding from federal and nongovernmental sources and work to secure funding commitments from the city and county as well. The demonstration program must be implemented by the city and the county and include elements for prevention, education, compliance, and monitoring to reduce to a minimum the introduction of phosphorus-bearing materials into Lake Whatcom. The partnership shall share the results of this program with other jurisdictions in Puget Sound seeking to reduce phosphorus loading.

(2) Any grant made under this section must be matched by at least an equal amount from nonstate sources. [2009 c 48 § 2.]

**Findings—Intent—2009 c 48:** "(1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The Puget Sound 2020 action agenda identifies water pollution as a primary threat to the health of Puget Sound and restoration of polluted waters as a top priority;

(b) Lake Whatcom is the drinking water reservoir for the city of Bellingham and the Lake Whatcom watershed provides fresh drinking water to one-half the population of Whatcom county;

(c) Whatcom creek flows out of Lake Whatcom and directly into Bellingham Bay which is the subject of a multiagency clean-up effort, the Bellingham Bay demonstration pilot project;

(d) The Puget Sound 2020 action agenda's area profile for Whatcom county identifies phosphorous pollution of Lake Whatcom as a key threat;

(e) Silver Beach creek is a major tributary to Lake Whatcom and its watershed is shared by the city of Bellingham and Whatcom county;

(f) Two decades of monitoring has shown that Silver Beach creek has some of the highest phosphorus loading of Lake Whatcom tributaries;

(g) Implementation of the recently completed watershed management plan and water cleanup plan for Lake Whatcom is identified as a priority strategy in the Puget Sound 2020 action agenda's priorities for Whatcom county; and

(h) Implementation of operations and management plans to manage on-site sewage systems around Lake Whatcom is identified as a key restoration strategy in Whatcom county.

(2) The legislature intends by this act to assist the city of Bellingham and Whatcom county in implementing a demonstration program to reduce phosphorus loading in the Lake Whatcom and Whatcom creek watershed and to share the lessons learned from this program with other jurisdictions in the Puget Sound basin working to reduce phosphorus loading." [2009 c 48 § 1.]

**RCW 90.71.420 Report to the legislature.** Nothing in this chapter may be construed to relieve the partnership of the need to provide a written report to the legislature each biennium pursuant to RCW 90.71.370(3), which must also include references to ongoing science-related activities and monitoring efforts that inform the findings of the report. [2017 c 54 § 5.]

**RCW 90.71.430 Environmental justice obligations of the Puget Sound partnership.** The partnership must apply and comply with the substantive and procedural requirements of chapter 70A.02 RCW. [2021 c 314 § 10.]

**Conflict with federal requirements—2021 c 314:** See note following RCW 70A.02.005.

**RCW 90.71.904 Transfer of powers, duties, and functions—References to chair of the Puget Sound action team.** (1) The Puget Sound action team is hereby abolished and its powers, duties, and functions are hereby transferred to the Puget Sound partnership as consistent with this chapter. All references to the chair or the Puget Sound action team in the Revised Code of Washington shall be construed to mean the executive director or the Puget Sound partnership.

(2) (a) All employees of the Puget Sound action team are transferred to the jurisdiction of the Puget Sound partnership.

(b) All reports, documents, surveys, books, records, files, papers, or written material in the possession of the Puget Sound action team shall be delivered to the custody of the Puget Sound partnership. All cabinets, furniture, office equipment, motor vehicles, and other tangible property employed by the Puget Sound action team shall be made available to the Puget Sound partnership. All funds, credits, or other assets held by the Puget Sound action team shall be assigned to the Puget Sound partnership.

(c) Any appropriations made to the Puget Sound action team shall, on July 1, 2007, be transferred and credited to the Puget Sound partnership.

(d) If any question arises as to the transfer of any personnel, funds, books, documents, records, papers, files, equipment, or other tangible property used or held in the exercise of the powers and the performance of the duties and functions transferred, the director of financial management shall make a determination as to the proper allocation and certify the same to the state agencies concerned.

(3) All rules and all pending business before the Puget Sound action team shall be continued and acted upon by the Puget Sound partnership. All existing contracts and obligations shall remain in full force and shall be performed by the Puget Sound partnership.

(4) The transfer of the powers, duties, functions, and personnel of the Puget Sound action team shall not affect the validity of any act performed before July 1, 2007.

(5) If apportionments of budgeted funds are required because of the transfers directed by this section, the director of financial management shall certify the apportionments to the agencies affected, the state auditor, and the state treasurer. Each of these shall make the appropriate transfer and adjustments in funds and appropriation accounts and equipment records in accordance with the certification.

(6) Nothing contained in this section may be construed to alter any existing collective bargaining unit or the provisions of any existing collective bargaining agreement until the agreement has expired or until the bargaining unit has been modified by action of the public employment relations commission as provided by law. [2007 c 341 § 41.]

**RCW 90.71.907 Effective date—2007 c 341.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect July 1, 2007. [2007 c 341 § 70.]



**Chapter 90.72 RCW**  
**SHELLFISH PROTECTION DISTRICTS**

**Sections**

- 90.72.020 Shellfish tidelands.
- 90.72.030 Shellfish protection districts—Establishment—Governing body—Programs.
- 90.72.040 Shellfish protection districts—Creation—Boundaries—Cooperation with governmental entities—Abolition—Referendum to repeal creation—Certain fees not permitted.
- 90.72.045 Shellfish protection districts—Programs required after closure or downgrading of growing area classification—Annual report.
- 90.72.060 Decisions addressing conflicting uses—Integration of the state environmental policy act and county ordinances and resolutions with programs.
- 90.72.065 Plans to control pollution effects of animal waste—Contracts with conservation districts.
- 90.72.070 Program financing—Activities not subject to fees, rates, or charges—Collection of charges or rates.
- 90.72.080 State water quality financial assistance—Priority to counties with shellfish protection districts.
- 90.72.900 Certain authority of counties not affected by chapter.

**Chapter 90.72 RCW**  
**SHELLFISH PROTECTION DISTRICTS**

**Sections**

- 90.72.020 Shellfish tidelands.
- 90.72.030 Shellfish protection districts—Establishment—Governing body—Programs.
- 90.72.040 Shellfish protection districts—Creation—Boundaries—Cooperation with governmental entities—Abolition—Referendum to repeal creation—Certain fees not permitted.
- 90.72.045 Shellfish protection districts—Programs required after closure or downgrading of growing area classification—Annual report.
- 90.72.060 Decisions addressing conflicting uses—Integration of the state environmental policy act and county ordinances and resolutions with programs.
- 90.72.065 Plans to control pollution effects of animal waste—Contracts with conservation districts.
- 90.72.070 Program financing—Activities not subject to fees, rates, or charges—Collection of charges or rates.
- 90.72.080 State water quality financial assistance—Priority to counties with shellfish protection districts.
- 90.72.900 Certain authority of counties not affected by chapter.

**RCW 90.72.020 Shellfish tidelands.** For purposes of this chapter, "shellfish tidelands" means all saltwater tidelands on which shellfish are grown or harvested for human consumption. [1985 c 417 § 2.]

**RCW 90.72.030 Shellfish protection districts—Establishment—Governing body—Programs.** The legislative authority of each county having shellfish tidelands within its boundaries is authorized to establish a shellfish protection district to include areas in which nonpoint pollution threatens the water quality upon which the continuation or restoration of shellfish farming or harvesting is dependent. The legislative authority shall constitute the governing body of the district and shall adopt a shellfish protection program with elements and activities to be effective within the district. The legislative authority may appoint a local advisory council to advise the legislative authority in preparation and implementation of shellfish protection programs. This program shall include any elements deemed appropriate to deal with the nonpoint pollution threatening water quality over shellfish tidelands, including, but not limited to, requiring the elimination or decrease of contaminants in stormwater runoff, establishing monitoring, inspection, and repair elements to ensure that on-site sewage systems are adequately maintained and working properly, assuring that animal grazing and manure management practices are consistent with best management practices, and establishing educational and public involvement programs to inform citizens on the causes of the threatening nonpoint pollution and what they can do to decrease the amount of such pollution. The county legislative authority shall consult with the department of health, the

department of ecology, the department of agriculture, or the conservation commission as appropriate as to the elements of the program. An element may be omitted where another program is effectively addressing those sources of nonpoint water pollution. Within the limits of RCW 90.72.040 and 90.72.070, the county legislative authority shall have full jurisdiction and authority to manage, regulate, and control its programs and to fix, alter, regulate, and control the fees for services provided and charges or rates as provided under those programs. Programs established under this chapter, may, but are not required to, be part of a system of sewerage as defined in RCW 36.94.010. [2008 c 250 § 1; 2007 c 150 § 1; 1992 c 100 § 2; 1985 c 417 § 3.]

**Findings—1992 c 100:** "The legislature finds that shellfish harvesting is important to our economy and way of life. Washington state is an international leader in the cultivation and production of shellfish. However, large portions of the state's productive recreational and commercial shellfish beds are closed to harvesting, and more are threatened, because of water pollution. The legislature finds that the problem of shellfish bed closures demands a public policy solution and that the state, local governments, and individuals must each take strong and swift action or this precious resource will be lost.

It is the goal of the legislature to prevent further closures of recreational and commercial shellfish beds, to restore water quality in saltwater tidelands to allow the reopening of at least one restricted or closed shellfish bed each year, and to ensure Washington state's commanding international position in shellfish production.

The legislature finds that failing on-site sewage systems and animal waste are the two most significant causes of shellfish bed closures over the past decade. Remedial actions at the local level are required to effectively address these problems.

The legislature finds that existing entities, including conservation districts and local health departments, should be used by counties to address the water quality problems affecting the recreational and commercial shellfish harvest.

The legislature finds that local action in each watershed where shellfish are harvested is required to protect this vital resource. The legislature hereby encourages all counties having saltwater tidelands within their boundaries to establish shellfish protection districts and programs designed to prevent any further degradation and contamination and to allow for restoration and reopening of closed shellfish growing areas." [1992 c 100 § 1.]

**RCW 90.72.040 Shellfish protection districts—Creation—Boundaries—Cooperation with governmental entities—Abolition—Referendum to repeal creation—Certain fees not permitted.** (1) The county legislative authority may create a shellfish protection district on its own motion or by submitting the question to the voters of the proposed district and obtaining the approval of a majority of those voting. The boundaries of the district shall be determined by the legislative authority. The legislative authority may create more than one district. A district may include any area or areas within the county, whether incorporated or unincorporated. Counties shall coordinate and cooperate with cities, towns, and water-related special

districts within their boundaries in establishing shellfish protection districts and carrying out shellfish protection programs. Where a portion of the proposed district lies within an incorporated area, the county shall develop procedures for the participation of the city or town in the determination of the boundaries of the district and the administration of the district, including funding of the district's programs. The legislative authority of more than one county may by agreement provide for the creation of a district including areas within each of those counties. County legislative authorities are encouraged to coordinate their plans and programs to protect shellfish growing areas, especially where shellfish growing areas are located within the boundaries of more than one county. The legislative authority or authorities creating a district may abolish a shellfish protection district on its or their own motion or by submitting the question to the voters of the district and obtaining the approval of a majority of those voting.

(2) If the county legislative authority creates a shellfish protection district by its own motion, any registered voter residing within the boundaries of the shellfish protection district may file a referendum petition to repeal the ordinance that created the district. Any referendum petition to repeal the ordinance creating the shellfish protection district shall be filed with the county auditor within seven days of passage of the ordinance. Within ten days of the filing of a petition, the county auditor shall confer with the petitioner concerning form and style of the petition, issue an identification number for the petition, and write a ballot title for the measure. The ballot title shall be posed as a question so that an affirmative answer to the question and an affirmative vote on the measure results in creation of the shellfish protection district and a negative answer to the question and a negative vote on the measure results in the shellfish protection district not being created. The petitioner shall be notified of the identification number and ballot title within this ten-day period.

After this notification, the petitioner shall have thirty days in which to secure on petition forms the signatures of not less than twenty-five percent of the registered voters residing within the boundaries of the shellfish protection district and file the signed petitions with the county auditor. Each petition form shall contain the ballot title and full text of the measure to be referred. The county auditor shall verify the sufficiency of the signatures on the petitions. If sufficient valid signatures are properly submitted, the county auditor shall submit the referendum measure to the registered voters residing in the shellfish protection district in a special election no later than one hundred twenty days after the signed petition has been filed with the county auditor.

(3) The county legislative authority shall not impose fees, rates, or charges for shellfish protection district programs upon properties on which fees, rates, or charges are imposed under chapter 36.89 or 36.94 RCW for substantially the same programs and services. [2011 c 10 § 84; 1997 c 447 § 20; 1992 c 100 § 3; 1985 c 417 § 4.]

**Notice to registered poll voters—Elections by mail—2011 c 10:**  
See note following RCW 29A.04.008.

**Finding—Purpose—1997 c 447:** See note following RCW 70.05.074.

**Findings—1992 c 100:** See note following RCW 90.72.030.

**RCW 90.72.045 Shellfish protection districts—Programs required after closure or downgrading of growing area classification—Annual report.** The county legislative authority shall create a shellfish protection district and establish a shellfish protection program developed under RCW 90.72.030 or an equivalent program to address the causes or suspected causes of pollution within one hundred eighty days after the department of health, because of water quality degradation due to ongoing nonpoint sources of pollution has closed or downgraded the classification of a recreational or commercial shellfish growing area within the boundaries of the county. The county legislative authority shall initiate implementation of the shellfish protection program within sixty days after it is established.

A copy of the program must be provided to the departments of health, ecology, and agriculture. An agency that has regulatory authority for any of the sources of nonpoint pollution covered by the program shall cooperate with the county in its implementation. The county legislative authority shall submit a written report to the department of health annually that describes the status and progress of the program. If rates or fees are collected under RCW 90.72.070 for implementation of the shellfish protection district program, the annual report shall provide sufficient detail of the expenditure of the revenue collected to ensure compliance with RCW 90.72.070. [2008 c 250 § 2; 2007 c 150 § 2; 1992 c 100 § 4.]

**Findings—1992 c 100:** See note following RCW 90.72.030.

**RCW 90.72.060 Decisions addressing conflicting uses—Integration of the state environmental policy act and county ordinances and resolutions with programs.** Whenever a governmental entity makes a decision which addresses a matter in which there is a conflict between (1) on the one hand, a proposed development, proposed change in land use controls, or proposed change in the provision of utility services; and (2) on the other hand, the long-term use of an area for the growing or harvesting of shellfish, which area is within the boundaries of a shellfish protection district, then the governmental entity making the decision must observe the requirements of chapter 43.21C RCW and county ordinances or resolutions integrating the state environmental policy act of 1971 into the various programs under county jurisdiction. [1985 c 417 § 6.]

**RCW 90.72.065 Plans to control pollution effects of animal waste—Contracts with conservation districts.** Within available funding and as specified in the shellfish protection program, counties creating shellfish protection districts shall contract with conservation districts to draft plans with landowners to control pollution effects of animal waste. [1992 c 100 § 5.]

**Findings—1992 c 100:** See note following RCW 90.72.030.

**RCW 90.72.070 Program financing—Activities not subject to fees, rates, or charges—Collection of charges or rates.** The county legislative authority establishing a shellfish protection district may finance the protection program through (1) county tax revenues, (2) reasonable inspection fees and similar fees for services provided, (3) reasonable charges or rates specified in its protection program, or (4) federal, state, or private grants. A dairy animal feeding operation with a certified dairy nutrient management plan as required in chapter 90.64 RCW and any other commercial agricultural operation on agricultural lands as defined in RCW 36.70A.030 shall be subject to fees, rates, or charges by a shellfish protection district of no more than five hundred dollars in a calendar year. Facilities permitted and assessed fees for wastewater discharge under the national pollutant discharge elimination system shall not be subject to fees, rates, or charges for wastewater discharge by a shellfish protection district. Lands classified as forestland under chapter 84.33 RCW and timberland under chapter 84.34 RCW shall not be subject to fees, rates, or charges by a shellfish protection district. Counties may collect charges or rates in the manner determined by the county legislative authority. [2008 c 250 § 3; 1992 c 100 § 6; 1985 c 417 § 7.]

**Findings—1992 c 100:** See note following RCW 90.72.030.

**RCW 90.72.080 State water quality financial assistance—Priority to counties with shellfish protection districts.** Counties that have formed shellfish protection districts shall receive high priority for state water quality financial assistance to implement shellfish protection programs, including grants and loans provided under RCW 43.83.350, chapters \*70.146 and 90.50A RCW. [2015 1st sp.s. c 4 § 57; 1992 c 100 § 7.]

**\*Reviser's note:** Chapter 70.146 RCW was recodified as chapter 70A.135 RCW pursuant to 2020 c 20 § 2046.

**Findings—1992 c 100:** See note following RCW 90.72.030.

**RCW 90.72.900 Certain authority of counties not affected by chapter.** This chapter shall not be considered as diminishing or affecting the authority of a county to adopt and enforce programs or controls, within all or a portion of the county, to deal with nonpoint pollution. [1985 c 417 § 8.]

**Chapter 90.74 RCW**  
**AQUATIC RESOURCES MITIGATION**

**Sections**

- 90.74.005 Findings—Intent.
- 90.74.010 Definitions.
- 90.74.020 Mitigation plans.
- 90.74.030 Regulatory decisions, guidance—Multiple requests for review of mitigation plans.
- 90.74.040 Developing new programs/using existing programs to mitigate for environmental impacts—Departments authorized to seek funds.

**Chapter 90.74 RCW**  
**AQUATIC RESOURCES MITIGATION**

**Sections**

- 90.74.005 Findings—Intent.
- 90.74.010 Definitions.
- 90.74.020 Mitigation plans.
- 90.74.030 Regulatory decisions, guidance—Multiple requests for review of mitigation plans.
- 90.74.040 Developing new programs/using existing programs to mitigate for environmental impacts—Departments authorized to seek funds.

**RCW 90.74.005 Findings—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds that:

(a) The state lacks a clear policy relating to the mitigation of wetlands and aquatic habitat for infrastructure development;

(b) Regulatory agencies have generally required project proponents to use compensatory mitigation only at the site of the project's impacts and to mitigate narrowly for the habitat or biological functions impacted by a project;

(c) This practice of considering traditional on-site, in-kind mitigation may provide fewer environmental benefits when compared to innovative mitigation proposals that provide benefits in advance of a project's planned impacts and that restore functions or habitat other than those impacted at a project site;

(d) Regulatory decisions on development proposals that attempt to incorporate innovative mitigation measures take an unreasonably long period of time and are subject to a great deal of uncertainty and additional expenses; and

(e) Greater environmental benefits may be achievable through compensatory environmental mitigation when the collective mitigation investments of project proponents is paired with the structure of successful state programs that are referenced in statute and are designed to enhance and preserve aquatic and riparian functions when there is a clear linkage between the environmental impacts and the goals of the state program. Programs such as the forestry riparian easement program, the family forest fish passage program, and the riparian open space program created pursuant to RCW 76.09.040 may have a logical and physical nexus with many underlying projects, especially road projects, and are proven to create a sustained benefit in the aquatic environment.

(2) The legislature therefore declares that it is the policy of the state to authorize innovative mitigation measures by requiring state regulatory agencies to consider mitigation proposals for projects that are timed, designed, and located in a manner to provide equal or better biological functions and values compared to traditional on-site, in-kind mitigation proposals.

(3) It is the intent of the legislature to authorize local governments to accommodate the goals of this chapter. It is not the intent of the legislature to: (a) Restrict the ability of a project proponent to pursue project specific mitigation; or (b) create any new authority for regulating wetlands or aquatic habitat beyond what is specifically provided for in this chapter. [2012 c 62 § 2; 1997 c 424 § 1.]



**RCW 90.74.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Compensatory mitigation" means the restoration, creation, enhancement, or preservation of uplands, wetlands, or other aquatic resources for the purposes of compensating for unavoidable adverse impacts that remain after all appropriate and practicable avoidance and minimization has been achieved. "Compensatory mitigation" includes mitigation that:

(a) Occurs at the same time as, or in advance of, a project's planned environmental impacts;

(b) Is located in a site either on, near, or distant from the project's impacts; and

(c) Provides either the same or different biological functions and values as the functions and values impacted by the project.

(2) "Family forest fish passage program" means the program administered by the recreation and conservation office created pursuant to RCW 76.09.410 that provides public cost assistance to small forestland owners associated with the road maintenance and abandonment processes.

(3) "Forestry riparian easement program" means the program established in RCW 76.13.120.

(4) "Infrastructure development" means an action that is critical for the maintenance or expansion of an existing infrastructure feature such as a highway, rail line, airport, marine terminal, utility corridor, harbor area, or hydroelectric facility and is consistent with an approved land use planning process. This planning process may include the growth management act, chapter 36.70A RCW, or the shoreline management act, chapter 90.58 RCW, in areas covered by those chapters.

