

**WAC 173-501-020 Purpose.** Chapter 90.54 RCW (Water Resources Act of 1971) requires that utilization and management of waters of the state be guided by a number of fundamentals, including:

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. (RCW 90.54.020(1))

The quality of the natural environment shall be protected and, where possible, enhanced as follows:

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. (RCW 90.54.020 (3)(a))

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. (RCW 90.54.020 (3)(b))

The purpose of this chapter is to retain perennial rivers, streams, and lakes in the Nooksack water resource inventory area with instream flows and levels necessary to provide for preservation of wildlife, fish, scenic, aesthetic, and other environmental values, and navigational values, as well as recreation and water quality.

In administering and enforcing this regulation, the department's actions shall be consistent with the provisions of chapter 90.54 RCW.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.54.020 (3)(a) and 90.54.040 (1) and (2). WSR 85-24-073 (Order 85-19), § 173-501-020, filed 12/4/85.]