

WAC 173-153-130 How are records of decision and reports of examination made by a water conservancy board? (1) Records of decision and reports of examination are adopted by a majority vote of a board, pursuant to RCW 90.80.070(4). A board's record of decision and report of examination must be in writing, and the record of decision and report of examination become part of the public record.

(2) When a board proposes to deny an application, in whole or in part, the board must issue to both the applicant and ecology a record of decision and report of examination denying the transfer, or a portion of the transfer, subject to review and final determination by ecology.

(3) When a board proposes to approve an application, the board must issue to both the applicant and ecology a record of decision and a report of examination approving the transfer, subject to review and final approval by ecology.

What is included in a record of decision?

(4) The record of decision must be prepared on a form provided by ecology and identified as the Record of Decision, form number 040-105, and must include the conclusion of the board as to whether the application is denied or approved and a record of the individual vote or abstention of each participating commissioner or that a commissioner has recused him or herself.

What is included in a report of examination?

(5) It is the responsibility of the water conservancy board to ensure that all relevant issues identified during its evaluation of the application, or which are raised by any commenting party during the board's evaluation process, are thoroughly evaluated and discussed in the board's deliberations. These discussions must be fully documented in the report of examination.

(6) The report of examination will consist of a form provided by ecology and identified as Water Conservancy Board Report of Examination, form number 040-106, documenting and summarizing the basic facts associated with the decision. This shall include:

(a) Within a section entitled "background":

(i) A description of the water right proposed for transfer, including the board-assigned water right change application number, and the board's tentative determination as to the validity and quantification of the right, as well as the historical water use information that was considered by the board;

(ii) An explanation of how the board complied with the State Environmental Policy Act; and

(iii) A description of any previous change decisions associated with the water right.

(b) Within a section entitled "comments and protests": A description of any protests, and written or oral comments, including:

(i) The names and addresses of the protestors or commenters;

(ii) A description of the issues raised; and

(iii) The board's analysis regarding each issue raised.

(c) Within a section entitled "investigation":

(i) A description of the project proposed by the applicant, including any issues related to development, such as the applicant's proposed development schedule and an analysis of the effect of the proposed transfer on other water rights, pending applications for changes or transfers, and instream flows established under state law;

(ii) A narrative description of any other water rights or other water uses associated with both the current and proposed place of use

and an explanation of how those other rights or uses will be exercised in conjunction with the right proposed to be transferred;

(iii) If the proposed transfer is authorized under RCW 90.44.100, an analysis of the transfer as to whether it is detrimental to the public interest, including impacts on any watershed planning activity. Public interest shall not be considered if the proposed transfer is authorized pursuant to RCW 90.03.380 exclusively;

(iv) Any information indicating that an existing water right or portion of a water right has been relinquished or abandoned due to nonuse and the basis for the determination;

(v) A description of the results of any geologic, hydrogeologic, or other scientific investigations that were considered by the board and how this information contributed to the board's conclusions;

(d) Within a section entitled "conclusions": A list of conclusions that the board drew from the information compiled regarding the transfer proposal. Conclusions must, at a minimum, describe:

(i) Whether, and to what extent, a valid water right exists;

(ii) Any relinquishment or abandonment of the water right associated with the water right transfer application as discussed in subsection (6)(d)(i) of this section;

(iii) The result, as adopted by the board, of any hydraulic analysis done related to the proposed water right transfer;

(iv) The board's conclusions of issues raised by any comments and protests received;

(v) Whether the transfer proposal will impair existing rights of others; and

(vi) If the proposed transfer is authorized pursuant to RCW 90.44.100, whether it is detrimental to the public interest. Public interest shall not be considered if the proposed transfer is authorized pursuant to RCW 90.03.380 exclusively;

(e) Within a section entitled "decision": A complete description of the board's decision, fully and comprehensively addressing the entire application proposal;

(f) Within a section entitled "provisions":

(i) Any conditions and limitations recommended as part of an approved transfer, and/or any other corrective action necessary to maintain the water use in compliance with state laws and regulations;

(ii) Any requirement to mitigate adverse effects of the project. Mitigation may be proposed by the applicant or the board and be required in the board's decision; and

(iii) A schedule for development and completion of the water right transfer, if approved in part or in whole, that includes a definite date for completion of the transfer and application of the water to an authorized beneficial use.

(7) Ecology may request additional information from the water conservancy board regarding the application and the board's decision, in addition to the requirements of subsection (6) of this section.

(8) A board's record of decision must clearly state that the applicant is not permitted to proceed to act on the proposal until ecology makes a final decision affirming, in whole or in part, the board's recommendation. However, if ecology does not act on a board's recommendation within the time frame established in RCW 90.80.080, the applicant is allowed to initiate the water right transfer pursuant to the board's record of decision after that period of time has expired. It is advised that the applicant not proceed until the appeal period of ecology's decision is complete, in compliance with WAC 173-153-180.

[Statutory Authority: RCW 90.80.040. WSR 06-18-102 (Order 05-18), § 173-153-130, filed 9/6/06, effective 10/7/06; WSR 03-01-039 (Order 01-13), § 173-153-130, filed 12/9/02, effective 1/9/03. Statutory Authority: Chapter 90.80 RCW. WSR 99-23-101 (Order 98-11), § 173-153-130, filed 11/17/99, effective 12/18/99.]