(5) "Mitigation" means sequentially avoiding impacts, minimizing impacts, or compensating for remaining unavoidable impacts.

(6) "Mitigation plan" means a document or set of documents developed through joint discussions between a project proponent and environmental regulatory agencies that describe the unavoidable wetland or aquatic resource impacts of a proposed infrastructure development or noninfrastructure development and the proposed compensatory mitigation for those impacts.

(7) "Noninfrastructure development" means a development project that requires the completion of compensatory mitigation that does not meet the definition of "infrastructure development" and is consistent with an approved land use planning process. This planning process may include the growth management act, chapter 36.70A RCW, or the shoreline management act, chapter 90.58 RCW, in areas covered by those chapters.

(8) "Project proponent" means a public or private entity responsible for preparing a mitigation plan.

(9) "Riparian open space program" means the program created pursuant to RCW 76.09.040.

(10) "Watershed" means an area identified as a state of Washington water resource inventory area under WAC 173-500-040 as it exists on June 7, 2012. [2012 c 62 § 3; 1997 c 424 § 2.]

**Reviser's note:** The definitions in this section have been alphabetized pursuant to RCW 1.08.015(2)(k).

**RCW 90.74.020 Mitigation plans.** (1) Project proponents may use a mitigation plan to propose compensatory mitigation within a watershed. A mitigation plan shall:

(a) Contain provisions that guarantee the long-term viability of the created, restored, enhanced, or preserved habitat, including assurances for protecting any essential biological functions and values defined in the mitigation plan;

(b) Contain provisions for long-term monitoring of any created, restored, or enhanced mitigation site; and

(c) Be consistent with the local comprehensive land use plan and any other applicable planning process in effect for the development area, such as an adopted subbasin or watershed plan.

(2) (a) The departments of ecology and fish and wildlife may not limit the scope of options in a mitigation plan to areas on or near the project site, or to habitat types of the same type as contained on the project site. The departments of ecology and fish and wildlife shall fully review and give due consideration to compensatory mitigation proposals that improve the overall biological functions and values of the watershed or bay and accommodate the mitigation needs of the infrastructure development or noninfrastructure development, including proposals or portions of proposals that are explored or developed in RCW 90.74.040.

(b) The departments of ecology and fish and wildlife are not required to grant approval to a mitigation plan that the departments find does not provide equal or better biological functions and values within the watershed or bay.

(3) When making a permit or other regulatory decision under the guidance of this chapter, the departments of ecology and fish and wildlife shall consider whether the mitigation plan provides equal or better biological functions and values, compared to the existing conditions, for the target resources or species identified in the mitigation plan. This consideration shall be based upon the following factors:

(a) The relative value of the mitigation for the target resources, in terms of the quality and quantity of biological functions and values provided;

(b) The compatibility of the proposal with the intent of broader resource management and habitat management objectives and plans, such as existing resource management plans, watershed plans, critical areas ordinances, the forestry riparian easement program, the riparian open space program, the family forest fish passage program, and shoreline master programs;

(c) The ability of the mitigation to address scarce functions or values within a watershed;

(d) The benefits of the proposal to broader watershed landscape, including the benefits of connecting various habitat units or providing population-limiting habitats or functions for target species;

(e) The benefits of early implementation of habitat mitigation for projects that provide compensatory mitigation in advance of the project's planned impacts; and

(f) The significance of any negative impacts to nontarget species or resources.

(4) A mitigation plan may be approved through a memorandum of agreement between the project proponent and either the department of ecology or the department of fish and wildlife, or both. [2012 c 62 § 4; 1997 c 424 § 3.]

**RCW 90.74.030 Regulatory decisions, guidance—Multiple requests for review of mitigation plans.** (1) In making regulatory decisions relating to wetland or aquatic resource mitigation, the departments of ecology and fish and wildlife shall, at the request of the project proponent, follow the guidance of this chapter.

(2) If the department of ecology or the department of fish and wildlife receives multiple requests for review of mitigation plans, each department may schedule its review of these proposals to conform to available budgetary resources. [2012 c 62 § 7; 1997 c 424 § 4.]

**RCW 90.74.040 Developing new programs/using existing programs to mitigate for environmental impacts—Departments authorized to seek funds.**

(1)(a) To the degree that resources are deemed available by the affected departments, the department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife shall allow, when appropriate, programs that are related to environmental mitigation, or explore the potential of developing new programs, to utilize the forestry riparian easement program, the riparian open space program, or the family forest fish passage program to mitigate for environmental impacts from projects conducted in the state where compatible with existing regulations. The use of these programs may not be additive to existing compensatory mitigation requirements.

(b) In implementing this subsection, the department of natural resources may be used as a resource, consistent with RCW 76.09.480, to assist in identifying potential projects that can be used for the mitigation of infrastructure and noninfrastructure development.

(2) The department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife are authorized to seek federal or private funds and in-kind contributions to implement this section. The scope of effort in implementing this section may be defined by the success of the department of ecology and the department of fish and wildlife in securing specific funding. [2012 c 62 § 5.]

**Chapter 90.80 RCW**  
**WATER CONSERVANCY BOARDS**

**Sections**

- 90.80.005 Findings.
- 90.80.010 Definitions.
- 90.80.020 Water conservancy boards—Creation.
- 90.80.030 Petition for board creation—Required information—  
Approval or denial—Description of training  
requirements.
- 90.80.035 Water conservancy boards for water resource inventory  
areas—Multicounty water conservancy boards—Petition  
for creation.
- 90.80.040 Rules—Minimum training requirements and continuing  
education.
- 90.80.050 Corporate powers—Board composition—Members' terms,  
expenses—Alternates—Eligibility to be appointed.
- 90.80.055 Additional board powers.
- 90.80.057 Quorum.
- 90.80.060 Board powers—Funding.
- 90.80.065 Dissolution of board.
- 90.80.070 Applications for water transfers—Notice—Record of  
decision—Review—Alternate serving as commissioner.
- 90.80.080 Records of decision—Transmittal to department and others  
—Internet posting—Review.
- 90.80.090 Appeals from director's decisions.
- 90.80.100 Damages arising from records of decisions on transfers—  
Immunity.
- 90.80.110 Approval of interties.
- 90.80.120 Conflicts of interest.
- 90.80.130 Application of open public meetings act.
- 90.80.135 Application of public records act.
- 90.80.140 Transfers approved under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW not  
affected.
- 90.80.150 Information required to be maintained on the department's  
website.

**Chapter 90.80 RCW**  
**WATER CONSERVANCY BOARDS**

**Sections**

- 90.80.005 Findings.
- 90.80.010 Definitions.
- 90.80.020 Water conservancy boards—Creation.
- 90.80.030 Petition for board creation—Required information—  
Approval or denial—Description of training  
requirements.
- 90.80.035 Water conservancy boards for water resource inventory  
areas—Multicounty water conservancy boards—Petition  
for creation.
- 90.80.040 Rules—Minimum training requirements and continuing  
education.
- 90.80.050 Corporate powers—Board composition—Members' terms,  
expenses—Alternates—Eligibility to be appointed.
- 90.80.055 Additional board powers.
- 90.80.057 Quorum.
- 90.80.060 Board powers—Funding.
- 90.80.065 Dissolution of board.
- 90.80.070 Applications for water transfers—Notice—Record of  
decision—Review—Alternate serving as commissioner.
- 90.80.080 Records of decision—Transmittal to department and others  
—Internet posting—Review.
- 90.80.090 Appeals from director's decisions.
- 90.80.100 Damages arising from records of decisions on transfers—  
Immunity.
- 90.80.110 Approval of interties.
- 90.80.120 Conflicts of interest.
- 90.80.130 Application of open public meetings act.
- 90.80.135 Application of public records act.
- 90.80.140 Transfers approved under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW not  
affected.
- 90.80.150 Information required to be maintained on the department's  
website.

**RCW 90.80.005 Findings.** The legislature finds:

- (1) Voluntary water right transfers can reallocate water use in a manner that will result in more efficient use of water resources;
- (2) Voluntary water right transfers can help alleviate water shortages, save capital outlays, reduce development costs, and provide an incentive for investment in water conservation efforts by water right holders; and
- (3) The state should expedite the administrative process for water right transfers by authorizing the establishment of water conservancy boards. [2001 c 237 § 6; 1997 c 441 § 1.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.010 Definitions.** The following definitions apply throughout this chapter, unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Alternate" means an individual: (a) Who is appointed by the county legislative authority or authorities under RCW 90.80.050(3); (b) who is trained under the requirements of RCW 90.80.040; and (c) who, while serving as a replacement for an absent or recused commissioner: (i) May serve and vote as a commissioner; (ii) is subject to any requirement applicable to a commissioner; and (iii) counts toward a quorum.

(2) "Board" means a water conservancy board created under this chapter.

(3) "Commissioner" means an individual who is appointed by the county legislative authority or authorities as a member of a water conservancy board under RCW 90.80.050(1), or an alternate appointed under RCW 90.80.050(3) while serving as a replacement for an absent or recused commissioner.

(4) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(5) "Director" means the director of the department of ecology.

(6) "Record of decision" means the conclusion reached by a water conservancy board regarding an application for a transfer filed with the board.

(7) "Transfer" means a transfer, change, amendment, or other alteration of a part or all of a water right authorized under RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.390, or 90.44.100. [2004 c 10 § 1; 2001 c 237 § 7; 1997 c 441 § 2.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.020 Water conservancy boards—Creation.** (1) The county legislative authority of a county may create a water conservancy board, subject to approval by the director, for the purpose of expediting voluntary water transfers within the county.

(2) A water conservancy board may be initiated by: (a) A resolution of the county legislative authority; (b) a resolution presented to the county legislative authority calling for the creation of a board by the legislative authority of an irrigation district, public utility district that operates a public water system, a reclamation district, a city operating a public water system, or a water-sewer district that operates a public water system; (c) a resolution by the governing body of a cooperative or mutual corporation that operates a public water system serving one hundred or more accounts; (d) a petition signed by five or more water rights holders, including their addresses, who divert water for use within the county; or (e) any combination of (a) through (d) of this subsection. The resolution or petition must state the need for the board, include proposed bylaws or rules and procedures that will govern the operation of the board, identify the geographic boundaries where there is an initial interest in transacting water sales or transfers, and describe the proposed method for funding the operation of the board.

(3) After receiving a resolution or petition to create a board, a county legislative authority shall determine its sufficiency. If the county legislative authority finds that the resolution or petition is sufficient, or if the county is initiating the creation of a board upon its own motion, it shall hold at least one public hearing on the proposed creation of the board. Notice of the hearing shall be published at least once in a newspaper of general circulation in the county not less than ten days nor more than thirty days before the date of the hearing. The notice shall describe the time, date, place, and purpose of the hearing, as well as the purpose of the board. Following the hearing, the county legislative authority may adopt a resolution approving the creation of the board if it finds that the board's creation is in the public interest. [1997 c 441 § 3.]

**RCW 90.80.030 Petition for board creation—Required information—Approval or denial—Description of training requirements.** (1) The county legislative authority shall forward a copy of the resolution or petition calling for the creation of the board, a copy of the resolution approving the creation of the board, and a summary of the public testimony presented at the public hearing to the director following the adoption of the resolution calling for the board's creation.

(2) The director shall approve or deny the creation of a board within forty-five days after the county legislative authority has submitted all information required under subsection (1) of this section. The director must determine whether the creation of the board would further the purposes of this chapter and is in the public interest. The director shall include a description of the necessary training requirements for commissioners in the notice of approval sent to the county legislative authority. [1997 c 441 § 4.]

**RCW 90.80.035 Water conservancy boards for water resource inventory areas—Multicounty water conservancy boards—Petition for creation.** (1) If a county is the only county having lands comprising a water resource inventory area as defined in chapter 173-500 WAC, the county may elect to establish a water conservancy board for the water resource inventory area, rather than for the entire county.

(2) Counties having lands within a water resource inventory area may jointly petition the department for establishment of a water conservancy board for the water resource inventory area. Counties may jointly petition the department to establish boards serving multiple counties or one or more water resource inventory areas. For any of these multicounty options, the counties must reach their joint determination on the decision to file the petition, on the proposed bylaws, and on other matters relating to the establishment and operation of the board in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and chapter 39.34 RCW, the interlocal cooperation act. Each county must meet the requirements of RCW 90.80.020(2). The counties must jointly determine the sufficiency of a petition under RCW 90.80.020(3) and each county legislative authority must hold a hearing in its county.

(3) If establishment of a multicounty water conservancy board under any of the options provided in subsection (2) of this section is approved by the department, the counties must jointly appoint the

board commissioners and jointly appoint members to fill vacancies as they occur, and may jointly appoint alternates in accordance with the provisions of this chapter and chapter 39.34 RCW.

(4) A board established for more than one county or for one or more water resource inventory areas has the same powers as other boards established under this chapter. The board has no jurisdiction outside the boundaries of the water resource inventory area or areas or the county or counties, as applicable, for which it has been established, except as provided in this chapter.

(5) The counties establishing a board for a multiple county area must designate a lead county for purposes of providing a single point of contact for communications with the department. The lead county shall forward the information required in RCW 90.80.030(1) for each county. [2004 c 10 § 2; 2001 c 237 § 8.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.040 Rules—Minimum training requirements and continuing education.** The director of the department may, as deemed necessary by the director, adopt rules in accordance with chapter 34.05 RCW necessary to carry out this chapter, including minimum requirements for the training and continuing education of commissioners. Training courses for commissioners shall include an overview of state water law and hydrology. Prior to commissioners taking action on proposed water right transfers, the commissioners shall comply with training requirements that include state water law and hydrology. [1997 c 441 § 5.]

**RCW 90.80.050 Corporate powers—Board composition—Members' terms, expenses—Alternates—Eligibility to be appointed.** (1) A water conservancy board constitutes a public body corporate and politic and a separate unit of local government in the state. Each board shall consist of three commissioners appointed by the county legislative authority or authorities as applicable for six-year terms. The county legislative authority or authorities shall stagger the initial appointment of commissioners so that the first commissioners who are appointed shall serve terms of two, four, and six years, respectively, from the date of their appointment. The county legislative authority or authorities may appoint two additional commissioners, for a total of five. If the county or counties elect to appoint five commissioners, the initial terms of the additional commissioners shall be for three and five-year terms respectively. All vacancies shall be filled for the unexpired term.

(2) The county legislative authority or authorities shall consider, but are not limited in appointing, nominations to the board by people or entities petitioning or requesting the creation of the board. The county legislative authority or authorities shall ensure that at least one commissioner is an individual water right holder who diverts or withdraws water for use within the area served by the board. The county legislative authority or authorities must appoint one person who is not a water right holder, except as provided in



subsection (5) of this section. If the county legislative authority or authorities choose not to appoint five commissioners, and as of May 10, 2001, there is no commissioner on an existing board who is not a water right holder, the county or counties are not required to appoint a new commissioner until the first vacancy occurs. In making appointments to the board, the county legislative authority or authorities shall choose from among persons who are residents of the county or counties or a county that is contiguous to the county that the water conservancy board is to serve.

(3) The county legislative authority or authorities may appoint up to two alternates to serve in a reserve capacity as replacements for absent or recused commissioners, and while serving in that capacity an alternate may serve for all or any portion of a meeting of the board. Alternates do not hold an appointed commissioner position on a board as set forth under subsection (1) of this section. An alternate shall be appointed to serve a six-year term.

(4) No commissioner may participate in a record of decision of a board until he or she has successfully completed the necessary training required under RCW 90.80.040. Commissioners shall serve without compensation, but are entitled to reimbursement for necessary travel expenses in accordance with RCW 43.03.050 and 43.03.060 and costs incident to receiving training.

(5) For the purposes [of] determining a person's eligibility to be appointed as a commissioner who is not a water right holder under this section, a person is not considered to be a water right holder: (a) By virtue of the person's receiving water from a municipal water supplier as defined in RCW 90.03.015, or (b) if the only water right held by the person is a right to the type of residential use of water that is exempted from permit requirements by RCW 90.44.050 and that right is for water from a well located in a county with a population that is not greater than one hundred fifty thousand people. [2004 c 104 § 2; 2004 c 10 § 3; 2001 c 237 § 10; 1997 c 441 § 6.]

**Reviser's note:** This section was amended by 2004 c 10 § 3 and by 2004 c 104 § 2, each without reference to the other. Both amendments are incorporated in the publication of this section under RCW 1.12.025(2). For rule of construction, see RCW 1.12.025(1).

**Purpose—2004 c 104:** "The purpose of this act is to ensure that counties have a sufficient portion of their citizenry eligible to serve as commissioners of water conservancy boards to enable the appointing legislative authorities to fill positions on the boards in both urban and rural counties." [2004 c 104 § 1.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.055 Additional board powers.** (1) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, a board shall operate on a countywide basis or on an area-wide basis in the case of a board with jurisdiction in more than one county or water resource inventory area, and have the following powers, in addition to any other powers granted in this chapter:

(a) Except as provided in subsection (2) of this section, a board may act upon applications for the same kinds of transfers that the department itself is authorized to act upon, including an application to establish a trust water right under chapter 90.38 or 90.42 RCW. A board may not act upon an application for the type of transfer within an irrigation district as described in RCW 90.03.380(3). If a board receives an application for a transfer between two irrigation districts as described in RCW 90.03.380(2), the board must, before publication of notice of the application, receive the concurrence specified in that section.

(b) A board may act upon an application to transfer a water right claim filed under chapter 90.14 RCW. In acting upon such an application, the board must make a tentative determination as to the validity and extent of the right, if any, embodied in the claim and may only issue a record of decision regarding a transfer of such a claim to the extent it is tentatively determined to be valid. Neither the board's tentative determination, nor the director's acceptance of such a tentative determination, constitutes an adjudication of the right under RCW 90.03.110 through 90.03.240 or 90.44.220, and such a determination does not preclude or prejudice a subsequent challenge to the validity, priority, or quantity of the right in a general adjudication under those sections.

(c) A board may establish a water right transfer information exchange through which all or part of a water right may be listed for sale or lease. The board may also accept and post notices in the exchange from persons interested in acquiring or leasing water rights from willing sellers.

(d) The director shall assign a representative of the department to provide technical assistance to each board. If requested by the board, the representative shall work with the board as it reviews applications for formal acceptance, prepares draft records of decision, and considers other technical or legal factors affecting the board's development of a final record of decision. A board may request and accept additional technical assistance from the department. A board may also request and accept assistance and support from the county government or governments of the county or counties in which it operates.

(2) The jurisdiction of a board shall not apply within the boundaries of a federal Indian reservation or to lands held in trust for an Indian band, tribe, or nation by the federal government. [2001 c 237 § 9.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.057 Quorum.** For purposes of carrying out the official business of a board, a quorum consists of the physical presence of two of the three members of a three-member board or three of the five members of a five-member board. A board may operate with one or two vacant positions as long as it meets the quorum requirement. [2001 c 237 § 19.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.060 Board powers—Funding.** (1) A water conservancy board may acquire, purchase, hold, lease, manage, occupy, and sell real and personal property or any interest therein, enter into and perform all necessary contracts, appoint and employ necessary agents and employees and fix their compensation, employ contractors including contracts for professional services, sue and be sued, and do any and all lawful acts required and expedient to carry out the purposes of this chapter.

(2) A board constitutes an independently funded entity, and may provide for its own funding as determined by the commissioners. The board may accept grants and may adopt fees for processing applications for transfers of water rights to fund the activities of the board. A board may not impose taxes or acquire property by the exercise of eminent domain. [1997 c 441 § 7.]

**RCW 90.80.065 Dissolution of board.** A water conservancy board may be formally dissolved by the county or jointly by the counties as applicable in which it operates by adoption of a resolution of the county legislative authority or authorities. Notice of the dissolution must be provided to the director. The department may petition the county legislative authority of the county or the lead county for a board to request that the board be dissolved for repeated statutory violations or demonstrated inability to perform the functions for which the board was created. [2001 c 237 § 16.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.070 Applications for water transfers—Notice—Record of decision—Review—Alternate serving as commissioner.** (1) A person proposing a transfer of a water right may elect to file an application with a water conservancy board, if a board has been established for the geographic area where the water is or would be diverted, withdrawn, or used. If the person has already filed an application with the department, the person may request that the department convey the application to the conservancy board with jurisdiction and the department must promptly forward the application. A board is not required to process an application filed with the board. If a board decides that it will not process an application, it must return the application to the applicant and must inform the applicant that the application may be filed with the department. An application to the board for a transfer shall be made on a form provided by the department. A board may require an applicant to submit within a reasonable time additional information as may be required by the board in order to review and act upon the application. At a minimum, the application shall include information sufficient to establish to the

board's satisfaction that a right to the quantity of water being transferred exists, and a description of any applicable limitations on the right to use water, including the point of diversion or withdrawal, place of use, source of supply, purpose of use, quantity of use permitted, time of use, period of use, and the place of storage.

