

WSR 21-07-123

DEPARTMENT OF ECOLOGY

[Filed March 23, 2021, 1:24 p.m.]

PUBLIC NOTICE

Announcing the Draft Upland Finfish Hatching and Rearing General Permit and Fact Sheet for Review and Comment

The Washington state department of ecology (ecology) proposes to reissue the **upland finfish hatching and rearing** national pollutant discharge elimination system and state waste discharge general permit (permit). The current permit was issued in April 2016, and expired at the end of March 2021. The revised draft permit and fact sheet, which explains the legal and technical basis for the permit, are available with any associated documents for review and public comment from **April 7, 2021, through May 26, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.** Ecology will host two informational workshops and public hearings on the draft permit.

Purpose of the Permit: The permit provides coverage for upland finfish hatching and rearing operations and limits the discharge of pollutants from raising or spawning fish, which includes uneaten feed, fish fecal matter, and medications and disease control chemicals. Under Federal and state water quality laws (Federal Clean Water Act and State Water Pollution Control Act), a permit is required for the discharge of these wastewaters. State, county, private, and some tribal hatcheries that rear finfish such as salmon and trout and that discharge wastewater to waters of the state must obtain permit authorization for their discharge.

Applying for Coverage under the Permit: Facilities that have already applied for coverage by September 30, 2020, and are covered under the existing permit, are covered under the new permit. New or unpermitted facilities may obtain coverage under the permit by submitting a complete permit application to ecology and satisfying all applicable public notice and State Environmental Policy Act requirements (WAC 173-226-200). Access to the application is available online at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Upland-fin-fish-permit>.

Copies of the Draft Permit and Fact Sheet: The draft permit and fact sheet will be available online at <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Permits-certifications/Upland-fin-fish-permit> by end of day on Wednesday, April 7, 2021. You may also request copies from water quality reception at 360-407-6600.

Submitting Written Comments: Ecology will accept written comments on the draft permit and fact sheet from **Wednesday, April 7, 2021, through Wednesday, May 26, 2021, at 11:59 p.m.** Ecology prefers online comment submission via the eComment form (link below) on the permit web page. Written comments by mail must be postmarked by **Wednesday, May 26, 2021**. Comments should reference specific permit text when possible.

Online via the eComment form: <https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=dsPUF> (preferred).

By mail: Send to Laurie Niewolny (See ecology contact).

Ecology Contact: Laurie Niewolny, Washington State Department of Ecology, P.O. Box 47775, Olympia, WA 98504-7775, phone 360-584-8852, email laurie.niewolny@ecy.wa.gov.

Assistance for Persons with Disabilities: To request ADA accommodation for disabilities, call ecology at 360-407-7285 or visit <https://ecology.wa.gov/accessibility>. People with impaired hearing may

call Washington relay service at 711. People with speech disability may call TTY at 877-833-6341.

Public Workshops and Hearings: The purpose of the workshop is to explain the general permit and to answer questions prior to the formal public hearing. The purpose of the hearing is to provide an opportunity for people to give formal oral testimony on the proposed draft permit. Oral testimony will receive the same consideration as written comments.

The public hearing will begin immediately following the public workshop and will conclude when public testimony is complete.

The **uplands finfish hatching and rearing general permit** workshops and hearings will occur at the dates and times shown below:

Tuesday, May 11, 2021, 10:00 a.m., webinar*. Join the webinar at <https://watech.webex.com/watech/onstage/g.php?MTID=ee391e55d64b50bce24fc99ed93262a53>.

Wednesday, May 12, 2021, 6:00 p.m., webinar*. Join the webinar at <https://watech.webex.com/watech/onstage/g.php?MTID=ed2d95aa4942075914ca2da70c7ce4aad>.

*Workshops and hearings offered via webinar allow individuals to view the presentation and provide testimony via computer or mobile device. *Ecology is not currently offering in-person hearings due to COVID-19 safety concerns.*

Issuing the Permit: After ecology receives and considers all public comments, we will make a final decision on permit issuance. Ecology expects to make a decision on the general permit in August 2021.