

**WAC 173-204-415 Sediment impact zones.** The purpose of this section is to set forth the standards for establishment, maintenance, and closure of sediment impact zones to meet the intent of sediment quality dilution zones authorized pursuant to RCW 90.48.520, except for sediment impact zones authorized under WAC 173-204-410(7). The department shall authorize all sediment impact zones via discharge permits or other formal administrative actions.

(1) General requirements. Authorization, modification and renewal of a sediment impact zone by the department shall require compliance with the following general requirements:

(a) Permits authorizing wastewater discharges to surface waters of the state of Washington under authority of chapter 90.48 RCW shall be conditioned so that the discharge receives:

(i) All known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment prior to discharge, as required by chapters 90.48, 90.52, and 90.54 RCW; and

(ii) Best management practices as stipulated by the department.

(b) The maximum area, and maximum chemical contaminant concentration and/or allowable maximum biological effect level within sediments assigned to a sediment impact zone shall be as authorized by the department, in accordance with the standards of this section.

(c) The department shall determine that the person's activity generating effluent discharges which require authorization of a sediment impact zone is in the public interest.

(d) The department shall determine that any person's activity generating effluent discharges which require authorization of a sediment impact zone has adequately addressed alternative waste reduction, recycling, and disposal options through application of all known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment to minimize as best practicable the volume and concentration of waste contaminants in the discharge.

(e) The area boundaries of the sediment impact zone established by the department shall include the minimum practicable surface area, not to exceed the surface area allowed under subsection (4) of this section.

(f) Adverse effects to biological resources within an authorized sediment impact zone shall be maintained at the minimum chemical contamination and biological effects levels practicable at all times. The department shall consider the relationship between environmental effects, technical feasibility and cost in determining the minimum practicable chemical contamination and biological effects levels. Adverse effects to biological resources within an authorized sediment impact zone shall not exceed a minor adverse effects level as a result of the discharge, as determined by the procedures of subsection (4) of this section.

(g) The operational terms and conditions for the sediment impact zone shall be maintained at all times.

(h) Final closure of the sediment impact zone shall be conducted in strict accordance with the department's sediment impact zone authorization.

(i) Documents authorizing a sediment impact zone shall require that the permitted discharge not result in a violation of the applicable sediment quality standards of WAC 173-204-320 through 173-204-340, outside the area limits of the established zone.

(j) All applications to the department for sediment impact zone authorizations shall be subject to public notice, comment and hearing procedures defined but not limited to the applicable discharge permit

or other formal administrative action requirements of chapter 43.21C RCW, the State Environmental Policy Act, chapter 197-11 WAC, SEPA rules, chapter 90.48 RCW, chapter 163-216 WAC, the State waste discharge permit program, and chapter 173-220 WAC, National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Permit Program prior to issuance of the authorization. In determining the need for, location, and/or design of any sediment impact zone authorization, the department shall give consideration to all comments received during public review of the proposed sediment impact zone application.

(2) Application requirements.

(a) Whenever, in the opinion of the department, as a result of an ongoing or proposed effluent discharge, a person violates, shall violate, or creates a substantial potential to violate the sediment quality standards of WAC 173-204-320 through 173-204-340 as applicable within a period of ten years from the later date of either the department's evaluation of the ongoing discharge or the starting date of the proposed discharge, the department may require application for a sediment impact zone authorization under authority of chapter 90.48 RCW.

(b) Any person with a proposed or permitted effluent discharge shall apply to the department for authorization of a sediment impact zone when:

(i) The department requires the sediment impact zone application by written notification; or

(ii) The person independently identifies that the ongoing or proposed effluent discharge violates, shall violate, or creates a substantial potential to violate the applicable sediment quality standards of WAC 173-204-320 through 173-204-340 within a period of ten years from the later date of the person's evaluation of the ongoing discharge or the starting date of the proposed discharge, using the procedures of this section.

(c) As necessary, the department may require any person to submit a sediment impact zone application in multiple steps concurrent with its ongoing review and determination concerning the adequacy of the application. The application shall provide the sediment impact zone design information required in subsection (4) of this section and other such information the department determines necessary. The application shall also provide the legal location and landowner(s) of property proposed for use as, or potentially affected by, a sediment impact zone, and shall be accompanied by such other relevant information as the department may require. The department shall issue a written approval of the complete sediment impact zone application prior to or concurrent with authorizing a sediment impact zone.

