



Washington's 2018 Water Quality Assessment

Jeremy Reiman

Ag and WQ Advisory Committee- 10/5/2021

Core WQA Team



Jeremy Reiman
WQP



Jen Carlson
EAP



Sharon Brown
TCP

- WQP – Water Quality Management Unit, Watershed Planning Unit, Communications Team
- EAP – Toxics Studies Unit, Watershed Health and Effectiveness Monitoring
- TCP – Aquatic Lands Cleanup Unit
- IT – Water Quality IT Unit, Environmental Support Systems Unit, Geographic Information Systems Unit

Agenda

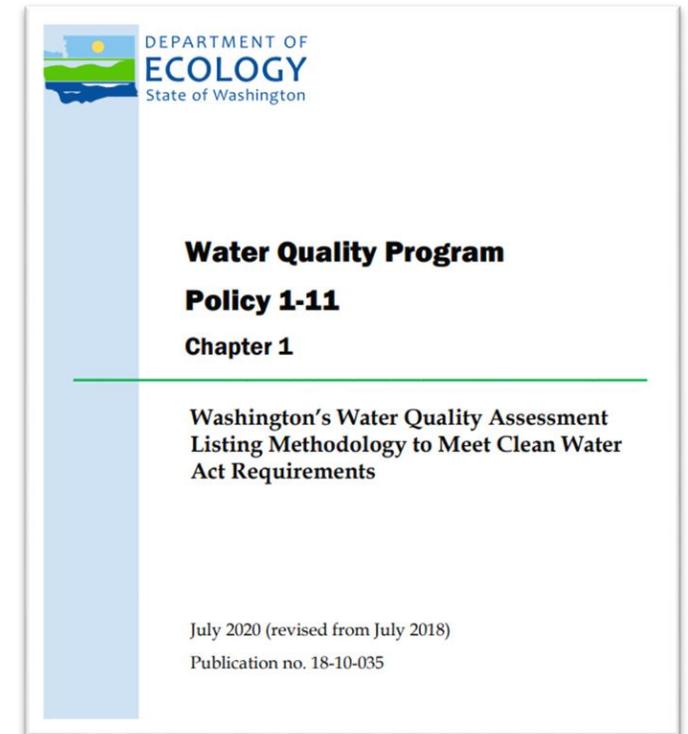
- 1 Background on Water Quality Assessment
- 2 2018 Water Quality Assessment
- 3 Submittal & Next Steps
- 4 Questions

What is the Water Quality Assessment?

- Clean Water Act requirement to provide “Integrated Report” on Water Quality to EPA every two years
 - 303(d) – Impaired waters not supporting designated uses
 - 305(b) – General report on water quality
- Comprehensive assessment of health of Washington’s surface waters based on all **readily available data**
- **Goal:** Prioritize protection and improvement of water quality
 - Required prioritize and develop Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)

The WQA Process

- 1 Update project plan & policies
- 2 “Call for Data”
- 3 Analyze the data
- 4 Waters placed into categories
- 5 Internal, Tribal, public reviews
- 6 Submit to EPA for approval



WQA Categories

Category 1: Meets Tested Standards	Not impaired or not known to be impaired No cleanup plan need
Category 2: Waters of Concern	
Category 3: Insufficient Data	
Category 4: A – Has a TMDL B – Pollution Control Program C – Non-pollutant	Impaired No cleanup plan needed
Category 5: The 303(d) List	Impaired Cleanup plan needed