(2) The applicant for any proposed water right transfer may apply to a board for a record of decision on a transfer if the water proposed to be transferred is currently diverted, withdrawn, or used within the geographic area in which the board has jurisdiction, or would be diverted, withdrawn, or used within the geographic area in which the board has jurisdiction if the transfer is approved. In the case of a proposed water right transfer in which the water is currently diverted or withdrawn or would be diverted or withdrawn outside the geographic boundaries of the county or the water resource inventory area where the use is proposed to be made, the board shall hold a public hearing in the county of the diversion or withdrawal or proposed diversion or withdrawal. The board shall provide for prominent publication of notice of the hearing in a newspaper of general circulation published in the county in which the hearing is to be held for the purpose of affording an opportunity for interested persons to comment upon the application. If an application is for a transfer of water out of the water resource inventory area that is the source of the water, the board shall consult with the department regarding the application.

(3) After an application for a transfer is filed with the board, the board shall publish notice of the application and send notice to state agencies in accordance with the requirements of RCW 90.03.280. In addition, the board shall send notice of the application to any Indian tribe with reservation lands that would be, but for RCW 90.80.055(2), within the area in which the board has jurisdiction. The board shall also provide notice of the application to any Indian tribe that has requested that it be notified of applications. Any person may submit comments and other information to the board regarding the application. The comments and information may be submitted in writing or verbally at any public meeting of the board to discuss or decide on the application. The comments must be considered by the board in making its record of decision.

(4) If a majority of the board determines that the application is complete, and that the transfer is in accordance with RCW 90.03.380, 90.03.390, or 90.44.100, the board must issue a record of decision approving the transfer, subject to review by the director. In making its record of decision, the board must consider among other things whether the proposed transfer can be made without detriment or injury to existing water rights, including rights established for instream flows. The board must include in its record of decision any conditions that are deemed necessary for the transfer to qualify for approval under the applicable laws of the state. The basis for the record of decision of the board must be documented in a report of examination. The board's proposed approval must clearly state that the applicant is not permitted to proceed to effect the proposed transfer until a final decision is made by the director. In making its record of decision, the board must consider among other things whether the proposed transfer can be made without detriment or injury to existing water rights, including rights established for instream flows.

(5) If a majority of the board determines that the application cannot be approved under the applicable laws of the state of

Washington, the board must make a record of decision denying the application together with its report of examination documenting its record of decision. The board's record of decision is subject to review by the director under RCW 90.80.080.

(6) When alternates appointed under the provisions of RCW 90.80.050(3) are serving as commissioners on a board, a majority vote of the board must include at least one commissioner appointed under the provisions of RCW 90.80.050(1).

(7) An alternate when serving as a commissioner in the review of an application before the board shall:

(a) Review the written record before the board and any exhibits provided for the review or provided at the hearing if a hearing was held;

(b) Review any audio or video recordings made of the proceedings on the application; and

(c) Conduct a site visit if a site visit by other commissioners acting on the application has been previously conducted.

(8) An alternate serving as a commissioner shall be guided by the conflict of interest standards applicable to all commissioners under RCW 90.80.120. The board shall provide notice of an alternate sitting as a commissioner to the applicant and other participants in proceedings before the board in a timely manner to provide sufficient time for any challenges for conflict of interest to be made prior to the board's decision on the application. [2004 c 10 § 4; 2001 c 237 § 11; 1997 c 441 § 9.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.080 Records of decision—Transmittal to department and others—Internet posting—Review.** (1) The board must provide a copy of its record of decision to the applicant. The board shall submit its record of decision on the transfer application to the department for review. The board shall also submit its report of examination to the department summarizing factual findings on which the board relied in reaching its record of decision and a copy of the files and records upon which the board's record of decision is based. The board shall also promptly transmit notice by mail to any person who objected to the transfer or who requested notice of the board's record of decision.

(2) Upon receipt of a board's record of decision, the department shall promptly post the text of the record of decision transmittal form on the department's internet site. The director shall review each record of decision made by a board for compliance with applicable state water law.

(3) Any party to a transfer, third party who alleges his or her water right will be impaired by the proposed transfer, or other person may file a letter of concern or support with the department and the department may consider the concern or support expressed in the letter. Such letters must be received by the department within thirty days of the department's receipt of the board's record of decision.

(4) The director shall review the record of decision of the board and shall affirm, reverse, or modify the action of the board within

forty-five days of receipt. The forty-five day time period may be extended for an additional thirty days by the director or at the request of the board or applicant. If the director fails to act within the prescribed time period, the board's record of decision becomes the decision of the department and is appealable as provided by RCW 90.80.090. If the director acts within the prescribed time period, the director's decision to affirm, modify, or reverse is appealable as provided by RCW 90.80.090, and the director's decision to remand is appealable as provided by \*RCW 90.80.120(2)(b). [2001 c 237 § 12; 1997 c 441 § 11.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 90.80.120 was amended by 2004 c 10 § 5, changing subsection (2)(b) to subsection (3)(b).

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.090 Appeals from director's decisions.** The decision of the director to approve or deny an action to create a board, or to approve, deny, or modify a water right transfer either by action or inaction is appealable in the same manner as other water right decisions made pursuant to chapters 90.03 and 90.44 RCW. [2001 c 237 § 13; 1997 c 441 § 12.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.100 Damages arising from records of decisions on transfers—Immunity.** Neither the county or counties, the department, a conservancy board, or its employees, nor individual conservancy board commissioners shall be subject to any cause of action or claim for damages arising out of records of decisions on transfers made by a board under this chapter. [2001 c 237 § 14; 1997 c 441 § 13.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.110 Approval of interties.** Nothing in this chapter eliminates or lessens the requirements necessary for the approval of interties. [1997 c 441 § 15.]

**RCW 90.80.120 Conflicts of interest.** (1) A commissioner of a water conservancy board shall not engage in any act which is in conflict with the proper discharge of the official duties of a commissioner. A commissioner is deemed to have a conflict of interest if he or she:

(a) Has an ownership interest in a water right subject to an application for approval before the board;

(b) Receives or has a financial interest in an application submitted to the board or a project, development, or venture related to the approval of the application; or

(c) Solicits, accepts, or seeks anything of economic value as a gift, gratuity, or favor from any person, firm, or corporation involved in the application.

(2) In the event of a recusal of an appointed commissioner, an alternate may serve as a commissioner on a board and may act upon the official board business for which the conflict of interest exists.

(3) The department shall return a record of decision to a conservancy board without action where the department determines that any member of a board has violated subsection (1) of this section.

(a) If a person seeking to rely on this section to disqualify a commissioner knows of the basis for disqualification before the time the board issues a record of decision, the person must request the board to have the commissioner recuse himself or herself from further involvement in processing the application, or be barred from later raising that challenge.

(b) If the commissioner does not recuse himself or herself or if the person becomes aware of the basis for disqualification after the board issues a record of decision but within the time period under RCW 90.80.080(3) for filing objections with the department, the person must raise the challenge with the department. If the department determines that the commissioner should be disqualified under this section, the director must remand the record of decision to the board for reconsideration and resubmission of a record of decision. The disqualified commissioner shall not participate in any further board review of the application. The department's decision on whether to remand a record of decision under this section may only be appealed at the same time and in the same manner as an appeal of the department's decision to affirm, modify, or reverse the record of decision after remand.

(c) If the person becomes aware of the basis for disqualification after the time for filing objections with the department, the person may raise the challenge in an appeal of the department's final decision under RCW 90.80.090. [2004 c 10 § 5; 2001 c 237 § 15; 1997 c 441 § 16.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.130 Application of open public meetings act.** Water conservancy board activities are subject to the open public meetings act, chapter 42.30 RCW and to \*chapter 42.32 RCW. This includes announcing meetings in advance. [2001 c 237 § 17; 1997 c 441 § 17.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The only section in chapter 42.32 RCW, RCW 42.32.030, was recodified as RCW 42.30.035 pursuant to 2017 3rd sp.s. c 25 § 30.

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.135 Application of public records act.** (1) A board is subject to the requirements of chapter 42.56 RCW. Each board must establish and maintain records of its proceedings and determinations. While in the possession of the board, all such records must be made available for inspection and copies must be provided to the public on request under the provisions of chapter 42.56 RCW.

(2) Upon the conclusion of its business involving a water right transfer application, a board must promptly send the original copies of all records relating to that application to the department for recordkeeping. A board may keep a copy of the original documents. After the records are transferred to the department, the responsibility for making the records available under chapter 42.56 RCW is transferred to the department. [2005 c 274 § 366; 2001 c 237 § 18.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.140 Transfers approved under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW not affected.** Nothing in this chapter affects transfers that may be otherwise approved under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW. [2001 c 237 § 20; 1997 c 441 § 18.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.80.150 Information required to be maintained on the department's website.** The department shall maintain information on its website concerning the boards formed or sought to be formed under the authority of this chapter, the transfer applications reviewed and other activities conducted by the boards, and the funding of such boards. Conservancy boards must provide information regarding their activities to the department to assist the department in updating this information at least biennially in even-numbered years. [2014 c 76 § 12; 2001 c 237 § 21; 1997 c 441 § 19.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.



**Chapter 90.82 RCW**  
**WATERSHED PLANNING**

**Sections**

- 90.82.005 Purpose.
- 90.82.010 Finding.
- 90.82.020 Definitions.
- 90.82.030 Principles.
- 90.82.040 WRIA planning units—Watershed planning grants—  
Eligibility criteria—Administrative costs.
- 90.82.043 Implementation plan.
- 90.82.048 Implementation plan—Timelines and milestones.
- 90.82.050 Limitations on liability.
- 90.82.060 Initiation of watershed planning—Scope of planning—  
Technical assistance from state agencies.
- 90.82.070 Water quantity component.
- 90.82.080 Instream flow component—Rules—Report.
- 90.82.085 Instream flows—Assessing and setting or amending.
- 90.82.090 Water quality component.
- 90.82.100 Habitat component.
- 90.82.110 Identification of projects and activities.
- 90.82.120 Plan parameters.
- 90.82.130 Plan approval—Public notice and hearing—Revisions.
- 90.82.140 Use of monitoring recommendations in RCW 77.85.210.

**Chapter 90.82 RCW**  
**WATERSHED PLANNING**

**Sections**

90.82.005	Purpose.
90.82.010	Finding.
90.82.020	Definitions.
90.82.030	Principles.
90.82.040	WRIA planning units—Watershed planning grants— Eligibility criteria—Administrative costs.
90.82.043	Implementation plan.
90.82.048	Implementation plan—Timelines and milestones.
90.82.050	Limitations on liability.
90.82.060	Initiation of watershed planning—Scope of planning— Technical assistance from state agencies.
90.82.070	Water quantity component.
90.82.080	Instream flow component—Rules—Report.
90.82.085	Instream flows—Assessing and setting or amending.
90.82.090	Water quality component.
90.82.100	Habitat component.
90.82.110	Identification of projects and activities.
90.82.120	Plan parameters.
90.82.130	Plan approval—Public notice and hearing—Revisions.
90.82.140	Use of monitoring recommendations in RCW 77.85.210.

**RCW 90.82.005 Purpose.** The purpose of this chapter is to develop a more thorough and cooperative method of determining what the current water resource situation is in each water resource inventory area of the state and to provide local citizens with the maximum possible input concerning their goals and objectives for water resource management and development.

It is necessary for the legislature to establish processes and policies that will result in providing state agencies with more specific guidance to manage the water resources of the state consistent with current law and direction provided by local entities and citizens through the process established in accordance with this chapter. [1997 c 442 § 101.]

**RCW 90.82.010 Finding.** The legislature finds that the local development of watershed plans for managing water resources and for protecting existing water rights is vital to both state and local interests. The local development of these plans serves vital local interests by placing it in the hands of people: Who have the greatest knowledge of both the resources and the aspirations of those who live and work in the watershed; and who have the greatest stake in the proper, long-term management of the resources. The development of such plans serves the state's vital interests by ensuring that the state's water resources are used wisely, by protecting existing water rights, by protecting instream flows for fish, and by providing for the economic well-being of the state's citizenry and communities. Therefore, the legislature believes it necessary for units of local government throughout the state to engage in the orderly development of these watershed plans. [1997 c 442 § 102.]

**RCW 90.82.020 Definitions.** Unless the context clearly requires otherwise, the definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter.

(1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(2) "Implementing rules" for a WRIA plan are the rules needed to give force and effect to the parts of the plan that create rights or obligations for any party including a state agency or that establish water management policy.

(3) "Minimum instream flow" means a minimum flow under chapter 90.03 or 90.22 RCW or a base flow under chapter 90.54 RCW.

(4) "WRIA" means a water resource inventory area established in chapter 173-500 WAC as it existed on January 1, 1997.

(5) "Water supply utility" means a water, combined water-sewer, irrigation, reclamation, or public utility district that provides water to persons or other water users within the district or a division or unit responsible for administering a publicly governed water supply system on behalf of a county.

(6) "WRIA plan" or "plan" means the product of the planning unit including any rules adopted in conjunction with the product of the planning unit. [1997 c 442 § 103.]

**RCW 90.82.030 Principles.** In order to have the best possible program for appropriating and administering water use in the state, the legislature establishes the following principles and criteria to carry out the purpose and intent of chapter 442, Laws of 1997.

(1) All WRIA planning units established under this chapter shall develop a process to assure that water resource user interests and directly involved interest groups at the local level have the opportunity, in a fair and equitable manner, to give input and direction to the process.

(2) If a planning unit requests technical assistance from a state agency as part of its planning activities under this chapter and the assistance is with regard to a subject matter over which the agency has jurisdiction, the state agency shall provide the technical assistance to the planning unit.

(3) Plans developed under chapter 442, Laws of 1997 shall be consistent with and not duplicative of efforts already under way in a WRIA, including but not limited to watershed analysis conducted under state forest practices statutes and rules. [1997 c 442 § 104.]

**RCW 90.82.040 WRIA planning units—Watershed planning grants—Eligibility criteria—Administrative costs.** (1) Once a WRIA planning unit has been initiated under RCW 90.82.060 and a lead agency has been designated, it shall notify the department and may apply to the department for funding assistance for conducting the planning and implementation. Funds shall be provided from and to the extent of appropriations made by the legislature to the department expressly for this purpose.

(2)(a) Each planning unit that has complied with subsection (1) of this section is eligible to receive watershed planning grants in the following amounts for the first three phases of watershed planning and phase four watershed plan implementation:

(i) Initiating governments may apply for an initial organizing grant of up to fifty thousand dollars for a single WRIA or up to

seventy-five thousand dollars for a multi-WRIA management area in accordance with RCW 90.82.060(4);

(ii)(A) A planning unit may apply for up to two hundred thousand dollars for each WRIA in the management area for conducting watershed assessments in accordance with RCW 90.82.070, except that a planning unit that chooses to conduct a detailed assessment or studies under (a)(ii)(B) of this subsection or whose initiating governments choose or have chosen to include an instream flow or water quality component in accordance with RCW 90.82.080 or 90.82.090 may apply for up to one hundred thousand additional dollars for each instream flow and up to one hundred thousand additional dollars for each water quality component included for each WRIA to conduct an assessment on that optional component and for each WRIA in which the assessments or studies under (a)(ii)(B) of this subsection are conducted.

(B) A planning unit may elect to apply for up to one hundred thousand additional dollars to conduct a detailed assessment of multipurpose water storage opportunities or for studies of specific multipurpose storage projects which opportunities or projects are consistent with and support the other elements of the planning unit's watershed plan developed under this chapter; and

(iii) A planning unit may apply for up to two hundred fifty thousand dollars for each WRIA in the management area for developing a watershed plan and making recommendations for actions by local, state, and federal agencies, tribes, private property owners, private organizations, and individual citizens, including a recommended list of strategies and projects that would further the purpose of the plan in accordance with RCW 90.82.060 through 90.82.100.

(b) A planning unit may request a different amount for phase two or phase three of watershed planning than is specified in (a) of this subsection, provided that the total amount of funds awarded do not exceed the maximum amount the planning unit is eligible for under (a) of this subsection. The department shall approve such an alternative allocation of funds if the planning unit identifies how the proposed alternative will meet the goals of this chapter and provides a proposed timeline for the completion of planning. However, the up to one hundred thousand additional dollars in funding for instream flow and water quality components and for water storage assessments or studies that a planning unit may apply for under (a)(ii)(A) of this subsection may be used only for those instream flow, water quality, and water storage purposes.

(c) By December 1, 2001, or within one year of initiating phase one of watershed planning, whichever occurs later, the initiating governments for each planning unit must inform the department whether they intend to have the planning unit establish or amend instream flows as part of its planning process. If they elect to have the planning unit establish or amend instream flows, the planning unit is eligible to receive one hundred thousand dollars for that purpose in accordance with (a)(ii) of this subsection. If the initiating governments for a planning unit elect not to establish or amend instream flows as part of the unit's planning process, the department shall retain one hundred thousand dollars to carry out an assessment to support establishment of instream flows and to establish such flows in accordance with RCW 90.54.020(3)(a) and chapter 90.22 RCW. The department shall not use these funds to amend an existing instream flow unless requested to do so by the initiating governments for a planning unit.

(d) In administering funds appropriated for supplemental funding for optional plan components under (a)(ii) of this subsection, the department shall give priority in granting the available funds to proposals for setting or amending instream flows.

(e) A planning unit may apply for a matching grant for phase four watershed plan implementation following approval under the provisions of RCW 90.82.130. A match of ten percent is required and may include financial contributions or in-kind goods and services directly related to coordination and oversight functions. The match can be provided by the planning unit or by the combined commitments from federal agencies, tribal governments, local governments, special districts, or other local organizations. The phase four grant may be up to one hundred thousand dollars for each planning unit for each of the first three years of implementation. At the end of the three-year period, a two-year extension may be available for up to fifty thousand dollars each year. For planning units that cover more than one WRIA, additional matching funds of up to twenty-five thousand dollars may be available for each additional WRIA per year for the first three years of implementation, and up to twelve thousand five hundred dollars per WRIA per year for each of the fourth and fifth years.

(3)(a) The department shall use the eligibility criteria in this subsection (3) instead of rules, policies, or guidelines when evaluating grant applications at each stage of the grants program.

(b) In reviewing grant applications under this subsection (3), the department shall evaluate whether:

(i) The planning unit meets all of the requirements of this chapter;

(ii) The application demonstrates a need for state planning funds to accomplish the objectives of the planning process; and

(iii) The application and supporting information evidences a readiness to proceed.

(c) In ranking grant applications submitted at each stage of the grants program, the department shall give preference to applications in the following order of priority:

(i) Applications from existing planning groups that have been in existence for at least one year;

(ii) Applications that address protection and enhancement of fish habitat in watersheds that have aquatic fish species listed or proposed to be listed as endangered or threatened under the federal endangered species act, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq. and for which there is evidence of an inability to supply adequate water for population and economic growth from:

(A) First, multi-WRIA planning; and

(B) Second, single WRIA planning;

(iii) Applications that address protection and enhancement of fish habitat in watersheds or for which there is evidence of an inability to supply adequate water for population and economic growth from:

(A) First, multi-WRIA planning; and

(B) Second, single WRIA planning.

(d) Except for phase four watershed plan implementation, the department may not impose any local matching fund requirement as a condition for grant eligibility or as a preference for receiving a grant.

(4) The department may retain up to one percent of funds allocated under this section to defray administrative costs.

(5) Planning under this chapter should be completed as expeditiously as possible, with the focus being on local stakeholders cooperating to meet local needs.

(6) Funding provided under this section shall be considered a contractual obligation against the moneys appropriated for this purpose. [2003 1st sp.s. c 4 § 2; 2001 c 237 § 2; 1998 c 247 § 1; 1997 c 442 § 105.]

**Findings—2003 1st sp.s. c 4:** "The legislature declares and reaffirms that a core principle embodied in chapter 90.82 RCW is that state agencies must work cooperatively with local citizens in a process of planning for future uses of water by giving local citizens and the governments closest to them the ability to determine the management of water in the WRIA or WRIs being planned.

The legislature further finds that this process of local planning must have all the tools necessary to accomplish this task and that it is essential for the legislature to provide a clear statutory process for implementation so that the locally developed plan will be the adopted and implemented plan to the greatest extent possible." [2003 1st sp.s. c 4 § 1.]

**Finding—Intent—2001 c 237:** "The legislature is committed to meeting the needs of a growing population and a healthy economy statewide; to meeting the needs of fish and healthy watersheds statewide; and to advancing these two principles together, in increments over time.

The legislature finds that improved management of the state's water resources, clarifying the authorities, requirements, and timelines for establishing instream flows, providing timely decisions on water transfers, clarifying the authority of water conservancy boards, and enhancing the flexibility of our water management system to meet both environmental and economic goals are important steps to providing a better future for our state.