(d) Submittal of an application to the department for authorization of a sediment impact zone under the terms and conditions of this section shall establish the applicant's interim compliance with requirements of chapter 90.48 RCW and this chapter, as determined by the department. The department may authorize an interim compliance period within a valid discharge permit or administrative order to ensure ultimate compliance with chapter 90.48 RCW and this chapter. The interim compliance period shall not continue beyond the date of issuance of a sediment impact zone authorization within a valid discharge permit issued by the department.

(e) Prior to authorization, the department shall make a reasonable effort to identify and notify all landowners, adjacent landowners, and lessees affected by the proposed sediment impact zone. The department shall issue a sediment impact zone notification letter to any person it believes to be a potentially affected landowner and other

parties determined appropriate by the department. The notification letter shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. The notification letter shall provide:

(i) The name of the person the department believes to be the affected landowner;

(ii) The names and addresses of other affected landowners to whom the department has sent a proposed sediment impact zone notification letter;

(iii) The name and address of the sediment impact zone applicant;

(iv) A general description of the location, size, and contamination level proposed for the sediment impact zone;

(v) The intention of the department to release all specific sediment impact zone application information to the public upon written request to the department;

(vi) The determination of the department concerning whether the proposed sediment impact zone application meets the standards of this section;

(vii) The intention of the department whether to authorize the proposed sediment impact zone; and

(viii) Notification that the affected landowners, adjacent landowners, and lessees may comment on the proposed sediment impact zone. Any comments on the proposed sediment impact zone authorization shall be submitted in writing to the department within thirty days from the date of receipt of the notification letter, unless the department provides an extension.

(f) Prior to authorization, the department shall issue a sediment impact zone notification letter to affected port districts, the Washington state department of natural resources marine lands division, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and other parties determined appropriate by the department. The notification letter shall be sent by certified mail, return receipt requested, or by personal service. The notification letter shall provide the information required under (e) of this subsection.

(3) Locational considerations. The department shall require any person applying for a sediment impact zone to submit information concerning potential location considerations of the zone. The location of an authorized sediment impact zone shall avoid whenever possible and minimize adverse impacts to areas of special importance. Prior to authorization of a sediment impact zone, the department shall consider all pertinent information from the applicant, all affected parties, local, state and federal agencies, federally recognized Indian tribes, and the public concerning locational considerations, including but not limited to:

(a) Spawning areas;

(b) Nursery areas;

(c) Waterfowl feeding areas;

(d) Shellfish harvest areas;

(e) Areas used by species of economic importance;

(f) Tribal areas of significance;

(g) Areas determined to be ecologically unique;

(h) Water supply intake areas;

(i) Areas used for primary contact public recreation;

(j) High quality waters that constitute an outstanding national resource; and

(k) Areas where sediment quality is substantially better than levels necessary for protection of biological resources and human health.

(4) Design requirements. The location, areal limitations, and degree of effects allowed within an authorized sediment impact zone shall be determined by application of the department's sediment impact zone computer models "CORMIX," "PLUMES," and/or "WASP," or an alternate sediment impact zone model(s) approved by the department under WAC 173-204-130(4), as limited by the standards of this section and the department's best professional judgment. The models shall be used by the department or by the discharger as required by the department, to estimate the impact of any person's wastewater or stormwater discharge on the receiving water and sediment quality for a period of ten years from the later date of either the department's formal approval of the application for a sediment impact zone authorization or the starting date of the discharge.

(a) Data requirements. The discharger shall submit the following information to determine requirements for establishment and authorization of a sediment impact zone, as required by the department:

(i) Data reports and analyses results for all samples of wastewater or stormwater, receiving water, and sediments collected by the discharger or other parties relating to evaluation of the potential effects of the permitted discharge, as required by WAC 173-204-400.

(ii) Data reports and analyses results determined necessary to:

(A) Apply discharge modeling to the permitted discharge; and

(B) To identify and evaluate potential alternative chemical and biological effects of the discharge on the receiving water and sediments; and

(C) To identify and evaluate potential alternatives to define the areal size and location of a sediment impact zone needed by the discharge.

(iii) Data reports and analyses results from the discharger's application of the "CORMIX," "PLUMES," and/or "WASP" or an alternate sediment impact zone model(s) approved by the department under WAC 173-204-130(4), to the permitted discharge to identify and evaluate:

(A) Potential alternative chemical and biological effects of the discharge on the receiving water and sediments; and

(B) Potential alternatives for the areal distribution and location of a potential sediment impact zone required by the discharge.

(iv) Preferred alternative for closure of the potential sediment impact zone by active removal and/or natural recovery, and identified costs of the preferred closure method.