Waters are placed into one of five categories

- Waters on 303(d) list remain until new data determines designated uses are met

WQA results publicly accessible

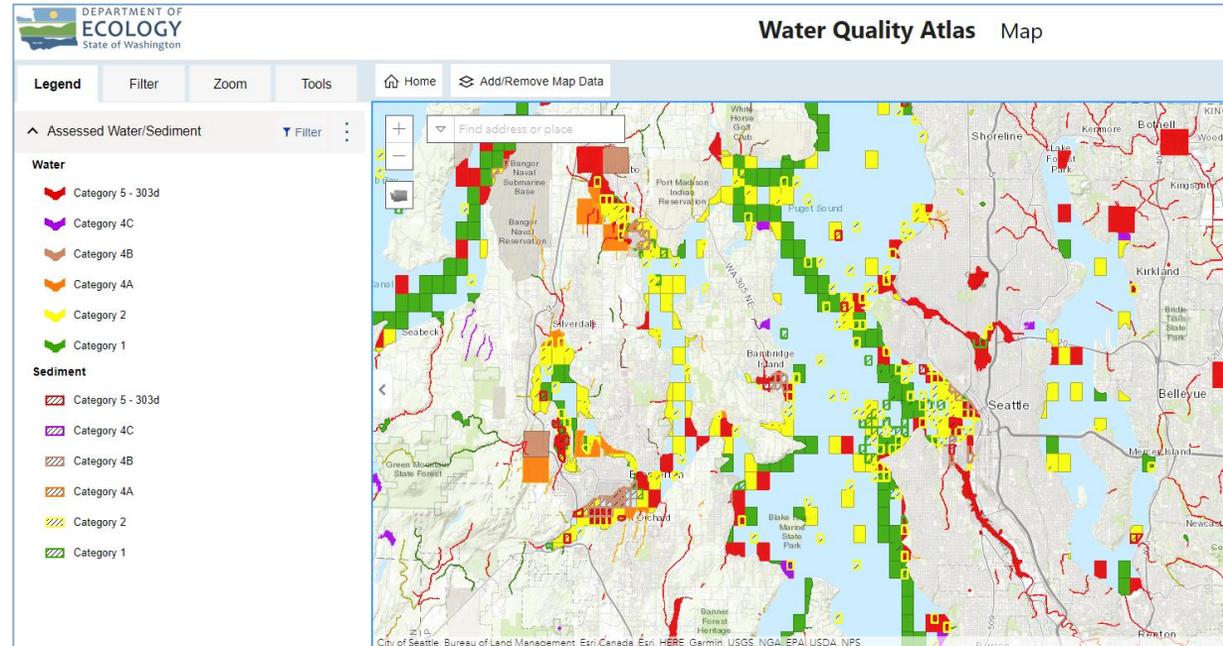
Approved Water Quality Assessment

Current Water Quality Assessment

View the [Water Quality Policy 1-11](#) for more information about how Washington's waters are assessed.

Listing Details	Categories	Sources												
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Year	Category													
Current	ALL <input type="button" value="Add"/>													
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Parameter: <input type="text" value="Nothing selected"/>														
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Assessment Unit ID: <input type="text"/>	Location	WQI Project/TMDL												
Reach Code: <input type="text"/>	Grid Cell: <input type="text"/>	Active WQI Project: <input type="text" value="Nothing selected"/>												
Waterbody: <input type="text" value="Nothing selected"/>	County: <input type="text" value="Nothing selected"/>													
Waterbody Type: <input type="text" value="Nothing selected"/>	WRIA: <input type="text" value="Nothing selected"/>													
Supporting Documentation														
Basis Statement: <input type="text"/>	Remarks: <input type="text"/>													

Water Quality Atlas



Outcomes of WQA

States prioritize development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs) or other pollution control programs to clean up impaired waters

- Considered in environmental permits
- Tribes, governments, and stakeholders use results:
 - Design monitoring programs and water quality improvement projects
 - Incorporate into other environmental reporting/analyses
 - Telling WQ success stories
- Public can learn more about water quality in Washington



2018 WQA Process

Process	Timeline
Update Policy 1-11	2016 - 2018
Call for Data	2016 & 2018
Technical Prep/Data Analysis	2018 - 1/7/2021
Waters are placed into one of five categories	1/7/2021
Internal Review	1/19/2021 - 2/5/2021
EPA/Tribal Preview	2/16/2021 - 3/16/2021
Public Review	4/8/2021 - 6/4/2021
 Submit to EPA for approval	8/31/2021