The need for these improvements is particularly urgent as we are faced with drought conditions. The failure to act now will only increase the potential negative effects on both the economy and the environment, including fisheries resources.

Deliberative action over several legislative sessions and interim periods between sessions will be required to address the long-term goal of improving the responsiveness of the state water code to meet the diverse water needs of the state's citizenry. It is the intent of the legislature to begin this work now by providing tools to enable the state to respond to imminent drought conditions and other immediate problems relating to water resources management. It is also the legislature's intent to lay the groundwork for future legislation for addressing the state's long-term water problems." [2001 c 237 § 1.]

**Severability—2001 c 237:** "If any provision of this act or its application to any person or circumstance is held invalid, the remainder of the act or the application of the provision to other persons or circumstances is not affected." [2001 c 237 § 33.]

**Effective date—2001 c 237:** "This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or

support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 10, 2001]." [2001 c 237 § 34.]

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.82.043 Implementation plan.** (1) Within one year of accepting funding under RCW 90.82.040(2)(e), the planning unit must complete a detailed implementation plan. Submittal of a detailed implementation plan to the department is a condition of receiving grants for the second and all subsequent years of the phase four grant.

(2) Each implementation plan must contain strategies to provide sufficient water for: (a) Production agriculture; (b) commercial, industrial, and residential use; and (c) instream flows. Each implementation plan must contain timelines to achieve these strategies and interim milestones to measure progress.

(3) The implementation plan must clearly define coordination and oversight responsibilities; any needed interlocal agreements, rules, or ordinances; any needed state or local administrative approvals and permits that must be secured; and specific funding mechanisms.

(4) In developing the implementation plan, the planning unit must consult with other entities planning in the watershed management area and identify and seek to eliminate any activities or policies that are duplicative or inconsistent. [2014 c 76 § 13; 2007 c 445 § 6; 2003 1st sp.s. c 4 § 3.]

**Findings—Intent—2007 c 445:** See note following RCW 90.46.005.

**Findings—2003 1st sp.s. c 4:** See note following RCW 90.82.040.

**RCW 90.82.048 Implementation plan—Timelines and milestones.**

(1) The timelines and interim milestones in a detailed implementation plan required by RCW 90.82.043 must address the planned future use of existing water rights for municipal water supply purposes, as defined in RCW 90.03.015, that are inchoate, including how these rights will be used to meet the projected future needs identified in the watershed plan, and how the use of these rights will be addressed when implementing instream flow strategies identified in the watershed plan.

(2) The watershed planning unit or other authorized lead agency shall ensure that holders of water rights for municipal water supply purposes not currently in use are asked to participate in defining the timelines and interim milestones to be included in the detailed implementation plan.

(3) The department of health shall annually compile a list of water system plans and plan updates to be reviewed by the department during the coming year and shall consult with the departments of \*community, trade, and economic development, ecology, and fish and wildlife to: (a) Identify watersheds where further coordination is needed between water system planning and local watershed planning under this chapter; and (b) develop a work plan for conducting the necessary coordination. [2003 1st sp.s. c 5 § 9.]

**\*Reviser's note:** The "department of community, trade, and economic development" was renamed the "department of commerce" by 2009 c 565.

**Severability—2003 1st sp.s. c 5:** See note following RCW 90.03.015.

**RCW 90.82.050 Limitations on liability.** (1) This chapter shall not be construed as creating a new cause of action against the state or any county, city, town, water supply utility, conservation district, or planning unit.

(2) Notwithstanding RCW 4.92.090, 4.96.010, and 64.40.020, no claim for damages may be filed against the state or any county, city, town, water supply utility, tribal governments, conservation district, or planning unit that or member of a planning unit who participates in a WRIA planning unit for performing responsibilities under this chapter. [1997 c 442 § 106.]

**RCW 90.82.060 Initiation of watershed planning—Scope of planning—Technical assistance from state agencies.** (1) Planning conducted under this chapter must provide for a process to allow the local citizens within a WRIA or multi-WRIA area to join together in an effort to: (a) Assess the status of the water resources of their WRIA or multi-WRIA area; and (b) determine how best to manage the water resources of the WRIA or multi-WRIA area to balance the competing resource demands for that area within the parameters under RCW 90.82.120.

(2) (a) Watershed planning under this chapter may be initiated for a WRIA only with the concurrence of: (i) All counties within the WRIA; (ii) the largest city or town within the WRIA unless the WRIA does not contain a city or town; and (iii) the water supply utility obtaining the largest quantity of water from the WRIA or, for a WRIA with lands within the Columbia Basin project, the water supply utility obtaining from the Columbia Basin project the largest quantity of water for the WRIA. To apply for a grant for organizing the planning unit as provided for under RCW 90.82.040(2)(a), these entities shall designate the entity that will serve as the lead agency for the planning effort and indicate how the planning unit will be staffed.

(b) For purposes of this chapter, WRIA 40 shall be divided such that the portion of the WRIA located entirely within the Stemilt and Squilchuck subbasins shall be considered WRIA 40a and the remaining portion shall be considered WRIA 40b. Planning may be conducted separately for WRIA 40a and 40b. WRIA 40a shall be eligible for one-fourth of the funding available for a single WRIA, and WRIA 40b shall be eligible for three-fourths of the funding available for a single WRIA.

(c) For purposes of this chapter, WRIA 29 shall be divided such that the portion of the WRIA located entirely within the White Salmon subbasin and the subbasins east thereof shall be considered WRIA 29b and the remaining portion shall be considered WRIA 29a. Planning may be conducted separately for WRIA 29a and 29b. WRIA 29a shall be eligible for one-half of the funding available for a single WRIA and WRIA 29b shall be eligible for one-half of the funding available for a single WRIA.



(d) For purposes of this chapter, WRIA 14 shall be divided such that the portion of the WRIA where surface waters drain into Hood Canal shall be considered WRIA 14b, and the remaining portion shall be considered WRIA 14a. Planning for WRIA 14b under this chapter shall be conducted by the WRIA 16 planning unit. WRIA 14b shall be eligible for one-half of the funding available for a single WRIA, and WRIA 14a shall be eligible for one-half of the funding available for a single WRIA.

(3) Watershed planning under this chapter may be initiated for a multi-WRIA area only with the concurrence of: (a) All counties within the multi-WRIA area; (b) the largest city or town in each WRIA unless the WRIA does not contain a city or town; and (c) the water supply utility obtaining the largest quantity of water in each WRIA.

(4) If entities in subsection (2) or (3) of this section decide jointly and unanimously to proceed, they shall invite all tribes with reservation lands within the management area.

(5) The entities in subsection (2) or (3) of this section, including the tribes if they affirmatively accept the invitation, constitute the initiating governments for the purposes of this section.

(6) The organizing grant shall be used to organize the planning unit and to determine the scope of the planning to be conducted. In determining the scope of the planning activities, consideration shall be given to all existing plans and related planning activities. The scope of planning must include water quantity elements as provided in RCW 90.82.070, and may include water quality elements as contained in RCW 90.82.090, habitat elements as contained in RCW 90.82.100, and instream flow elements as contained in RCW 90.82.080. The initiating governments shall work with state government, other local governments within the management area, and affected tribal governments, in developing a planning process. The initiating governments may hold public meetings as deemed necessary to develop a proposed scope of work and a proposed composition of the planning unit. In developing a proposed composition of the planning unit, the initiating governments shall provide for representation of a wide range of water resource interests.

(7) Each state agency with regulatory or other interests in the WRIA or multi-WRIA area to be planned shall assist the local citizens in the planning effort to the greatest extent practicable, recognizing any fiscal limitations. In providing such technical assistance and to facilitate representation on the planning unit, state agencies may organize and agree upon their representation on the planning unit. Such technical assistance must only be at the request of and to the extent desired by the planning unit conducting such planning. The number of state agency representatives on the planning unit shall be determined by the initiating governments in consultation with the governor's office.

(8) As used in this section, "lead agency" means the entity that coordinates staff support of its own or of other local governments and receives grants for developing a watershed plan. [2008 c 210 § 1; (2009 c 183 § 18 expired June 30, 2021); 2007 c 245 § 1; 2003 c 328 § 1; (2009 c 183 § 18 expired June 30, 2021); 2001 c 229 § 1; 1998 c 247 § 2.]

**Expiration date—2019 c 78; 2009 c 183:** See note following RCW 90.03.380.

**RCW 90.82.070 Water quantity component.** Watershed planning under this chapter shall address water quantity in the management area by undertaking an assessment of water supply and use in the management area and developing strategies for future use.

(1) The assessment shall include:

(a) An estimate of the surface and ground water present in the management area;

(b) An estimate of the surface and ground water available in the management area, taking into account seasonal and other variations;

(c) An estimate of the water in the management area represented by claims in the water rights claims registry, water use permits, certificated rights, existing minimum instream flow rules, federally reserved rights, and any other rights to water;

(d) An estimate of the surface and ground water actually being used in the management area;

(e) An estimate of the water needed in the future for use in the management area;

(f) An identification of the location of areas where aquifers are known to recharge surface bodies of water and areas known to provide for the recharge of aquifers from the surface; and

(g) An estimate of the surface and ground water available for further appropriation, taking into account the minimum instream flows adopted by rule or to be adopted by rule under this chapter for streams in the management area including the data necessary to evaluate necessary flows for fish.

(2) Strategies for increasing water supplies in the management area, which may include, but are not limited to, increasing water supplies through water conservation, water reuse, the use of reclaimed water, voluntary water transfers, aquifer recharge and recovery, additional water allocations, or additional water storage and water storage enhancements. The objective of these strategies is to supply water in sufficient quantities to satisfy the minimum instream flows for fish and to provide water for future out-of-stream uses for water identified in subsection (1)(e) and (g) of this section and to ensure that adequate water supplies are available for agriculture, energy production, and population and economic growth under the requirements of the state's growth management act, chapter 36.70A RCW. These strategies, in and of themselves, shall not be construed to confer new water rights. The watershed plan must address the strategies required under this subsection.

(3) The assessment may include the identification of potential site locations for water storage projects. The potential site locations may be for either large or small projects and cover the full range of possible alternatives. The possible alternatives include off-channel storage, underground storage, the enlargement or enhancement of existing storage, and on-channel storage. [2001 2nd sp.s. c 19 § 2; 1998 c 247 § 3.]

**Intent—2001 2nd sp.s. c 19:** "The legislature recognizes the potential for additional water storage as a solution to the water supply needs of the state. Last year the legislature created a task force to examine the role of increased water storage in providing water supplies to meet the needs of fish, population growth, and economic development, and to enhance the protection of people's lives and their property and the protection of aquatic habitat through flood control facilities. One solution discussed by the task force to

address the state's water supply problem is to store water when there is excess runoff and streamflow, and deliver or release it during the low flow period when it is needed. The task force discussed the need for assessments of potential site locations for water storage projects. The legislature intends this act to assist in obtaining the assessments relating to water storage." [2001 2nd sp.s. c 19 § 1.]

**RCW 90.82.080 Instream flow component—Rules—Report.** (1) (a) If the initiating governments choose, by majority vote, to include an instream flow component, it shall be accomplished in the following manner:

(i) If minimum instream flows have already been adopted by rule for a stream within the management area, unless the members of the local governments and tribes on the planning unit by a recorded unanimous vote request the department to modify those flows, the minimum instream flows shall not be modified under this chapter. If the members of local governments and tribes request the planning unit to modify instream flows and unanimous approval of the decision to modify such flow is not achieved, then the instream flows shall not be modified under this section;

(ii) If minimum streamflows have not been adopted by rule for a stream within the management area, setting the minimum instream flows shall be a collaborative effort between the department and members of the planning unit. The department must attempt to achieve consensus and approval among the members of the planning unit regarding the minimum flows to be adopted by the department. Approval is achieved if all government members and tribes that have been invited and accepted on the planning unit present for a recorded vote unanimously vote to support the proposed minimum instream flows, and all nongovernmental members of the planning unit present for the recorded vote, by a majority, vote to support the proposed minimum instream flows.

(b) The department shall undertake rule making to adopt flows under (a) of this subsection. The department may adopt the rules either by the regular rules adoption process provided in chapter 34.05 RCW, the expedited rules adoption process as set forth in RCW 34.05.353, or through a rules adoption process that uses public hearings and notice provided by the county legislative authority to the greatest extent possible. Such rules do not constitute significant legislative rules as defined in RCW 34.05.328, and do not require the preparation of small business economic impact statements.

(c) If approval is not achieved within four years of the date the planning unit first receives funds from the department for conducting watershed assessments under RCW 90.82.040, the department may promptly initiate rule making under chapter 34.05 RCW to establish flows for those streams and shall have two additional years to establish the instream flows for those streams for which approval is not achieved.

(2) (a) Notwithstanding RCW 90.03.345, minimum instream flows set under this section for rivers or streams that do not have existing minimum instream flow levels set by rule of the department shall have a priority date of two years after funding is first received from the department under RCW 90.82.040, unless determined otherwise by a unanimous vote of the members of the planning unit but in no instance may it be later than the effective date of the rule adopting such flow.

(b) Any increase to an existing minimum instream flow set by rule of the department shall have a priority date of two years after funding is first received for planning in the WRIA or multi-WRIA area from the department under RCW 90.82.040 and the priority date of the portion of the minimum instream flow previously established by rule shall retain its priority date as established under RCW 90.03.345.

(c) Any existing minimum instream flow set by rule of the department that is reduced shall retain its original date of priority as established by RCW 90.03.345 for the revised amount of the minimum instream flow level.

(3) Before setting minimum instream flows under this section, the department shall engage in government-to-government consultation with affected tribes in the management area regarding the setting of such flows.

(4) Nothing in this chapter either: (a) Affects the department's authority to establish flow requirements or other conditions under RCW 90.48.260 or the federal clean water act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 et seq.) for the licensing or relicensing of a hydroelectric power project under the federal power act (16 U.S.C. Sec. 791 et seq.); or (b) affects or impairs existing instream flow requirements and other conditions in a current license for a hydroelectric power project licensed under the federal power act.

(5) If the planning unit is unable to obtain unanimity under subsection (1) of this section, the department may adopt rules setting such flows.

(6) The department shall report annually to the appropriate legislative standing committees on the progress of instream flows being set under this chapter, as well as progress toward setting instream flows in those watersheds not being planned under this chapter. The report shall be made by December 1, 2003, and by December 1st of each subsequent year. [2003 1st sp.s. c 4 § 4; 1998 c 247 § 4.]

**Findings—2003 1st sp.s. c 4:** See note following RCW 90.82.040.

**RCW 90.82.085 Instream flows—Assessing and setting or amending.**

By October 1, 2001, the department of ecology shall complete a final nonproject environmental impact statement that evaluates streamflows to meet the alternative goals of maintaining, preserving, or enhancing instream resources and the technically defensible methodologies for determining these streamflows. Planning units and state agencies assessing and setting or amending instream flows must, as a minimum, consider the goals and methodologies addressed in the nonproject environmental impact statement. A planning unit or state agency may assess, set, or amend instream flows in a manner that varies from the final nonproject environmental impact statement if consistent with applicable instream flow laws. [2001 c 237 § 3.]

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.

**RCW 90.82.090 Water quality component.** If the initiating governments choose to include a water quality component, the watershed plan shall include the following elements:

(1) An examination based on existing studies conducted by federal, state, and local agencies of the degree to which legally established water quality standards are being met in the management area;

(2) An examination based on existing studies conducted by federal, state, and local agencies of the causes of water quality violations in the management area, including an examination of information regarding pollutants, point and nonpoint sources of pollution, and pollution-carrying capacities of water bodies in the management area. The analysis shall take into account seasonal streamflow or level variations, natural events, and pollution from natural sources that occurs independent of human activities;

(3) An examination of the legally established characteristic uses of each of the nonmarine bodies of water in the management area;

(4) An examination of any total maximum daily load established for nonmarine bodies of water in the management area, unless a total maximum daily load process has begun in the management area as of the date the watershed planning process is initiated under RCW 90.82.060;

(5) An examination of existing data related to the impact of fresh water on marine water quality;

(6) A recommended approach for implementing the total maximum daily load established for achieving compliance with water quality standards for the nonmarine bodies of water in the management area, unless a total maximum daily load process has begun in the management area as of the date the watershed planning process is initiated under RCW 90.82.060; and

(7) Recommended means of monitoring by appropriate government agencies whether actions taken to implement the approach to bring about improvements in water quality are sufficient to achieve compliance with water quality standards.

This chapter does not obligate the state to undertake analysis or to develop strategies required under the federal clean water act (33 U.S.C. Sec. 1251 et seq.). This chapter does not authorize any planning unit, lead agency, or local government to adopt water quality standards or total maximum daily loads under the federal clean water act. [1998 c 247 § 5.]

**RCW 90.82.100 Habitat component.** If the initiating governments choose to include a habitat component, the watershed plan shall be coordinated or developed to protect or enhance fish habitat in the management area. Such planning must rely on existing laws, rules, or ordinances created for the purpose of protecting, restoring, or enhancing fish habitat, including the shoreline management act, chapter 90.58 RCW, the growth management act, chapter 36.70A RCW, and the forest practices act, chapter 76.09 RCW. Planning established under this section shall be integrated with strategies developed under other processes to respond to potential and actual listings of salmon and other fish species as being threatened or endangered under the federal endangered species act, 16 U.S.C. Sec. 1531 et seq. Where habitat restoration activities are being developed under chapter 246, Laws of 1998, such activities shall be relied on as the primary nonregulatory habitat component for fish habitat under this chapter. [1998 c 247 § 6.]

**RCW 90.82.110 Identification of projects and activities.** The planning unit shall review historical data such as fish runs, weather patterns, land use patterns, seasonal flows, and geographic characteristics of the management area, and also review the planning, projects, and activities that have already been completed regarding natural resource management or enhancement in the management area and the products or status of those that have been initiated but not completed for such management in the management area, and incorporate their products as appropriate so as not to duplicate the work already performed or underway.

The planning group is encouraged to identify projects and activities that are likely to serve both short-term and long-term management goals and that warrant immediate financial assistance from the state, federal, or local government. If there are multiple projects, the planning group shall give consideration to ranking projects that have the greatest benefit and schedule those projects that should be implemented first. [1998 c 247 § 7.]

**RCW 90.82.120 Plan parameters.** (1) Watershed planning developed and approved under this chapter shall not contain provisions that: (a) Are in conflict with existing state statutes, federal laws, or tribal treaty rights; (b) impair or diminish in any manner an existing water right evidenced by a claim filed in the water rights claims registry established under chapter 90.14 RCW or a water right certificate or permit; (c) require a modification in the basic operations of a federal reclamation project with a water right the priority date of which is before June 11, 1998, or alter in any manner whatsoever the quantity of water available under the water right for the reclamation project, whether the project has or has not been completed before June 11, 1998; (d) affect or interfere with an ongoing general adjudication of water rights; (e) modify or require the modification of any waste discharge permit issued under chapter 90.48 RCW; (f) modify or require the modification of activities or actions taken or intended to be taken under a habitat restoration work schedule developed under chapter 246, Laws of 1998; or (g) modify or require the modification of activities or actions taken to protect or enhance fish habitat if the activities or actions are: (i) Part of an approved habitat conservation plan and an incidental take permit, an incidental take statement, a management or recovery plan, or other cooperative or conservation agreement entered into with a federal or state fish and wildlife protection agency under its statutory authority for fish and wildlife protection that addresses the affected habitat; or (ii) part of a water quality program adopted by an irrigation district under chapter 87.03 RCW or a board of joint control under chapter 87.80 RCW. This subsection (1)(g) applies as long as the activities or actions continue to be taken in accordance with the plan, agreement, permit, or statement. Any assessment conducted under RCW 90.82.070, 90.82.090, or 90.82.100 shall take into consideration such activities and actions and those taken under the forest practices rules, including watershed analysis adopted under the forest practices act, chapter 76.09 RCW.

(2) Watershed planning developed and approved under this chapter shall not change existing local ordinances or existing state rules or permits, but may contain recommendations for changing such ordinances or rules.

(3) Notwithstanding any other provision of this chapter, watershed planning shall take into account forest practices rules

under the forest practices act, chapter 76.09 RCW, and shall not create any obligations or restrictions on forest practices additional to or inconsistent with the forest practices act and its implementing rules, whether watershed planning is approved by the counties or the department. [1998 c 247 § 8.]

**RCW 90.82.130 Plan approval—Public notice and hearing—**

**Revisions.** (1)(a) Upon completing its proposed watershed plan, the planning unit may approve the proposal by consensus of all of the members of the planning unit or by consensus among the members of the planning unit appointed to represent units of government and a majority vote of the nongovernmental members of the planning unit.

(b) If the proposal is approved by the planning unit, the unit shall submit the proposal to the counties with territory within the management area. If the planning unit has received funding beyond the initial organizing grant under RCW 90.82.040, such a proposal approved by the planning unit shall be submitted to the counties within four years of the date that funds beyond the initial funding are first drawn upon by the planning unit.