(b) Overlapping sediment impact zones. Overlapping sediment impact zones, as predicted by the "CORMIX," "PLUMES," and/or "WASP" models or an alternate sediment impact zone model(s) approved by the department under WAC 173-204-130(4), and the department's best professional judgment, shall be authorized only as follows:

(i) The applicable sediment impact zone maximum criteria of WAC 173-204-420 shall not be exceeded as a result of the multiple discharge sediment impact zones overlap; and

(ii) If the department determines that the applicable chemical contaminant concentration and biological effects restrictions of WAC 173-204-420 would be exceeded as a result of the overlap of multiple discharge sediment impact zones, the department may authorize the sediment impact zones after:

(A) Application of a waste load allocation process to the individual permitted discharges to identify individual permit effluent limitations necessary to meet:

(I) The applicable chemical contaminant concentration and biological effects restrictions for sediment impact zones required by this section; and/or

(II) Stormwater best management practices required by the department; and

(B) Establishment of individual permit compliance schedules for the multiple permitted discharges to ensure compliance with:

(I) The permit effluent limitations established by the department using the waste load allocation process and best professional judgment; and

(II) The standards of WAC 173-204-400 through 173-204-420.

(5) Maintenance requirements.

(a) The department shall review sediment impact zone monitoring conducted by the discharger to evaluate compliance with the department's sediment impact zone authorization and the standards of WAC 173-204-400 through 173-204-420. The department may require additional sediment impact zone monitoring when the department determines that any sediment sampling station within an authorized sediment impact zone exceeds the sediment impact zone maximum criteria of WAC 173-204-420 or violates the sediment impact zone authorization as a result of the discharge.

(b) Whenever the department can clearly demonstrate that, as a result of an effluent discharge, a discharger violates, shall violate, or creates a substantial potential to violate the department's sediment impact zone authorization, or the sediment impact zone maximum criteria of WAC 173-204-420, the department shall:

(i) Provide written notification and supporting documentation of the department's clear demonstration determination to the affected discharger;

(ii) Establish a reasonable time frame for the affected discharger to either submit a written statement and supporting documentation rebutting the department's clear demonstration determination, or accept the department's determination. The discharger may use the clear demonstration methods identified in (c) of this subsection for rebuttal of the department's clear demonstration; and

(iii) Provide written notification of the department's determination concerning approval or denial of the submitted clear demonstration rebuttal to the discharger.

(c) For the purpose of this section, a clear demonstration shall consist of:

(i) Use of the sediment impact zone model(s) "CORMIX," "PLUMES," and/or "WASP" or other model(s) to demonstrate a discharge(s) is the source of the violation or potential violation; and

(ii) Use of one or more of the following methods to demonstrate a violation of the sediment impact zone authorization or the sediment impact zone maximum criteria of WAC 173-204-420:

(A) Direct sediment sampling. A violation of the sediment impact zone authorization and/or the sediment impact zone maximum criteria of WAC 173-204-420 is demonstrated when:

(I) The average chemical concentration for three stations within the sediment impact zone exceeds the sediment impact zone maximum criteria of WAC 173-204-420 due to the discharge source. This concentration average shall not include stations for which complete biological testing information shows that the biological effects requirements of WAC 173-204-420, or the authorized sediment impact zone if applicable, are met; or

(II) The biological effects at each of any three stations within the sediment impact zone exceed the sediment impact zone maximum biological effects criteria of WAC 173-204-420 or the authorized sediment impact zone as applicable, due to the discharge source; or

(B) Monitoring data which demonstrates a chemical contaminant concentration gradient toward the discharge source exists in sediments which violates the sediment impact zone authorization or the standards of WAC 173-204-420; or

(C) A trend analysis of the effluent chemical discharge quality and (inplace) sediment monitoring data which statistically demonstrates an ongoing violation or substantial potential to violate the sediment impact zone authorization or the standards of WAC 173-204-420; or

(D) Field depositional (e.g., sediment traps) and/or effluent particulate (e.g., centrifuge analysis) data which demonstrate an ongoing violation or substantial potential to violate the sediment impact zone authorization or the standards of WAC 173-204-420; or

(E) Mathematical or computer modeling which demonstrates an ongoing violation or substantial potential to violate the sediment impact zone authorization or the standards of WAC 173-204-420.