What's New: Updates to Policy 1-11

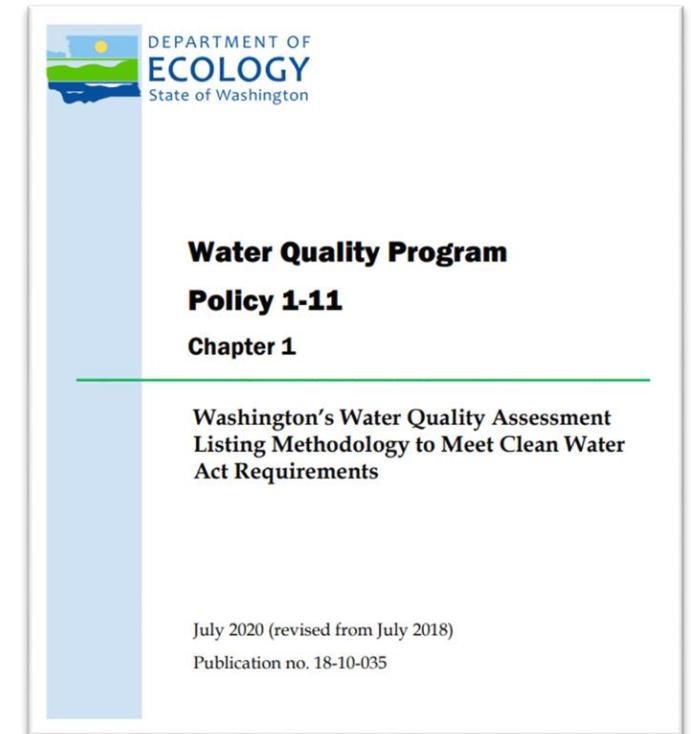
3-year public process (2016-2018)

Improve accuracy of 303d listings

Update assessment methodology for all parameters

Update contaminated sediments methodology

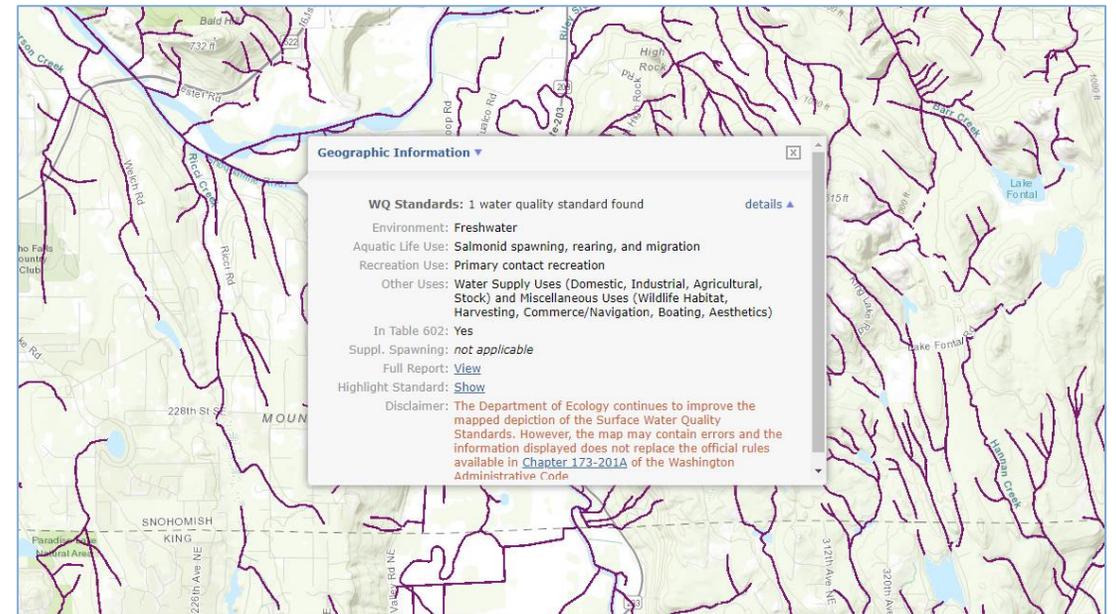
Update to reflect new bacteria standards & human health criteria