(c) If the watershed plan is not approved by the planning unit, the planning unit may submit the components of the plan for which agreement is achieved using the procedure under (a) of this subsection, or the planning unit may terminate the planning process.

(2)(a) With the exception of a county legislative authority that chooses to opt out of watershed planning as provided in (c) of this subsection, the legislative authority of each of the counties with territory in the management area shall provide public notice of and conduct at least one public hearing on the proposed watershed plan submitted under this section. After the public hearings, the legislative authorities of these counties shall convene in joint session to consider the proposal. The counties may approve or reject the proposed watershed plan for the management area, but may not amend it. Approval of such a proposal shall be made by a majority vote of the members of each of the counties with territory in the management area.

(b) If a proposed watershed plan is not approved, it shall be returned to the planning unit with recommendations for revisions. Approval of such a revised proposal by the planning unit and the counties shall be made in the same manner provided for the original watershed plan. If approval of the revised plan is not achieved, the process shall terminate.

(c) A county legislative authority may choose to opt out of watershed planning under this chapter and the public hearing processes under (a) and (b) of this subsection if the county's affected territory within a particular management area is: (i) Less than five percent of the total territory within the management area; or (ii) five percent or more of the total territory within the management area and all other initiating governments within the management area consent. A county meeting these conditions and choosing to opt out shall notify the department and the other initiating governments of that choice prior to commencement of plan adoption under the provisions of (a) of this subsection. A county choosing to opt out under the provisions of this section shall not be bound by obligations contained in the watershed plan adopted for that management area under this chapter. Even if a county chooses to opt out under the provisions

of this section, the other counties within a management area may adopt a proposed watershed plan as provided in this chapter.

(3) The planning unit shall not add an element to its watershed plan that creates an obligation unless each of the governments to be obligated has at least one representative on the planning unit and the respective members appointed to represent those governments agree to adding the element that creates the obligation. A member's agreeing to add an element shall be evidenced by a recorded vote of all members of the planning unit in which the members record support for adding the element. If the watershed plan is approved under subsections (1) and (2) of this section and the plan creates obligations: (a) For agencies of state government, the agencies shall adopt by rule the obligations of both state and county governments and rules implementing the state obligations, or, with the consent of the planning unit, may adopt policies, procedures, or agreements related to the obligations or implementation of the obligations in addition to or in lieu of rules. The obligations on state agencies are binding upon adoption of the obligations, and the agencies shall take other actions to fulfill their obligations as soon as possible, and should annually review implementation needs with respect to budget and staffing; (b) for counties, the obligations are binding on the counties and the counties shall adopt any necessary implementing ordinances and take other actions to fulfill their obligations as soon as possible, and should annually review implementation needs with respect to budget and staffing; or (c) for an organization voluntarily accepting an obligation, the organization must adopt policies, procedures, agreements, rules, or ordinances to implement the plan, and should annually review implementation needs with respect to budget and staffing.

(4) After a plan is adopted in accordance with subsection (3) of this section, and if the department participated in the planning process, the plan shall be deemed to satisfy the watershed planning authority of the department with respect to the components included under the provisions of RCW 90.82.070 through 90.82.100 for the watershed or watersheds included in the plan. The department shall use the plan as the framework for making future water resource decisions for the planned watershed or watersheds. Additionally, the department shall rely upon the plan as a primary consideration in determining the public interest related to such decisions.

(5) Once a WRIA plan has been approved under subsection (2) of this section for a watershed, the department may develop and adopt modifications to the plan or obligations imposed by the plan only through a form of negotiated rule making that uses the same processes that applied in that watershed for developing the plan.

(6) As used in this section, "obligation" means any action required as a result of this chapter that imposes upon a tribal government, county government, or state government, either: A fiscal impact; a redeployment of resources; or a change of existing policy. [2003 1st sp.s. c 4 § 5; 2001 c 237 § 4; 1998 c 247 § 9.]

**Findings—2003 1st sp.s. c 4:** See note following RCW 90.82.040.

**Finding—Intent—Severability—Effective date—2001 c 237:** See notes following RCW 90.82.040.

**Intent—2001 c 237:** See note following RCW 90.66.065.



**RCW 90.82.140 Use of monitoring recommendations in RCW**

**77.85.210.** In conducting assessments and other studies that include monitoring components or recommendations, the department and planning units shall implement the monitoring recommendations developed under \*RCW 77.85.210. [2001 c 298 § 2.]

**\*Reviser's note:** RCW 77.85.210 was repealed by 2005 c 309 § 10.

**Finding—Intent—2001 c 298:** "The legislature finds that a comprehensive program of monitoring is fundamental to making sound public policy and programmatic decisions regarding salmon recovery and watershed health. Monitoring provides accountability for results of management actions and provides the data upon which an adaptive management framework can lead to improvement of strategies and programs. Monitoring is also a required element of any salmon recovery plan submitted to the federal government for approval. While numerous agencies and citizen organizations are engaged in monitoring a wide range of salmon recovery and watershed health parameters, there is a greater need for coordination of monitoring efforts, for using limited monitoring resources to obtain information most useful for achieving relevant local, state, and federal requirements regarding watershed health and salmon recovery, and for making the information more accessible to those agencies and organizations implementing watershed health programs and projects. Regarding salmon recovery monitoring, the state independent science panel has concluded that many programs already monitor indicators relevant to salmonids, but the efforts are largely uncoordinated or unlinked among programs, have different objectives, use different indicators, lack support for sharing data, and lack shared statistical designs to address specific issues raised by listing of salmonid species under the federal endangered species act.

Therefore, it is the intent of the legislature to encourage the refocusing of existing agency monitoring activities necessary to implement a comprehensive watershed health monitoring program, with a focus on salmon recovery. The program should: Be based on a framework of greater coordination of existing monitoring activities; require monitoring activities most relevant to adopted local, state, and federal watershed health objectives; and facilitate the exchange of monitoring information with agencies and organizations carrying out watershed health, salmon recovery, and water resources management planning and programs." [2001 c 298 § 1.]

**Chapter 90.84 RCW**  
**WETLANDS MITIGATION BANKING**

**Sections**

- 90.84.005 Findings—Purpose—Intent.
- 90.84.010 Definitions.
- 90.84.020 Wetlands or wetlands banks—Authority for regulating.
- 90.84.030 Rules—Submission of proposed rules to legislative committees.
- 90.84.040 Certification of banks—Approval of use of credits by state and local governments.
- 90.84.050 Approval of use of credits by the department—Requirements.
- 90.84.060 Interpretation of chapter and rules.
- 90.84.070 Application to public and private mitigation banks.

**Chapter 90.84 RCW**  
**WETLANDS MITIGATION BANKING**

**Sections**

- 90.84.005 Findings—Purpose—Intent.
- 90.84.010 Definitions.
- 90.84.020 Wetlands or wetlands banks—Authority for regulating.
- 90.84.030 Rules—Submission of proposed rules to legislative committees.
- 90.84.040 Certification of banks—Approval of use of credits by state and local governments.
- 90.84.050 Approval of use of credits by the department—Requirements.
- 90.84.060 Interpretation of chapter and rules.
- 90.84.070 Application to public and private mitigation banks.

**RCW 90.84.005 Findings—Purpose—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds that wetlands mitigation banks are an important tool for providing compensatory mitigation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands. The legislature further finds that the benefits of mitigation banks include: (a) Maintenance of the ecological functioning of a watershed by consolidating compensatory mitigation into a single large parcel rather than smaller individual parcels; (b) increased potential for the establishment and long-term management of successful mitigation by bringing together financial resources, planning, and scientific expertise not practicable for many project-specific mitigation proposals; (c) increased certainty over the success of mitigation and reduction of temporal losses of wetlands since mitigation banks are typically implemented and functioning in advance of project impacts; (d) potential enhanced protection and preservation of the state's highest value and highest functioning wetlands; (e) a reduction in permit processing times and increased opportunity for more cost-effective compensatory mitigation for development projects; and (f) the ability to provide compensatory mitigation in an efficient, predictable, and economically and environmentally responsible manner. Therefore, the legislature declares that it is the policy of the state to authorize wetland mitigation banking.

(2) The purpose of this chapter is to support the establishment of mitigation banks by: (a) Authorizing state agencies and local governments, as well as private entities, to achieve the goals of this chapter; and (b) providing a predictable, efficient, regulatory framework, including timely review of mitigation bank proposals. The legislature intends that, in the development and adoption of rules for banks, the department establish and use a collaborative process involving interested public and private entities. [1998 c 248 § 1.]

**RCW 90.84.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Banking instrument" means the documentation of agency and bank sponsor concurrence on the objectives and administration of the bank that describes in detail the physical and legal characteristics of the bank, including the service area, and how the bank will be established and operated.

(2) "Bank sponsor" means any public or private entity responsible for establishing and, in most circumstances, operating a bank.

(3) "Credit" means a unit of trade representing the increase in the ecological value of the site, as measured by acreage, functions, and/or values, or by some other assessment method.

(4) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(5) "Wetlands mitigation bank" or "bank" means a site where wetlands are restored, created, enhanced, or in exceptional circumstances, preserved expressly for the purpose of providing compensatory mitigation in advance of authorized impacts to similar resources.

(6) "Mitigation" means sequentially avoiding impacts, minimizing impacts, and compensating for remaining unavoidable impacts.

(7) "Practicable" means available and capable of being done after taking into consideration cost, existing technology, and logistics in light of overall project purposes.

(8) "Service area" means the designated geographic area in which a bank can reasonably be expected to provide appropriate compensation for unavoidable impacts to wetlands.

(9) "Unavoidable" means adverse impacts that remain after all appropriate and practicable avoidance and minimization have been achieved. [1998 c 248 § 3.]

**RCW 90.84.020 Wetlands or wetlands banks—Authority for regulating.** This chapter does not create any new authority for regulating wetlands or wetlands banks beyond what is specifically provided for in this chapter. No authority is granted to the department under this chapter to adopt rules or guidance that apply to wetland projects other than banks under this chapter. [1998 c 248 § 2.]

**RCW 90.84.030 Rules—Submission of proposed rules to legislative committees.** (1) Subject to the requirements of this chapter, the department, through a collaborative process, shall adopt rules for:

- (a) Certification, operation, and monitoring of wetlands mitigation banks. The rules shall include procedures to assure that:
  - (i) Priority is given to banks providing for the restoration of degraded or former wetlands;
  - (ii) Banks involving the creation and enhancement of wetlands are certified only where there are adequate assurances of success and that the bank will result in an overall environmental benefit; and
  - (iii) Banks involving the preservation of wetlands or associated uplands are certified only when the preservation is in conjunction with the restoration, enhancement, or creation of a wetland, or in other exceptional circumstances as determined by the department consistent with this chapter;
- (b) Determination and release of credits from banks. Procedures regarding credits shall authorize the use and sale of credits to offset adverse impacts and the phased release of credits as different levels of the performance standards are met;
- (c) Public involvement in the certification of banks, using existing statutory authority;
- (d) Coordination of governmental agencies, including early notification of the local government where the bank is located;

(e) Establishment of criteria for determining service areas for each bank in accordance with subsection (2) of this section;

(f) Performance standards; and

(g) Long-term management, financial assurances, and remediation for certified banks.

(2) The criteria for determining service areas under subsection (1)(e) of this section shall include a requirement that restricts the maximum extent of the service area of a wetlands mitigation bank to the water resource inventory area (WRIA) as established under chapter 173-500 WAC in which the bank is located except where a service area may include parts of other WRIsAs if it is ecologically defensible and appropriate.

(3) Before adopting rules under this chapter, the department shall submit the proposed rules to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature. By January 30, 1999, the department shall submit a report to the appropriate standing committees of the legislature on its progress in developing rules under this chapter. [2008 c 80 § 1; 1998 c 248 § 4.]

**RCW 90.84.040 Certification of banks—Approval of use of credits by state and local governments.** (1) The department may certify only those banks that meet the requirements of this chapter. Certification shall be accomplished through a banking instrument. The local jurisdiction in which the bank is located shall be signatory to the banking instrument.

(2) For a bank for which an application for a banking instrument was filed January 1, 2008, or thereafter, the department may not certify a bank without local approval of the bank. The local jurisdiction in which the bank is located has final approval over the certification of the mitigation bank. If the local government approves the bank, it shall be a signatory to the banking instrument.

(3) State agencies and local governments may approve use of credits from a bank for any mitigation required under a permit issued or approved by that state agency or local government to compensate for the proposed impacts of a specific public or private project. [2008 c 80 § 2; 1998 c 248 § 5.]

**RCW 90.84.050 Approval of use of credits by the department—Requirements.** Prior to authorizing use of credits from a bank as a means of mitigation under a permit issued or approved by the department, the department must assure that all appropriate and practicable steps have been undertaken to first avoid and then minimize adverse impacts to wetlands. In determining appropriate steps to avoid and minimize adverse impacts to wetlands, the department shall take into consideration the functions and values of the wetland, including fish habitat, groundwater quality, and protection of adjacent properties. The department may approve use of credits from a bank when:

(1) The credits represent the creation, restoration, or enhancement of wetlands of like kind and in close proximity when estuarine wetlands are being mitigated;

(2) There is no practicable opportunity for on-site compensation;  
or

(3) Use of credits from a bank is environmentally preferable to on-site compensation. [1998 c 248 § 6.]

**RCW 90.84.060 Interpretation of chapter and rules.** The interpretation of this chapter and rules adopted under this chapter must be consistent with applicable federal guidance for the establishment, use, and operation of wetlands mitigation banks as it existed on June 11, 1998, or such subsequent date as may be provided by the department by rule, consistent with the purposes of this chapter. [1998 c 248 § 7.]

**RCW 90.84.070 Application to public and private mitigation banks.** This chapter applies to public and private mitigation banks. [1998 c 248 § 8.]

**Chapter 90.86 RCW**  
**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON WATER SUPPLY DURING DROUGHT**

**Sections**

- 90.86.010 Joint legislative committee on water supply during drought.
- 90.86.020 Membership.
- 90.86.030 Meetings—Requests for information—Reports from department of ecology—Recommendations to the legislature.
- 90.86.900 Effective date—2005 c 60.

**Chapter 90.86 RCW**  
**JOINT LEGISLATIVE COMMITTEE ON WATER SUPPLY DURING DROUGHT**

**Sections**

- 90.86.010 Joint legislative committee on water supply during drought.
- 90.86.020 Membership.
- 90.86.030 Meetings—Requests for information—Reports from department of ecology—Recommendations to the legislature.
- 90.86.900 Effective date—2005 c 60.

**RCW 90.86.010 Joint legislative committee on water supply during drought.** The joint legislative committee on water supply during drought is created. [2005 c 60 § 1.]

**RCW 90.86.020 Membership.** The committee shall consist of four senators and four representatives who shall be selected biennially as follows:

(1) The president of the senate shall appoint four members from the senate to serve on the committee, including the chair of the committee responsible for water resource issues. Two members from each major political party must be appointed.

(2) The speaker of the house of representatives shall appoint four members from the house of representatives to serve on the committee, including the chair of the committee responsible for water resource issues. Two members from each major political party must be appointed.

(3) The committee shall elect a chair and a vice chair. The chair shall be a member of the house of representatives in even-numbered years and a member of the senate in odd-numbered years.

(4) The presiding officer of the appropriate legislative chamber shall fill any vacancies occurring on the committee by appointment from the same political party as the departing member.

(5) Members shall serve until their successors are appointed as provided in this section, or until they are no longer members of the legislature, whichever is sooner. [2005 c 60 § 2.]

**RCW 90.86.030 Meetings—Requests for information—Reports from department of ecology—Recommendations to the legislature.** (1) The joint legislative committee on water supply during drought shall convene from time to time at the call of the chair when an advisory is in effect under RCW 43.83B.405(1), when a drought emergency order under RCW 43.83B.405 is in effect, or when the chair determines, in consultation with the department of ecology, that it is likely that such an order will be issued within the next year.

(2) The committee may request and review information relating to water supply conditions in the state, and economic, environmental, and other impacts relating to decreased water supply being experienced or anticipated. The governor's executive water emergency committee, the department of ecology, and other state agencies with water management or related responsibilities shall cooperate in responding to requests from the committee.



(3) During drought conditions in which a drought emergency order issued under RCW 43.83B.405(2) is in effect, the department of ecology shall provide to the committee no less than monthly a report describing drought response activities of the department and other state and federal agencies participating on the water supply availability committee. The report shall include information regarding applications for, and approvals and denials of emergency water withdrawals and temporary changes or transfers of, water rights under RCW 43.83B.410. The report must include information regarding grants applied for or issued under RCW 43.83B.415.

(4) The committee from time to time shall make recommendations to the senate and house of representatives on budgetary and legislative actions that will improve the state's drought response programs and planning. [2023 c 287 § 5; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 § 122; 2005 c 60 § 3.]

**Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 26; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7:** See note following RCW 43.03.027.

**RCW 90.86.900 Effective date—2005 c 60.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [April 14, 2005]. [2005 c 60 § 5.]

**Chapter 90.88 RCW**  
**AQUATIC REHABILITATION ZONES**

**Sections**

- 90.88.005 Findings—Intent.
- 90.88.010 Designation by the legislature—Zone one established.
- 90.88.020 Hood Canal rehabilitation program—State lead agency—  
Local management board.
- 90.88.030 Aquatic zone one—Roles of Hood Canal coordinating council  
and Puget Sound partnership—Participation of  
governments and nonprofit organizations—Project  
funding, priorities, and criteria—Reports.
- 90.88.040 Forest practices—Nonapplicability of chapter.
- 90.88.050 Scope of chapter.
- 90.88.900 Effective date—2005 c 478.
- 90.88.901 Regulatory authority not conferred.
- 90.88.902 Activities subject to appropriations.
- 90.88.903 Effective date—2005 c 479.

**Chapter 90.88 RCW**  
**AQUATIC REHABILITATION ZONES**

**Sections**

- 90.88.005 Findings—Intent.
- 90.88.010 Designation by the legislature—Zone one established.
- 90.88.020 Hood Canal rehabilitation program—State lead agency—  
Local management board.
- 90.88.030 Aquatic zone one—Roles of Hood Canal coordinating council  
and Puget Sound partnership—Participation of  
governments and nonprofit organizations—Project  
funding, priorities, and criteria—Reports.
- 90.88.040 Forest practices—Nonapplicability of chapter.
- 90.88.050 Scope of chapter.
- 90.88.900 Effective date—2005 c 478.
- 90.88.901 Regulatory authority not conferred.
- 90.88.902 Activities subject to appropriations.
- 90.88.903 Effective date—2005 c 479.

**RCW 90.88.005 Findings—Intent.** (1) The legislature finds that Hood Canal is a precious aquatic resource of our state. The legislature finds that Hood Canal is a rich source of recreation, fishing, aquaculture, and aesthetic enjoyment for the citizens of this state. The legislature also finds that Hood Canal has great cultural significance for the tribes in the Hood Canal area. The legislature therefore recognizes Hood Canal's substantial environmental, cultural, economic, recreational, and aesthetic importance in this state.

(2) The legislature finds that Hood Canal is a marine water of the state at significant risk. The legislature finds that Hood Canal has a "dead zone" related to low-dissolved oxygen concentrations, a condition that has recurred for many years. The legislature also finds that this problem and various contributors to the problem were documented in the May 2004 *Preliminary Assessment and Corrective Action Plan* published by the state agency known as the Puget Sound action team and the Hood Canal coordinating council.

(3) The legislature further finds that significant research, monitoring, and study efforts are currently occurring regarding Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature also finds numerous public, private, and community organizations are working to provide public education and identify potential solutions. The legislature recognizes that, while some information and research is now available and some potential solutions have been identified, more research and analysis is needed to fully develop a program to address Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations.

(4) The legislature finds a need exists for the state to take action to address Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature also finds establishing an aquatic rehabilitation zone for Hood Canal will serve as a statutory framework for future regulations and programs directed at recovery of this important aquatic resource.

(5) The legislature therefore intends to establish an aquatic rehabilitation zone for Hood Canal as the framework to address Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature also intends to incorporate provisions in the new statutory chapter

creating the designation as solutions are identified regarding this problem. [2007 c 341 § 50; 2005 c 478 § 1.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**RCW 90.88.010 Designation by the legislature—Zone one established.** (1) Aquatic rehabilitation zones may be designated by the legislature for areas whose surrounding marine water bodies pose serious environmental or public health concerns.

(2) Aquatic rehabilitation zone one is established. Aquatic rehabilitation zone one includes all watersheds that drain to Hood Canal south of a line projected from Tala Point in Jefferson county to Foulweather Bluff in Kitsap county. [2005 c 478 § 2.]