(d) The department's response to a clear demonstration of a violation or potential violation shall be to require maintenance activities in the following order:

(i) Require reanalysis of whether the discharger's effluent treatment complies with all known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment and best management practices based on the data used to establish the clear demonstration;

(ii) Alter the authorized sediment impact zone size and/or degree of effects consistent with the standards of this section and the results of direct sediment sampling;

(iii) Reduce impacts of the existing or potential violation by requiring additional discharge controls or additional sediment impact zone maintenance activities which can include, but are not limited to:

(A) Dredging and removal of sediments, solely for sediment impact zone maintenance needs or coordinated with maintenance dredging of commercially important areas, e.g., navigational lanes or ship berthing areas;

(B) Dredging, treatment, and replacement of sediments within the sediment impact zone; and/or

(C) Capping of sediments within the sediment impact zone;

(iv) Limit the quantity and/or quality of the existing permitted discharge; and/or

(v) Withdraw the department's sediment impact zone authorization and require final closure of the zone.

(e) All sediment impact zone maintenance actions conducted under this chapter shall provide for landowner review of the maintenance action plans prior to implementation of the action. In cases where the discharger is not able to secure access to lands subject to the sediment impact zone maintenance actions of this subsection, the department may facilitate negotiations or other proceedings to secure access to the lands. Requests for department facilitation of land access shall be submitted to the department in writing by the responsible discharger.

(6) Closure planning and requirements.

(a) The discharger shall select and identify a preferred method for closure of a sediment impact zone in the application required by WAC 173-204-415(2). Closure methods can include either active cleanup

and/or natural recovery and monitoring. The department shall incorporate the discharger's identified closure method in the sediment impact zone authorization.

(b) The department may require closure of authorized sediment impact zones when the department determines that:

(i) The discharger has violated the sediment impact zone maintenance standards of subsection (5) of this section; or

(ii) The department determines that:

(A) The wastewater or stormwater discharge quality will not violate the applicable sediment quality standards of WAC 173-204-320 through 173-204-340; or

(B) A sediment impact zone is no longer needed or eligible under the standards of WAC 173-204-410 through 173-204-415.

(7) Modification of sediment impact zones. The department may modify sediment impact zone authorization requirements where the nature of a person's activity which generates, transports, disposes, prevents, controls, or treats effluent discharges has substantially changed and been demonstrated to the department's satisfaction. The modification may occur after consideration of the following:

(a) Reduction of effects. Assessment of the discharge activities and treatment methods shall be conducted by the discharger to demonstrate to the satisfaction of the department that:

(i) Elimination of the sediment impact zone is not practicable; and

(ii) Further reduction in any existing or proposed sediment impact zone area size and/or level of contamination or effects is not practicable in consideration of discharge requirements for all known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment, best management practices, and applicable waste reduction and recycling provisions.

(b) Alterations. There are substantial alterations or additions to the person's activity generating effluent discharges which require authorization of a sediment impact zone which occur after permit issuance and justify application of permit conditions different from, or absent in, the existing permit.

(c) New information. Sediment impact zones may be modified when new information is received by the department that was not available at the time of permit issuance that would have justified the application of different sediment impact zone authorization conditions.

(d) New regulations. The standards or regulations on which the permit was based have changed by amended standards, criteria, or by judicial decision after the permit was issued.

(e) Changes in technology. Advances in waste control technology that qualify as "all known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment" and "best management practices" shall be adopted as permit requirements, as appropriate, in all permits re-issued by the department.

(8) Renewal of previously authorized sediment impact zones. Renewal of sediment impact zones previously authorized under the standards of WAC 173-204-410 and this section shall be allowed under the following conditions:

(a) The department determines the discharge activities and treatment methods meet all known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment and best management practices as stipulated by the department; and

(b) The discharger demonstrates to the department's satisfaction that the discharge activities comply with the standards of WAC

173-204-400 through 173-204-420 and with the existing sediment impact zone authorization; and

(c) Reduction of effects. The discharger conducts an assessment of the permitted discharge activities and treatment methods and demonstrates to the department's satisfaction that:

(i) Elimination of the sediment impact zone is not practicable; and

(ii) A further reduction in any existing or proposed sediment impact zone area size and/or level of contamination is not practicable in consideration of discharge requirements for all known, available and reasonable methods of prevention, control, and treatment, best management practices, and applicable waste reduction and recycling provisions.

[Statutory Authority: Chapters 70.105D and 90.48 RCW. WSR 13-06-014 (Order 08-07), § 173-204-415, filed 2/25/13, effective 9/1/13. Statutory Authority: RCW 90.48.220. WSR 96-02-058, § 173-204-415, filed 12/29/95, effective 1/29/96. Statutory Authority: Chapters 43.21C, 70.105D, 90.48, 90.52, 90.54 and 90.70 RCW. WSR 91-08-019 (Order 90-41), § 173-204-415, filed 3/27/91, effective 4/27/91.]