**RCW 90.88.020 Hood Canal rehabilitation program—State lead agency—Local management board.** (1) The development of a program for rehabilitation of Hood Canal is authorized in Jefferson, Kitsap, and Mason counties within the aquatic rehabilitation zone one.

(2) The Puget Sound partnership, created in RCW 90.71.210, is designated as the state lead agency for the rehabilitation program authorized in this section.

(3) The Hood Canal coordinating council is designated as the local management board for the rehabilitation program authorized in this section.

(4) The Puget Sound partnership and the Hood Canal coordinating council must each approve and must comanage projects under the rehabilitation program authorized in this section. [2007 c 341 § 51; 2005 c 479 § 2.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**Findings—2005 c 479:** "(1) The legislature finds that Hood Canal is a precious aquatic resource of our state. The legislature finds that Hood Canal is a rich source of recreation, fishing, aquaculture, and aesthetic enjoyment for the citizens of this state. The legislature also finds that Hood Canal has great cultural significance for the tribes in the Hood Canal area. The legislature therefore recognizes Hood Canal's substantial environmental, cultural, economic, recreational, and aesthetic importance to Washington.

(2) The legislature finds that Hood Canal is a marine water of the state at significant risk. The legislature finds that Hood Canal has a "dead zone" related to low-dissolved oxygen concentrations, a condition that has recurred for many years. The legislature also finds this problem and various contributors to the problem were documented in the May 2004 *Preliminary Assessment and Corrective Action Plan* published by the state Puget Sound action team and the Hood Canal coordinating council.

(3) The legislature further finds that significant research, monitoring, and study efforts are currently occurring regarding Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature recognizes that federal, state, tribal, and local governments and other organizations and entities are coordinating research, monitoring, and modeling efforts through the Hood Canal low-dissolved oxygen program. The legislature also recognizes that these entities

and others are continuing individual efforts to study and identify potential solutions for Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature also recognizes numerous public, private, and community organizations are working to provide public education regarding Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature recognizes and encourages the continuation of these efforts.

(4) The legislature finds a need exists for the state to provide additional resources to address Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The legislature also finds a need exists to designate the state and local entities to develop, coordinate, and administer a Hood Canal rehabilitation program and funding." [2005 c 479 § 1.]

**Forest practices—Nonapplicability of act—2005 c 479:** "This act does not apply to forest practices regulated under chapter 76.09 RCW." [2005 c 479 § 4.]

**RCW 90.88.030 Aquatic zone one—Roles of Hood Canal coordinating council and Puget Sound partnership—Participation of governments and nonprofit organizations—Project funding, priorities, and criteria—Reports.**

(1) The Hood Canal coordinating council shall serve as the local management board for aquatic rehabilitation zone one. The local management board shall coordinate local government efforts with respect to the program authorized according to RCW 90.88.020. In the Hood Canal area, the Hood Canal coordinating council also shall:

(a) Serve as the lead entity and the regional recovery organization for the purposes of chapter 77.85 RCW for Hood Canal summer chum; and

(b) Assist in coordinating activities under chapter 90.82 RCW.

(2) When developing and implementing the program authorized in RCW 90.88.020 and when establishing funding criteria according to subsection (7) of this section, the Puget Sound partnership, created in RCW 90.71.210, and the local management board shall solicit participation by federal, tribal, state, and local agencies and universities and nonprofit organizations with expertise in areas related to program activities. The local management board may include state and federal agency representatives, or additional persons, as nonvoting management board members or may receive technical assistance and advice from them in other venues. The local management board also may appoint technical advisory committees as needed.

(3) The local management board and the Puget Sound partnership shall participate in the development of the program authorized under RCW 90.88.020.

(4) The local management board and its participating local and tribal governments shall assess concepts for a regional governance structure and shall submit a report regarding the findings and recommendations to the appropriate committees of the legislature by December 1, 2007.

(5) Any of the local management board's participating counties and tribes, any federal, tribal, state, or local agencies, or any universities or nonprofit organizations may continue individual efforts and activities for rehabilitation of Hood Canal. Nothing in this section limits the authority of units of local government to enter into interlocal agreements under chapter 39.34 RCW or any other provision of law.

(6) The local management board may not exercise authority over land or water within the individual counties or otherwise preempt the authority of any units of local government.

(7) The local management board and the Puget Sound partnership each may receive and disburse funding for projects, studies, and activities related to Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. The Puget Sound partnership and the local management board shall jointly coordinate a process to prioritize projects, studies, and activities for which the Puget Sound partnership receives state funding specifically allocated for Hood Canal corrective actions to implement this section. The local management board and the Puget Sound partnership shall establish criteria for funding these projects, studies, and activities based upon their likely value in addressing and resolving Hood Canal's low-dissolved oxygen concentrations. Final approval for projects under this section requires the consent of both the Puget Sound partnership and the local management board. Projects under this section must be comanaged by the Puget Sound partnership and the local management board. Nothing in this section prohibits any federal, tribal, state, or local agencies, universities, or nonprofit organizations from receiving funding for specific projects that may assist in the rehabilitation of Hood Canal.

(8) The local management board may hire and fire staff, including an executive director, enter into contracts, accept grants and other moneys, disburse funds, make recommendations to local governments about potential regulations and the development of programs and incentives upon request, pay all necessary expenses, and choose a fiduciary agent.

(9) The local management board shall report its progress on a quarterly basis to the legislative bodies of the participating counties and tribes and the participating state agencies. The local management board also shall submit an annual report describing its efforts and successes in implementing the program established according to RCW 90.88.020 to the appropriate committees of the legislature. [2007 c 341 § 52; 2005 c 479 § 3.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**Findings—Forest practices—Nonapplicability of act—2005 c 479:** See notes following RCW 90.88.020.

**RCW 90.88.040 Forest practices—Nonapplicability of chapter.** This chapter does not apply to forest practices regulated under chapter 76.09 RCW. [2005 c 478 § 3.]

**RCW 90.88.050 Scope of chapter.** This chapter does not alter, diminish, or expand the jurisdictional authorities in other statutes or affect the application of other statutory requirements or programs that do not specifically refer to aquatic rehabilitation zones. [2005 c 478 § 4.]

**RCW 90.88.900 Effective date—2005 c 478.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public

institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 16, 2005]. [2005 c 478 § 6.]

**RCW 90.88.901 Regulatory authority not conferred.** Nothing in chapter 479, Laws of 2005 provides any regulatory authority to the Puget Sound partnership, created in RCW 90.71.210, or the Hood Canal coordinating council. [2007 c 341 § 53; 2005 c 479 § 5.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**RCW 90.88.902 Activities subject to appropriations.** The activities of the Puget Sound partnership, created in RCW 90.71.210, and the Hood Canal coordinating council required by chapter 479, Laws of 2005 are subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose. [2007 c 341 § 54; 2005 c 479 § 6.]

**Effective date—2007 c 341:** See RCW 90.71.907.

**RCW 90.88.903 Effective date—2005 c 479.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [May 16, 2005]. [2005 c 479 § 8.]

**Chapter 90.90 RCW**  
**COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY**

**Sections**

- 90.90.005 Finding.
- 90.90.010 Columbia river basin water supply development account—Use for storage facilities and access to water supplies—Evaluation—Public comment—Use of net water savings—Water service contracts.
- 90.90.020 Allocation and development of water supplies.
- 90.90.030 Voluntary regional agreements—Scope and application—Definitions.
- 90.90.040 Columbia river water supply inventory—Long-term water supply and demand forecast.
- 90.90.050 Columbia river mainstem water resources information system.
- 90.90.060 Additional releases of water from Lake Roosevelt.
- 90.90.070 Columbia river water delivery account—Creation—Distribution.
- 90.90.080 Impacts of water release—Department of ecology's duties.
- 90.90.090 Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account—Water service contracts.
- 90.90.100 Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account—Water service contracts.
- 90.90.110 Use of certain water made available through reoperation of Sullivan lake.
- 90.90.120 Walla Walla water 2050 plan.
- 90.90.900 Effective date—2006 c 6.



**Chapter 90.90 RCW  
COLUMBIA RIVER BASIN WATER SUPPLY**

**Sections**

- 90.90.005 Finding.
- 90.90.010 Columbia river basin water supply development account—Use for storage facilities and access to water supplies—Evaluation—Public comment—Use of net water savings—Water service contracts.
- 90.90.020 Allocation and development of water supplies.
- 90.90.030 Voluntary regional agreements—Scope and application—Definitions.
- 90.90.040 Columbia river water supply inventory—Long-term water supply and demand forecast.
- 90.90.050 Columbia river mainstem water resources information system.
- 90.90.060 Additional releases of water from Lake Roosevelt.
- 90.90.070 Columbia river water delivery account—Creation—Distribution.
- 90.90.080 Impacts of water release—Department of ecology's duties.
- 90.90.090 Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account—Water service contracts.
- 90.90.100 Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account—Water service contracts.
- 90.90.110 Use of certain water made available through reoperation of Sullivan lake.
- 90.90.120 Walla Walla water 2050 plan.
- 90.90.900 Effective date—2006 c 6.

**RCW 90.90.005 Finding.** (1) The legislature finds that a key priority of water resource management in the Columbia river basin is the development of new water supplies that includes storage and conservation in order to meet the economic and community development needs of people and the instream flow needs of fish.

(2) The legislature therefore declares that a Columbia river basin water supply development program is needed, and directs the department of ecology to aggressively pursue the development of water supplies to benefit both instream and out-of-stream uses. [2006 c 6 § 1.]

**RCW 90.90.010 Columbia river basin water supply development account—Use for storage facilities and access to water supplies—Evaluation—Public comment—Use of net water savings—Water service contracts.** (1) The Columbia river basin water supply development account is created in the state treasury. The account may receive direct appropriations from the legislature, receipts of any funds pursuant to RCW 90.90.020 and 90.90.030, or funds from any other sources. The account is intended to fund projects using tax exempt bonds.

(2) (a) Expenditures from the Columbia river basin water supply development account may be used to assess, plan, and develop new storage, improve or alter operations of existing storage facilities, implement conservation projects, develop pump exchanges, or any other

actions designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Columbia river basin for both instream and out-of-stream uses. Except for the development of new storage projects and pump exchanges, there shall be no expenditures from this account for water acquisition or transfers from one water resource inventory area to another without specific legislative authority. For purposes of this chapter, "pump exchanges" means water supply development projects that exchange water from one source to another or relocate an existing diversion downstream, with resulting instream benefit.

(b) Two-thirds of the funds placed in the account shall be used to support the development of new storage facilities and pump exchanges; the remaining one-third shall be used for the other purposes listed in this section.

(3) (a) Funds may not be expended from this account for the construction of a new storage facility until the department of ecology evaluates the following:

(i) Water uses to be served by the facility;

(ii) The quantity of water necessary to meet those uses;

(iii) The benefits and costs to the state of meeting those uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural, and environmental effects; and

(iv) Alternative means of supplying water to meet those uses, including the costs of those alternatives and an analysis of the extent to which long-term water supply needs can be met using these alternatives.

(b) The department of ecology may rely on studies and information developed through compliance with other state and federal permit requirements and other sources. The department shall compile its findings and conclusions, and provide a summary of the information it reviewed.

(c) Before finalizing its evaluation under the provisions of this section, the department of ecology shall make the preliminary evaluation available to the public. Public comment may be made to the department within thirty days of the date the preliminary evaluation is made public.

(4) Net water savings achieved through conservation measures funded by the account shall be placed in trust in proportion to the state funding provided to implement a project.

(5) Net water savings achieved through conservation measures funded by the account developed within the boundaries of the federal Columbia river reclamation project and directed to the Odessa subarea to reduce the use of groundwater for existing irrigation is exempt from the provisions of subsection (4) of this section.

(6) The department of ecology may enter into water service contracts with applicants receiving water from the program to recover all or a portion of the cost of developing the water supply. Costs recovered under water service contracts does not include staff time expended by the department on developing the water supply. With the applicant's concurrence, the department may receive power revenue generated by the water supply developed by the department through water service contracts. The department may deny an application if the applicant does not enter into a water service contract. Revenue collected from water service contracts must be deposited into the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account created in RCW 90.90.100. The department may adopt rules describing the methodology as to how charges will be established and direct costs recovered for water supply developed under the Columbia river basin

water supply program. Water service contracts with federal agencies under RCW 90.42.150 are not required to be established by rule.

(7) Moneys in the Columbia river basin water supply development account created in this section may be spent only after appropriation.

(8) Interest earned by deposits in the account will be retained in the account. [2011 c 83 § 1; 2006 c 6 § 2.]

**RCW 90.90.020 Allocation and development of water supplies.**

(1)(a) Water supplies secured through the development of new storage facilities made possible with funding from the Columbia river basin water supply development account, the Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account, and the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account shall be allocated as follows:

(i) Two-thirds of active storage shall be available for appropriation for out-of-stream uses; and

(ii) One-third of active storage shall be available to augment instream flows and shall be managed by the department of ecology. The timing of releases of this water shall be determined by the department of ecology, in cooperation with the department of fish and wildlife and fisheries comanagers, to maximize benefits to salmon and steelhead populations.

(b) Water available for appropriation under (a)(i) of this subsection but not yet appropriated shall be temporarily available to augment instream flows to the extent that it does not impair existing water rights.

(2) Water developed under the provisions of this section to offset out-of-stream uses and for instream flows is deemed adequate mitigation for the issuance of new water rights provided for in subsection (1)(a) of this section and satisfies all consultation requirements under state law related to the issuance of new water rights.

(3) The department of ecology shall focus its efforts to develop water supplies for the Columbia river basin on the following needs:

(a) Alternatives to groundwater for agricultural users in the Odessa subarea aquifer;

(b) Sources of water supply for pending water right applications;

(c) A new uninterruptible supply of water for the holders of interruptible water rights on the Columbia river mainstem that are subject to instream flows or other mitigation conditions to protect streamflows; and

(d) New municipal, domestic, industrial, and irrigation water needs within the Columbia river basin.

(4) The one-third/two-thirds allocation of water resources between instream and out-of-stream uses established in this section does not apply to:

(a) Applications for changes or transfers of existing water rights in the Columbia river basin; or

(b) Applications for water rights in the Walla Walla river basin implementing the Walla Walla water 2050 plan adopted June 30, 2021. [2023 c 239 § 1; 2011 c 83 § 4; 2006 c 6 § 3.]

**RCW 90.90.030 Voluntary regional agreements—Scope and application—Definitions. (Expires June 30, 2024.)** (1) The department of ecology may enter into voluntary regional agreements for the

purpose of providing new water for out-of-stream use, streamlining the application process, and protecting instream flow.

(2) Such agreements shall ensure that:

(a) For water rights issued from the Columbia river mainstem, there is no negative impact on Columbia river mainstem instream flows in the months of July and August as a result of the new appropriations issued under the agreement;

(b) For water rights issued from the lower Snake river mainstem, there is no negative impact on Snake river mainstem instream flows from April through August as a result of the new appropriations issued under the agreement; and

(c) Efforts are made to harmonize such agreements with watershed plans adopted under the authority of chapter 90.82 RCW that are applicable to the area covered by the agreement.

(3) The protection of instream flow as set forth in subsection (2) of this section is adequate for purposes of mitigating instream flow impacts resulting from any appropriations for out-of-stream use made under a voluntary regional agreement, and the only applicable consultation provisions under state law regarding instream flow impacts shall be those set forth in subsection (4) of this section.

(4) Before executing a voluntary agreement under this section, the department of ecology shall:

(a) Provide a sixty-day period for consultation with county legislative authorities and watershed planning groups with jurisdiction over the area where the water rights included in the agreement are located, the department of fish and wildlife, and affected tribal governments, and federal agencies. The department of fish and wildlife shall provide written comments within that time period. The consultation process for voluntary regional agreements developed under the provisions of this section is deemed adequate for the issuance of new water rights provided for in this section and satisfies all consultation requirements under state law related to the issuance of new water rights; and

(b) Provide a thirty-day public review and comment period for a draft agreement, and publish a summary of any public comments received. The thirty-day review period shall not begin until after the department of ecology has concluded its consultation under (a) of this subsection and the comments that have been received by the department are made available to the public.

(5) The provisions of subsection (4) of this section satisfy all applicable consultation requirements under state law.

(6) The provisions of this section and any voluntary regional agreements developed under such provisions may not be relied upon by the department of ecology as a precedent, standard, or model that must be followed in any other voluntary regional agreements.

(7) Nothing in this section may be interpreted or administered in a manner that precludes the processing of water right applications under chapter 90.03 or 90.44 RCW that are not included in a voluntary regional agreement.

(8) Nothing in this section may be interpreted or administered in a manner that impairs or diminishes a valid water right or a habitat conservation plan approved for purposes of compliance with the federal endangered species act.

(9) If the department of ecology executes a voluntary agreement under this section that includes water rights appropriated from the lower Snake river mainstem, the department shall develop aggregate

data in accordance with the provisions of RCW 90.90.050 for the lower Snake river mainstem.

(10) Any agreement entered into under this section shall remain in full force and effect through the term of the agreement regardless of the expiration of this section.

(11) The definitions in this subsection apply to this section and RCW 90.90.050, and may only be used for purposes of implementing these sections.

(a) "Columbia river mainstem" means all water in the Columbia river within the ordinary high water mark of the main channel of the Columbia river between the border of the United States and Canada and the Bonneville dam, and all groundwater within one mile of the high water mark.

(b) "Lower Snake river mainstem" means all water in the lower Snake river within the ordinary high water mark of the main channel of the lower Snake river from the head of Ice Harbor pool to the confluence of the Snake and Columbia rivers, and all groundwater within one mile of the high water mark.

(12) This section expires June 30, 2024. [2018 c 72 § 1; 2012 c 161 § 1; 2006 c 6 § 4.]

**RCW 90.90.040 Columbia river water supply inventory—Long-term water supply and demand forecast.** (1) To support the development of new water supplies in the Columbia river and to protect instream flow, the department of ecology shall work with all interested parties, including interested county legislative authorities and watershed planning groups in the Columbia river basin, and affected tribal governments, to develop a Columbia river water supply inventory and a long-term water supply and demand forecast. The inventory must include:

(a) A list of conservation projects that have been implemented under this chapter and the amount of water conservation they have achieved; and

(b) A list of potential water supply and storage projects in the Columbia river basin, including estimates of:

- (i) Cost per acre-foot;
- (ii) Benefit to fish and other instream needs;
- (iii) Benefit to out-of-stream needs; and
- (iv) Environmental and cultural impacts.

(2) The department of ecology shall complete the first Columbia river water supply inventory by November 15, 2006, and shall update the inventory annually thereafter.

(3) The department of ecology shall complete the first Columbia river long-term water supply and demand forecast by November 15, 2006, and shall update the report every five years thereafter. [2011 c 83 § 6; 2006 c 6 § 5.]

**RCW 90.90.050 Columbia river mainstem water resources information system.** (1) In order to better understand current water use and instream flows in the Columbia river mainstem, the department of ecology shall establish and maintain a Columbia river mainstem water resources information system that provides the information necessary for effective mainstem water resource planning and management.

(2) To accomplish the objective in subsection (1) of this section, the department of ecology shall use information compiled by existing local watershed planning groups, federal agencies, the Bonneville power administration, irrigation districts, conservation districts in the basin, and other available sources. The information shall include:

(a) The total aggregate quantity of water rights issued under state permits and certificates and filed under state claims on the Columbia river mainstem and for groundwater within one mile of the mainstem; and

(b) The total aggregate volume of current water use under these rights as metered and reported by water users under current law.

(3) The department of ecology shall publish the aggregate data on the department's website no later than June 30, 2009, and shall periodically update the data.

(4) For purposes of this section, the definition of Columbia river mainstem in RCW 90.90.030(11) shall apply and the use of the definition is solely limited to the purpose of collecting data to meet the information requirements of this section. [2018 c 72 § 2; 2006 c 6 § 6.]

**RCW 90.90.060 Additional releases of water from Lake Roosevelt.**

(1) In 2006, the legislature enacted chapter 6, Laws of 2006, an act relating to water resource management in the Columbia river basin. In its enactment, the legislature established that a key priority of water resource management in the Columbia river basin is the development of new water supplies to meet economic and community development needs concurrent with instream flow needs.

(2) Consistent with this intent, the governor and the legislature are in agreement with the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation and the Spokane Tribe of Indians to support additional releases of water from Lake Roosevelt. Because the sovereign and proprietary interests of these tribal governments are directly affected by water levels in Lake Roosevelt, the state intends to share a portion of the benefits derived from Lake Roosevelt water releases and to mitigate for any impacts such releases may have upon the tribes.

(3) These new releases of Lake Roosevelt water of approximately eighty-two thousand five hundred acre feet of water, increasing to no more than one hundred thirty-two thousand five hundred acre feet of water in drought years, will bolster the state economy and will meet the following critical needs: New surface water supplies for farmers to replace the use of diminishing groundwater in the Odessa aquifer; new water supplies for municipalities with pending water right applications; enhanced certainty for agricultural water users with water rights that are interruptible during times of drought; and water to increase flows in the river when salmon need it most.

(4) Nothing in chapter 82, Laws of 2008 expands, impairs, or otherwise affects the existing status and sovereignty of the tribal governments involved in Lake Roosevelt water releases pursuant to this section and RCW 90.90.070. [2008 c 82 § 1.]

**Effective date—2008 c 82:** "This act takes effect July 1, 2008."  
[2008 c 82 § 4.]

**RCW 90.90.070 Columbia river water delivery account—Creation—**

**Distribution.** (1) The Columbia river water delivery account is created in the state treasury. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. The account consists of all moneys transferred or appropriated to the account by law. The legislature may appropriate moneys in the account:

(a) For distributions for purposes of RCW 90.90.060 as provided in this section; and

(b) To the department of ecology for other purposes relating to implementation of RCW 90.90.060 and 90.90.080.

(2) On July 1, 2008, and each July 1st thereafter for the duration of the agreements described in RCW 90.90.060, the state treasurer shall transfer moneys from the general fund into the Columbia river water delivery account in the amounts described in subsection (3) of this section.

(3) Subject to appropriations, on July 1, 2008, and each July 1st thereafter, the state treasurer shall distribute moneys from the Columbia river water delivery account as follows:

(a) To the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, on July 1, 2008, the sum of three million seven hundred seventy-five thousand dollars; and on July 1, 2009, the sum of three million six hundred twenty-five thousand dollars. Each July 1st thereafter for the duration of the agreement, the treasurer shall distribute an amount equal to the previous year's distribution adjusted for inflation. The inflation adjustment shall be computed using the percentage change on the implicit price deflator for personal consumption expenditures for the United States for the previous calendar year, as compiled by the bureau of economic analysis of the United States department of commerce and reported in the most recent quarterly publication of the economic and revenue forecast council or successor agency.

(b) To the Spokane Tribe of Indians, on July 1, 2008, the sum of two million two hundred fifty thousand dollars. Each July 1st thereafter for the duration of the agreement, the treasurer shall distribute an amount equal to the previous year's distribution adjusted for inflation. The inflation adjustment shall be computed using the percentage change in the consumer price index for the Washington state Seattle-Tacoma-Bremerton consolidated metropolitan statistical area for the previous calendar year as compiled by the bureau of labor statistics, United States department of labor, and reported in the most recent quarterly publication of the economic and revenue forecast council or successor agency.

(4) The state treasurer may not distribute moneys from the Columbia river water delivery account to a tribe pursuant to this section unless the director of ecology has certified in writing to the state treasurer and the legislature that the agreement with the tribes is still in effect. [2008 c 82 § 2.]

**Effective date—2008 c 82:** See note following RCW 90.90.060.

**RCW 90.90.080 Impacts of water release—Department of ecology's duties.** (1) Because the potential impacts of water releases under agreements reached under this chapter on affected counties are unknown, the department of ecology shall, by November 15, 2009:

(a) Conduct an assessment of the potential impacts, including recommendations for mitigation, and report to [the] appropriate committees of the legislature; and

(b) Establish a process for identifying and reporting on future impacts on the affected counties, and for making recommendations for mitigation.

(2) Within the framework of Columbia river basin water resources management under this chapter, the department of ecology shall:

(a) Provide technical assistance to help affected counties identify and develop competitive project applications to benefit both instream and out-of-stream uses;

(b) Assist affected counties in exploring options to ensure water resources are available for their current and future needs. Such options include pursuing a memorandum of understanding with the affected counties that is consistent with RCW 90.90.005 to effectuate the purposes of this section. The memorandum of understanding shall be available for public comment for a period of thirty days before being signed by the department; and

(c) Consider regional equity when making funding decisions on water supply applications.

(3) As used in this section, "affected counties" means those counties east of the crest of the Cascade mountains with an international border, or those counties east of the crest of the Cascade mountains that border both a county with an international border and a county with four hundred thousand or more residents. [2008 c 82 § 3.]

**Effective date—2008 c 82:** See note following RCW 90.90.060.

**RCW 90.90.090 Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account—Water service contracts.** (1) The Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature, moneys directed to the account pursuant to RCW 90.90.020 and 90.90.030, or moneys directed to the account from any other sources must be deposited in the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. The account is intended to fund projects using taxable bonds. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided in this section.

(2)(a) Expenditures from the Columbia river basin taxable bond water supply development account may be used to assess, plan, and develop new storage, improve or alter operations of existing storage facilities, implement conservation projects, develop pump exchanges, or any other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Columbia river basin for both instream and out-of-stream uses. Except for the development of new storage projects and pump exchanges, there may be no expenditures from the account for water acquisition or transfers from one water resource inventory area to another without specific legislative authority. For the purposes of this section, the term "pump exchanges" means water supply development projects that exchange water from one source to another or relocate an existing diversion downstream, with resulting instream benefit.

(b) Two-thirds of the moneys placed in the account must be used to support the development of new storage facilities and pump



exchanges; the remaining one-third of the moneys must be used for the other purposes listed in this section.

(3) (a) Funds may not be expended from the account for the construction of a new storage facility until the department of ecology evaluates the following:

(i) Water uses to be served by the facility;

(ii) The quantity of water necessary to meet those uses;

(iii) The benefits and costs to the state of meeting those uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural, and environmental effects; and

(iv) Alternative means of supplying water to meet those uses, including the costs of those alternatives and an analysis of the extent to which long-term water supply needs can be met using these alternatives.

(b) The department of ecology may rely on studies and information developed through compliance with other state and federal permit requirements and other sources. The department shall compile its findings and conclusions, and provide a summary of the information it reviewed.

(c) Before finalizing its evaluation under the provisions of this section, the department of ecology shall make the preliminary evaluation available to the public. Public comment may be made to the department within thirty days of the date the preliminary evaluation is made public.

(4) Net water savings achieved through conservation measures funded by the account shall be placed in trust in proportion to the state funding provided to implement a project.

(5) Net water savings achieved through conservation measures funded by the account developed within the boundaries of the federal Columbia river reclamation project and directed to the Odessa subarea to reduce the use of groundwater for existing irrigation is exempt from the provisions of subsection (4) of this section.

(6) The department of ecology may enter into water service contracts with applicants receiving water from the program to recover all or a portion of the cost of developing the water supply. Costs recovered under water service contracts does not include staff time expended by the department on developing the water supply. With the applicant's concurrence, the department may receive power revenue generated by the water supply developed by the department through water service contracts. The department may deny an application if the applicant does not enter into a water service contract. Revenue collected from water service contracts must be deposited into the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account created in RCW 90.90.100. The department may adopt rules describing the methodology as to how charges will be established and direct costs recovered for water supply developed under the Columbia river basin water supply program. Water service contracts with federal agencies under RCW 90.42.150 are not required to be established by rule.

(7) Interest earned by deposits in the account will be retained in the account. [2011 c 83 § 2.]

**RCW 90.90.100 Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account—Water service contracts.** (1) The Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account is created in the state treasury. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature, moneys

directed to the account pursuant to RCW 90.90.020 and 90.90.030, revenue from water service contracts described in this chapter, or moneys directed into the account from any other sources must be deposited in the account. Moneys in the account may be spent only after appropriation. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided in this section.

(2) (a) Expenditures from the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account may be used to assess, plan, and develop new storage, improve or alter operations of existing storage facilities, implement conservation projects, develop pump exchanges, or any other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies within the Columbia river basin for both instream and out-of-stream uses. Except for the development of new storage projects and pump exchanges, there may be no expenditures from the account for water acquisition or transfers from one water resource inventory area to another without specific legislative authority. For the purposes of this section, the term "pump exchanges" means water supply development projects that exchange water from one source to another or relocate an existing diversion downstream, with resulting instream benefit.

(b) Two-thirds of the moneys placed in the account must be used to support the development of new storage facilities and pump exchanges; the remaining one-third of the moneys must be used for the other purposes listed in this section.

(3) (a) Funds may not be expended from the account for the construction of a new storage facility until the department of ecology evaluates the following:

(i) Water uses to be served by the facility;

(ii) The quantity of water necessary to meet those uses;

(iii) The benefits and costs to the state of meeting those uses, including short-term and long-term economic, cultural, and environmental effects; and

(iv) Alternative means of supplying water to meet those uses, including the costs of those alternatives and an analysis of the extent to which long-term water supply needs can be met using these alternatives.

(b) The department of ecology may rely on studies and information developed through compliance with other state and federal permit requirements and other sources. The department shall compile its findings and conclusions, and provide a summary of the information it reviewed.

(c) Before finalizing its evaluation under the provisions of this section, the department of ecology shall make the preliminary evaluation available to the public. Public comment may be made to the department within thirty days of the date the preliminary evaluation is made public.

(4) Net water savings achieved through conservation measures funded by the account shall be placed in trust in proportion to the state funding provided to implement a project.

(5) Net water savings achieved through conservation measures funded by the account developed within the boundaries of the federal Columbia river reclamation project and directed to the Odessa subarea to reduce the use of groundwater for existing irrigation is exempt from the provisions of subsection (4) of this section.

(6) The department of ecology may enter into water service contracts with applicants receiving water from the program to recover all or a portion of the cost of developing the water supply. Costs recovered under water service contracts does not include staff time

expended by the department on developing the water supply. With the applicant's concurrence, the department may receive power revenue generated by the water supply developed by the department through water service contracts. The department may deny an application if the applicant does not enter into a water service contract. Revenue collected from water service contracts must be deposited into the Columbia river basin water supply revenue recovery account created in this section. The department may adopt rules describing the methodology as to how charges will be established and direct costs recovered for water supply developed under the Columbia river basin water supply program. Water service contracts with federal agencies under RCW 90.42.150 are not required to be established by rule.

(7) Interest earned by deposits in the account will be retained in the account. [2011 c 83 § 3.]

**RCW 90.90.110 Use of certain water made available through reoperation of Sullivan lake.** Two-thirds of the water made available through reoperation of Sullivan lake funded from the Columbia river basin water supply development account created in RCW 90.90.010 must be used to supply or offset out-of-stream uses described in RCW 90.90.020(3) in Douglas, Ferry, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, and Stevens counties. At least one-half of this quantity must be made available for municipal, domestic, and industrial uses. [2011 c 83 § 5.]

**RCW 90.90.120 Walla Walla water 2050 plan.** (1) The Walla Walla water 2050 plan must be used as an integrated water resource strategy, through a coordinated effort between the states of Washington and Oregon, affected federally recognized tribes, affected federal, state, and local agencies, and agricultural, environmental, business, and other community stakeholders.

(2) In developing water supply solutions in the Walla Walla river basin, the department of ecology should employ an integrated water resource management strategy that will provide concurrent water supply benefits to both instream and out-of-stream uses and address a variety of water resource and ecosystem challenges affecting fish passage, habitat functions, and agricultural, municipal, industrial, and domestic water supply, consistent with the Walla Walla water 2050 plan.

(3) The department of ecology shall consider any increase in the quantity of water supply due to a project being implemented under the Walla Walla water 2050 plan that is completed after July 23, 2023, to be water supply developed under this section.

(4) In implementing subsection (2) of this section, the department of ecology will be advised by the Walla Walla basin advisory committee, including representatives from a broad range of interests, including agricultural, environmental, and other stakeholders, and tribal, local, state, and federal governments.

(5) In consultation with affected federally recognized tribes, the department of ecology shall evaluate the development of a bistate legal regulatory framework for allocation of developed water resources, in collaboration with the state of Oregon.

(6) The department of ecology shall submit a report to the relevant committees of the legislature by June 30, 2025, with a recommendation for the bistate legal regulatory framework necessary

for equitable allocation and management of developed water resources from the build out of water supply projects envisioned in the Walla Walla water 2050 plan.

(7) Subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, the department of ecology is authorized to fund the development, construction, and implementation of projects to implement the Walla Walla water 2050 plan that may be located outside of the state, provided that the projects benefit instream and out-of-stream water demands in the state.

(8) Water supplies developed under this section must be apportioned between the states consistent with any written agreements entered into with the state of Oregon and the confederated tribes of the Umatilla Indian reservation related to the management of water in the Walla Walla river basin.

(9) The department of ecology has the authority to designate water supplies developed under this section for instream flow purposes and placed into the trust water rights program authorized under chapter 90.42 RCW. Water supplies developed under this section that are designated for instream flow purposes are unavailable to satisfy existing water rights, including water rights with superior priority, and are exempt from provisions under RCW 90.42.070.

(10) Water supplies developed under this section must be managed consistent with the intent of the specific project being implemented.

(11) It is the intent of the legislature for the state to share in the cost to implement the Walla Walla water 2050 plan authorized under this section, subject to the availability of amounts appropriated for this specific purpose, with at least one-half of the total costs to finance the implementation of the Walla Walla water 2050 plan funded through federal, private, and other nonstate sources, including private funding sources from entities that benefit from projects. This section applies to the total costs of the Walla Walla water 2050 plan and not to individual projects within the plan and includes funding for projects that have been completed prior to July 23, 2023.

(12) Nothing in this section prevents the department of ecology from regulating water users consistent with existing adjudications to ensure that water use by holders of adjudicated surface water right certificates are not impaired by use under junior groundwater right certificates, claims, and permits. [2023 c 239 § 2.]

**RCW 90.90.900 Effective date—2006 c 6.** This act takes effect July 1, 2006. [2006 c 6 § 10.]

**Chapter 90.94 RCW**  
**STREAMFLOW RESTORATION**

**Sections**

- 90.94.010 Definitions.
- 90.94.020 Authorization for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting with a potential impact on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow—Requirements—Fees—Adoption of rules.
- 90.94.030 Authorization for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting with a potential impact on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow—Requirements—Watershed restoration and enhancement committees—Watershed restoration and enhancement plan—Fees—Adoption of rules—Application of section.
- 90.94.040 Pilot projects to measure water use from all new groundwater withdrawals for domestic purposes exempt from permitting—Areas—Report to the legislature.
- 90.94.050 Report to the legislature—Elements.
- 90.94.060 Watershed restoration and enhancement account.
- 90.94.070 Watershed restoration and enhancement taxable bond account.
- 90.94.080 Watershed restoration and enhancement bond account.
- 90.94.090 Joint legislative task force on water resource mitigation —Water resource mitigation pilot projects.
- 90.94.900 Effective date—2018 c 1.

**Chapter 90.94 RCW  
STREAMFLOW RESTORATION**

**Sections**

- 90.94.010 Definitions.
- 90.94.020 Authorization for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting with a potential impact on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow—Requirements—Fees—Adoption of rules.
- 90.94.030 Authorization for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting with a potential impact on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow—Requirements—Watershed restoration and enhancement committees—Watershed restoration and enhancement plan—Fees—Adoption of rules—Application of section.
- 90.94.040 Pilot projects to measure water use from all new groundwater withdrawals for domestic purposes exempt from permitting—Areas—Report to the legislature.
- 90.94.050 Report to the legislature—Elements.
- 90.94.060 Watershed restoration and enhancement account.
- 90.94.070 Watershed restoration and enhancement taxable bond account.
- 90.94.080 Watershed restoration and enhancement bond account.
- 90.94.090 Joint legislative task force on water resource mitigation—Water resource mitigation pilot projects.
- 90.94.900 Effective date—2018 c 1.

**RCW 90.94.010 Definitions.** The definitions in this section apply throughout this chapter unless the context clearly requires otherwise.

(1) "Department" means the department of ecology.

(2) "Lead agency" has the same meaning as defined in RCW 90.82.060.

(3) "Water resource inventory area" or "WRIA" means a water resource inventory area established in chapter 173-500 WAC as it existed on January 19, 2018. [2018 c 1 § 201.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** "The legislature intends to appropriate three hundred million dollars for projects to achieve the goals of this act until June 30, 2033. The department of ecology is directed to implement a program to restore and enhance streamflows by fulfilling obligations under this act to develop and implement plans to restore streamflows to levels necessary to support robust, healthy, and sustainable salmon populations." [2018 c 1 § 304.]

**RCW 90.94.020 Authorization for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting with a potential impact on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow—Requirements—Fees—Adoption of rules.** (1) Unless requirements are otherwise specified in the applicable rules adopted under this chapter or under chapter 90.22 or 90.54 RCW, potential impacts on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow are authorized for new

domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 through compliance with the requirements established in this section.

(2) In the following water resource inventory areas with instream flow rules adopted by the department under chapters 90.22 and 90.54 RCW that do not explicitly regulate permit-exempt groundwater withdrawals and that have completed a watershed plan adopted under chapter 90.82 RCW, the department shall work with the initiating governments and the planning units described in chapter 90.82 RCW to review existing watershed plans to identify the potential impacts of exempt well use, identify evidence-based conservation measures, and identify projects to improve watershed health: 1 (Nooksack); 11 (Nisqually); 22 (Lower Chehalis); 23 (Upper Chehalis); 49 (Okanogan); 55 (Little Spokane); and 59 (Colville).

(3) In the water resource inventory areas listed in subsection (2) of this section, the lead agency shall invite a representative from each federally recognized Indian tribe that has a usual and accustomed harvest area within the water resource inventory area to participate as part of the planning unit.

(4) (a) In collaboration with the planning unit, the initiating governments must update the watershed plan to include recommendations for projects and actions that will measure, protect, and enhance instream resources and improve watershed functions that support the recovery of threatened and endangered salmonids. Watershed plan recommendations may include, but are not limited to, acquiring senior water rights, water conservation, water reuse, stream gaging, groundwater monitoring, and developing natural and constructed infrastructure, which includes, but is not limited to, such projects as floodplain restoration, off-channel storage, and aquifer recharge. Qualifying projects must be specifically designed to enhance streamflows and not result in negative impacts to ecological functions or critical habitat.

(b) At a minimum, the watershed plan must include those actions that the planning units determine to be necessary to offset potential impacts to instream flows associated with permit-exempt domestic water use. The highest priority recommendations must include replacing the quantity of consumptive water use during the same time as the impact and in the same basin or tributary. Lower priority projects include projects not in the same basin or tributary and projects that replace consumptive water supply impacts only during critical flow periods. The watershed plan may include projects that protect or improve instream resources without replacing the consumptive quantity of water where such projects are in addition to those actions that the planning unit determines to be necessary to offset potential consumptive impacts to instream flows associated with permit-exempt domestic water use.

(c) Prior to adoption of the updated watershed plan, the department must determine that actions identified in the watershed plan, after accounting for new projected uses of water over the subsequent twenty years, will result in a net ecological benefit to instream resources within the water resource inventory area.

(d) The watershed plan may include:

(i) Recommendations for modification to fees established under this subsection;

(ii) Standards for water use quantities that are less than authorized under RCW 90.44.050 or more or less than authorized under subsection (5) of this section for withdrawals exempt from permitting;

(iii) Specific conservation requirements for new water users to be adopted by local or state permitting authorities; or

(iv) Other approaches to manage water resources for a water resource inventory area or a portion thereof.

(e) Any modification to fees collected under subsection (5) of this section or standards for water use quantities that are less than authorized under RCW 90.44.050 or more or less than authorized under subsection (5) of this section for withdrawals exempt from permitting may not be applied unless authorized by rules adopted under this chapter or under chapter 90.54 RCW.

(5) Until an updated watershed plan is approved and rules are adopted under this chapter or chapter 90.54 RCW, a city or county issuing a building permit under RCW 19.27.097(1)(c), or approving a subdivision under chapter 58.17 RCW in a watershed listed in subsection (2) of this section must:

(a) Record relevant restrictions or limitations associated with water supply with the property title;

(b) Collect applicable fees, as described under this section;

(c) Record the number of building permits issued under chapter 19.27 RCW or subdivision approvals issued under chapter 58.17 RCW subject to the provisions of this section;

(d) Annually transmit to the department three hundred fifty dollars of each fee collected under this subsection;

(e) Annually transmit an accounting of building permits and subdivision approvals subject to the provisions of this section to the department;

(f) Until rules have been adopted that specify otherwise, require the following measures for each new domestic use that relies on a withdrawal exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050:

(i) An applicant shall pay a fee of five hundred dollars to the permitting authority;

(ii) An applicant may obtain approval for a withdrawal exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 for domestic use only, with a maximum annual average withdrawal of three thousand gallons per day per connection.

(6) Rules adopted under this chapter or under chapter 90.54 RCW may:

(a) Rely on watershed plan recommendations and procedures established in this section to authorize new withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 that would potentially impact a closed water body or a minimum flow or level;

(b) Rely on projects identified in the watershed plan to offset consumptive water use; and

(c) Include updates to fees based on the planning unit's determination of the costs for offsetting consumptive water use.

(7)(a) If a watershed plan that meets the requirements of this section is not adopted in water resource inventory area 1 (Nooksack) by February 1, 2019, the department must adopt rules for that water resource inventory area that meet the requirements of this section by August 1, 2020.

(b) If a watershed plan that meets the requirements of this section is not adopted in water resource inventory area 11 (Nisqually) by February 1, 2019, the department must adopt rules for that water resource inventory area that meet the requirements of this section by August 1, 2020.

(c) The department must adopt rules that meet the requirements of this section for any of the following water resource inventory areas



that do not adopt a watershed plan that meets the requirements of this section by February 1, 2021: 22 (Lower Chehalis); 23 (Upper Chehalis); 49 (Okanogan); 55 (Little Spokane); and 59 (Colville).

(8) This section only applies to new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 in the following water resource inventory areas with instream flow rules adopted under chapters 90.22 and 90.54 RCW that do not explicitly regulate permit-exempt groundwater withdrawals: 1 (Nooksack); 11 (Nisqually); 22 (Lower Chehalis); 23 (Upper Chehalis); 49 (Okanogan); 55 (Little Spokane); and 59 (Colville) and does not restrict the withdrawal of groundwater for other uses that are exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050. [2018 c 1 § 202.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.030 Authorization for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting with a potential impact on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow—Requirements—Watershed restoration and enhancement committees—Watershed restoration and enhancement plan—Fees—Adoption of rules—Application of section.** (1) Unless requirements are otherwise specified in the applicable rules adopted under this chapter or chapter 90.22 or 90.54 RCW, potential impacts on a closed water body and potential impairment to an instream flow are authorized for new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 through compliance with the requirements established in this section.

(2) (a) In the following water resource inventory areas with instream flow rules adopted by the department under chapters 90.22 and 90.54 RCW that do not explicitly regulate permit-exempt groundwater withdrawals and that have either not adopted a watershed plan, or adopted a partial watershed plan, under chapter 90.82 RCW, the department shall establish watershed restoration and enhancement committees in the following water resource inventory areas: 7 (Snohomish); 8 (Cedar-Sammamish); 9 (Duwamish-Green); 10 (Puyallup-White); 12 (Chambers-Clover); 13 (Deschutes); 14 (Kennedy-Goldsborough); and 15 (Kitsap).

(b) The department shall chair the watershed restoration and enhancement committee and invite the following entities to participate:

(i) A representative from each federally recognized Indian tribe that has reservation land within the water resource inventory area;

(ii) A representative from each federally recognized Indian tribe that has a usual and accustomed harvest area within the water resource inventory area;

(iii) A representative from the department of fish and wildlife, appointed by the director of the department of fish and wildlife;

(iv) A representative designated by each county within the water resource inventory area;

(v) A representative designated by each city within the water resource inventory area;

(vi) A representative designated by the largest irrigation district within the water resource inventory area;

(vii) A representative designated by the largest publicly owned water purveyor providing water within the water resource inventory area that is not a municipality;

(viii) A representative designated by a local organization representing the residential construction industry within the water resource inventory area;

(ix) A representative designated by a local organization representing environmental interests within the water resource inventory area; and

(x) A representative designated by a local organization representing agricultural interests within the water resource inventory area.

(3) By June 30, 2021, the department shall prepare and adopt a watershed restoration and enhancement plan for each watershed listed under subsection (2)(a) of this section, in collaboration with the watershed restoration and enhancement committee. Except as described in (h) of this subsection, all members of a watershed restoration and enhancement committee must approve the plan prior to adoption.

(a) The watershed restoration and enhancement plan should include recommendations for projects and actions that will measure, protect, and enhance instream resources and improve watershed functions that support the recovery of threatened and endangered salmonids. Plan recommendations may include, but are not limited to, acquiring senior water rights, water conservation, water reuse, stream gaging, groundwater monitoring, and developing natural and constructed infrastructure, which includes but is not limited to such projects as floodplain restoration, off-channel storage, and aquifer recharge. Qualifying projects must be specifically designed to enhance streamflows and not result in negative impacts to ecological functions or critical habitat.

(b) At a minimum, the plan must include those actions that the committee determines to be necessary to offset potential impacts to instream flows associated with permit-exempt domestic water use. The highest priority recommendations must include replacing the quantity of consumptive water use during the same time as the impact and in the same basin or tributary. Lower priority projects include projects not in the same basin or tributary and projects that replace consumptive water supply impacts only during critical flow periods. The plan may include projects that protect or improve instream resources without replacing the consumptive quantity of water where such projects are in addition to those actions that the committee determines to be necessary to offset potential consumptive impacts to instream flows associated with permit-exempt domestic water use.

(c) Prior to adoption of the watershed restoration and enhancement plan, the department must determine that actions identified in the plan, after accounting for new projected uses of water over the subsequent twenty years, will result in a net ecological benefit to instream resources within the water resource inventory area.

(d) The watershed restoration and enhancement plan must include an evaluation or estimation of the cost of offsetting new domestic water uses over the subsequent twenty years, including withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050.

(e) The watershed restoration and enhancement plan must include estimates of the cumulative consumptive water use impacts over the subsequent twenty years, including withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050.

(f) The watershed restoration and enhancement plan may include:

(i) Recommendations for modification to fees established under this subsection;

(ii) Standards for water use quantities that are less than authorized under RCW 90.44.050 or more or less than authorized under subsection (4) of this section for withdrawals exempt from permitting;

(iii) Specific conservation requirements for new water users to be adopted by local or state permitting authorities; or

(iv) Other approaches to manage water resources for a water resource inventory area or a portion thereof.

(g) After adoption of a watershed restoration and enhancement plan, the department shall evaluate the plan recommendations and initiate rule making, if necessary, to incorporate recommendations into rules adopted under this chapter or under chapter 90.22 or 90.54 RCW. Any modification to fees collected under subsection (4) of this section or standards for water use quantities that are less than authorized under RCW 90.44.050 or more or less than authorized under subsection (4) of this section for withdrawals exempt from permitting may not be applied unless authorized by rules adopted under this chapter or under chapter 90.54 RCW.

(h) If the watershed restoration and enhancement committee fails to approve a plan by June 30, 2021, the director of the department shall submit the final draft plan to the salmon recovery funding board established under RCW 77.85.110 and request that the salmon recovery funding board provide a technical review and provide recommendations to the director to amend the final draft plan, if necessary, so that actions identified in the plan, after accounting for new projected uses of water over the subsequent twenty years, will result in a net ecological benefit to instream resources within the water resource inventory area. The director of the department shall consider the recommendations and may amend the plan without committee approval prior to adoption. After plan adoption, the director of the department shall initiate rule making within six months to incorporate recommendations into rules adopted under this chapter or under chapter 90.22 or 90.54 RCW, and shall adopt amended rules within two years of initiation of rule making.

(4) (a) Until a watershed restoration and enhancement plan is approved and rules are adopted under subsection (3) of this section, a city or county issuing a building permit under RCW 19.27.097(1)(d), or approving a subdivision under chapter 58.17 RCW in a watershed listed in subsection (2)(a) of this section must:

(i) Record relevant restrictions or limitations associated with water supply with the property title;

(ii) Collect applicable fees, as described under this section;

(iii) Record the number of building permits issued under chapter 19.27 RCW or subdivision approvals issued under chapter 58.17 RCW subject to the provisions of this section;

(iv) Annually transmit to the department three hundred fifty dollars of each fee collected under this subsection;

(v) Annually transmit an accounting of building permits and subdivision approvals subject to the provisions of this section to the department;

(vi) Until rules have been adopted that specify otherwise, require the following measures for each new domestic use that relies on a withdrawal exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050:

(A) An applicant shall pay a fee of five hundred dollars to the permitting authority;

(B) Except as provided in (b) of this subsection, an applicant may obtain approval for a withdrawal exempt from permitting under RCW

90.44.050 for domestic use only, with a maximum annual average withdrawal of nine hundred fifty gallons per day per connection; and

(C) An applicant shall manage stormwater runoff on-site to the extent practicable by maximizing infiltration, including using low-impact development techniques, or pursuant to stormwater management requirements adopted by the local permitting authority, if locally adopted requirements are more stringent.

(b) Upon the issuance of a drought emergency order under RCW 43.83B.405, the department may curtail withdrawal of groundwater exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 and approved under this subsection (4) to no more than three hundred fifty gallons per day per connection for indoor use only. Notwithstanding the limitation to no more than three hundred fifty gallons per day per connection for indoor use only, an applicant may use groundwater exempt from permitting to maintain a fire control buffer during a drought emergency order.

(5) Rules adopted under this chapter or chapter 90.54 RCW may:

(a) Rely on watershed restoration and enhancement plan recommendations and procedures established in this section to authorize new withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 that would potentially impact a closed water body or a minimum flow or level;

(b) Rely on projects identified in the watershed restoration and enhancement plan to offset consumptive water use; and

(c) Include updates to fees based on the watershed restoration and enhancement committee's determination of the costs for offsetting consumptive water use.

(6) This section only applies to new domestic groundwater withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 in the following water resource inventory areas with instream flow rules adopted under chapters 90.22 and 90.54 RCW that do not explicitly regulate permit-exempt groundwater withdrawals: 7 (Snohomish); 8 (Cedar-Sammamish); 9 (Duwamish-Green); 10 (Puyallup-White); 12 (Chambers-Clover); 13 (Deschutes); 14 (Kennedy-Goldsborough); and 15 (Kitsap) and does not restrict the withdrawal of groundwater for other uses that are exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050. [2018 c 1 § 203.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.040 Pilot projects to measure water use from all new groundwater withdrawals for domestic purposes exempt from permitting—Areas—Report to the legislature.** (1) The department shall initiate two pilot projects to measure water use from all new groundwater withdrawals for domestic purposes exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 in the areas described in this section. The pilot projects must be conducted to determine the overall feasibility of measuring water use for all new groundwater withdrawals. The department must purchase and provide meters to be used in the pilot projects. The pilot projects must be conducted in the area under the Dungeness water rule, chapter 173-518 WAC, within water resource inventory area 18 and the area in which the Kittitas county water bank program operates within water resource inventory area 39.

(2) At a minimum, the pilot project must address the following:

(a) Initial and ongoing costs, including costs to local government and the department;

(b) Technical, practical, and legal considerations that must be addressed;

(c) The costs and benefits of a water use measurement program relying on individual meters versus a water management program that estimates permit-exempt groundwater withdrawals; and

(d) Measures to protect the privacy of individual property owners and ensure accurate data collection.

(3) The department shall report on the pilot project results in the report to the legislature submitted under RCW 90.94.050. The department shall include recommendations to the legislature, including estimated program costs for expanding the pilot projects to other basins. [2018 c 1 § 204.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.050 Report to the legislature—Elements.** The department shall submit a report to the legislature by December 31, 2020, and December 31, 2027, in compliance with RCW 43.01.036, that includes the following elements:

(1) Progress in completing and adopting watershed plans under RCW 90.94.020 and watershed restoration and enhancement plans under RCW 90.94.030;

(2) A description of program projects and expenditures;

(3) An assessment of the streamflow restoration and enhancement benefits from program projects;

(4) A listing of other efforts or actions taken associated with streamflow restoration and enhancement, projects to benefit instream resources, and other directly related watershed improvements conducted in coordination with the restoration and enhancement planning process;

(5) The total number of new withdrawals exempt from permitting under RCW 90.44.050 authorized in each water resource inventory area under provisions of RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030, and estimates of consumptive water use impacts associated with the new withdrawals; and

(6) A description of potential or planned projects, including projected costs and anticipated streamflow, water supply, and watershed health benefits. [2018 c 1 § 205.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.060 Watershed restoration and enhancement account.**

(1) The watershed restoration and enhancement account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from fees paid pursuant to RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030 must be deposited into the account. The account may also receive those moneys as may be appropriated by the legislature for the purpose of funding restoration and enhancement projects as identified in RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030. Expenditures from the account may be used only for the costs of administering chapter 1, Laws of 2018, including implementing watershed planning projects under RCW 90.94.020 and watershed restoration and enhancement projects under RCW 90.94.030, and collecting data and completing studies necessary to develop, implement, and evaluate watershed restoration and enhancement projects

under chapter 1, Laws of 2018. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

(2) Fee revenues collected under RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030 must be used exclusively within the water resource inventory area in which the fee originated. The restriction in this subsection does not apply to moneys in the watershed restoration and enhancement account that do not originate from fees collected under RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030. [2018 c 1 § 206.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.070 Watershed restoration and enhancement taxable bond account.** (1) The watershed restoration and enhancement taxable bond account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature or moneys directed to the account from any other source must be deposited in the account. The account is intended to fund projects using taxable bonds. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided for in this section. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

(2) Expenditures from the watershed restoration and enhancement taxable bond account may be used to assess, plan, and develop projects that include acquiring senior water rights, water conservation, water reuse, stream gaging, groundwater monitoring, and developing natural and constructed infrastructure, which includes, but is not limited to, projects such as floodplain restoration, off-channel storage, and aquifer recharge, or other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies with priority given to projects in watersheds developing plans as directed by RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030 and watersheds participating in the pilot project in RCW 90.94.040. [2018 c 1 § 207.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.080 Watershed restoration and enhancement bond account.** (1) The watershed restoration and enhancement bond account is created in the custody of the state treasurer. All receipts from direct appropriations from the legislature or moneys directed to the account from any other source must be deposited in the account. The account is intended to fund projects using tax exempt bonds. Expenditures from the account may be used only as provided for in this section. Only the director or the director's designee may authorize expenditures from the account. The account is subject to allotment procedures under chapter 43.88 RCW, but an appropriation is not required for expenditures.

(2) Expenditures from the watershed restoration and enhancement bond account may be used to assess, plan, and develop projects that include acquiring senior water rights, water conservation, water reuse, stream gaging, groundwater monitoring, and developing natural and constructed infrastructure, which includes, but is not limited to,

projects such as floodplain restoration, off-channel storage, and aquifer recharge, or other actions designed to provide access to new water supplies with priority given to projects in watersheds developing plans as directed by RCW 90.94.020 and 90.94.030 and watersheds participating in the pilot project in RCW 90.94.040. [2018 c 1 § 208.]

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.090 Joint legislative task force on water resource mitigation—Water resource mitigation pilot projects. (Expires January 1, 2029.)**

(1) A joint legislative task force on water resource mitigation is established to review the treatment of surface water and groundwater appropriations as they relate to instream flows and fish habitat, to develop and recommend a mitigation sequencing process and scoring system to address such appropriations, and to review the Washington supreme court decision in *Foster v. Department of Ecology*, 184 Wn.2d 465, 362 P.3d 959 (2015).

(2) The task force must consist of the following members:

(a) Two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the senate, appointed by the president of the senate;

(b) Two members from each of the two largest caucuses of the house of representatives, appointed by the speaker of the house of representatives;

(c) A representative from the department, appointed by the director of the department;

(d) A representative from the department of fish and wildlife, appointed by the director of the department of fish and wildlife;

(e) A representative from the department of agriculture, appointed by the director of the department of agriculture;

(f) One representative from each of the following groups, appointed by the consensus of the cochairs of the task force:

(i) An organization representing the farming industry in Washington;

(ii) An organization representing Washington cities;

(iii) Two representatives from an environmental advocacy organization or organizations;

(iv) An organization representing municipal water purveyors;

(v) An organization representing business interests;

(vi) Representatives of two federally recognized Indian tribes, one invited by recommendation of the Northwest Indian fisheries commission, and one invited by recommendation of the Columbia river intertribal fish commission.

(3) If a member has not been designated for a position set forth in subsection (2) of this section, that position may not be counted for purposes of determining a quorum.

(4) One cochair of the task force must be a member of the majority caucus of one chamber of the legislature, and one cochair must be a member of the minority caucus of the other chamber of the legislature, as those caucuses existed as of January 19, 2018.

(5) The first meeting of the task force must occur by June 30, 2018.

(6) Staff support for the task force must be provided by the office of program research and senate committee services. The department and the department of fish and wildlife shall cooperate

with the task force and provide information as the cochairs reasonably request.

(7) Within existing appropriations, the expenses of the operations of the task force, including the expenses associated with the task force's meetings, must be paid jointly and in equal amounts by the senate and the house of representatives. Task force expenditures are subject to approval by the house executive rules committee and the senate facility and operations committee. Legislative members of the task force are reimbursed for travel expenses in accordance with RCW 44.04.120. Nonlegislative members are not entitled to be reimbursed for travel expenses if they are elected officials or are participating on behalf of an employer, governmental entity, or other organization. Any reimbursement for other nonlegislative members is subject to chapter 43.03 RCW.

(8) (a) By November 15, 2019, and November 15, 2022, the joint legislative task force must make recommendations to the legislature in compliance with RCW 43.01.036.

(b) Recommendations of the joint legislative task force must be made by a sixty percent majority of the appointed members of the task force. The representatives of the departments of fish and wildlife, ecology, and agriculture are not eligible to vote on the recommendations. Minority recommendations that achieve the support of at least five of the appointed voting members of the task force may also be submitted to the legislature.

(9) The department shall issue permit decisions for up to five water resource mitigation pilot projects. It is the intent of the legislature to use the pilot projects to inform the legislative task force process while also enabling the processing of water right applications that address water supply needs. The department is authorized to issue permits in reliance upon water resource mitigation of impacts to instream flows and closed surface water bodies under the following mitigation sequence:

(a) Avoiding impacts by: (i) Complying with mitigation required by adopted rules that set forth minimum flows, levels, or closures; or (ii) making the water diversion or withdrawal subject to the applicable minimum flows or levels; or

(b) Where avoidance of impacts is not reasonably attainable, minimizing impacts by providing permanent new or existing trust water rights or through other types of replacement water supply resulting in no net annual increase in the quantity of water diverted or withdrawn from the stream or surface water body and no net detrimental impacts to fish and related aquatic resources; or

(c) Where avoidance and minimization are not reasonably attainable, compensating for impacts by providing net ecological benefits to fish and related aquatic resources in the water resource inventory area through in-kind or out-of-kind mitigation or a combination thereof, that improves the function and productivity of affected fish populations and related aquatic habitat. Out-of-kind mitigation may include instream or out-of-stream measures that improve or enhance existing water quality, riparian habitat, or other instream functions and values for which minimum instream flows or closures were established in that watershed.

(10) The department must monitor the implementation of the pilot projects, including all mitigation associated with each pilot project, approved under this section at least annually through December 31, 2028.



(11) The pilot projects eligible for processing under this section, based on criteria as of January 19, 2018, include:

(a) A city operating a group A water system in Kitsap county and water resource inventory area 15, with a population between 13,000 and 14,000;

(b) A city operating a group A water system in Pierce county and water resource inventory area 10, with a population between 9,500 and 10,500;

(c) A city operating a group A water system in Thurston county and water resource inventory area 11, with a population between 8,500 and 9,500;

(d) A nonprofit mutual water system operating a group A water system in Pierce county and water resource inventory area 12, with between 10,500 and 11,500 service connections; and

(e) An irrigation district located in Whatcom county and water resource inventory area 1, solely for the purpose of processing changes of water rights from surface water to groundwater, and implementing flow augmentation to benefit instream flows.

(12) Water right applicants eligible to be processed under this pilot project authority must elect to be included in the pilot project review by notifying the department by July 1, 2018. Once an applicant notifies the department of its intent to be processed under this pilot project authority, subsection (9) of this section applies to final decisions issued by the department, even if such a final decision is issued after the expiration of this section.

(13) By November 15, 2018, the department must furnish the task force with information on conceptual mitigation plans for each water resource mitigation pilot project application. By November 15, 2019, and November 15, 2022, the department must provide the task force with an update on the mitigation plans based on additional information developed after November 15, 2018.

(14) To ensure that the processing of pilot project applications can inform the task force process in a timely manner, the department must expedite processing of applications for water resource mitigation pilot projects. The applicant for each pilot project must reimburse the department for the department's costs of processing the applicant's application.

(15) The water resource mitigation pilot project authority granted to the department does not affect or modify any other procedural requirements of chapter 90.03, 90.44, or 90.54 RCW that apply to the processing of such applications.

(16) The joint legislative task force expires December 31, 2022. During the period from November 16, 2019, through December 31, 2022, the work of the task force is limited to:

(a) A review of any additional information that may be developed after November 15, 2019, as a result of the pilot projects established under subsection (9) of this section; and

(b) An update of the task force's November 15, 2019, recommendations.

(17) This section expires January 1, 2029. [2021 c 332 § 7024. Prior: 2019 c 413 § 7035; 2018 c 1 § 301.]

**Effective date—2021 c 332:** See note following RCW 43.19.501.

**Effective date—2019 c 413:** See note following RCW 28B.15.210.

**Intent—2018 c 1:** See note following RCW 90.94.010.

**RCW 90.94.900 Effective date—2018 c 1.** This act is necessary for the immediate preservation of the public peace, health, or safety, or support of the state government and its existing public institutions, and takes effect immediately [January 19, 2018]. [2018 c 1 § 307.]