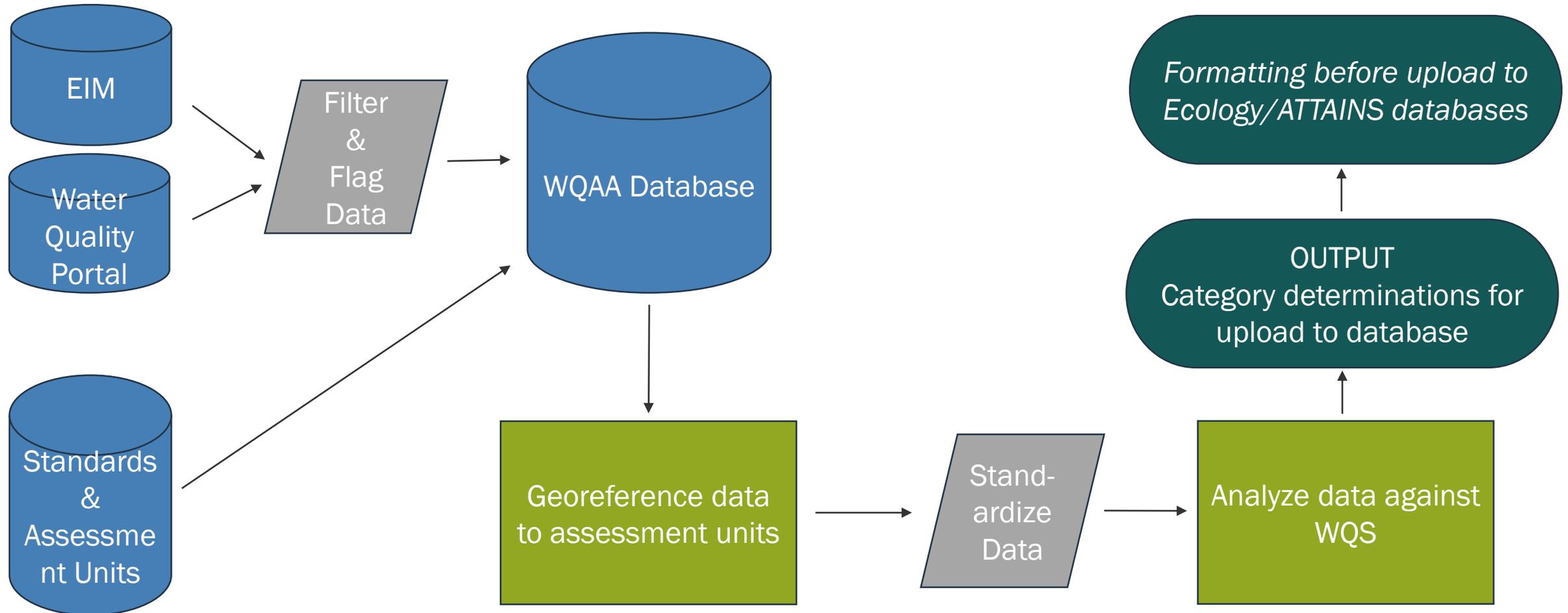
What's New: Standards and AU GIS Layers

- Standards GIS Layer
 - Houses information on what designated uses and standards are applied within waterbodies
- Assessment Units (AU):
 - How we segment waterbodies for analysis
 - Freshwaters: NHD Reach/Standards based
 - Marine waters: LatLong/Standards based

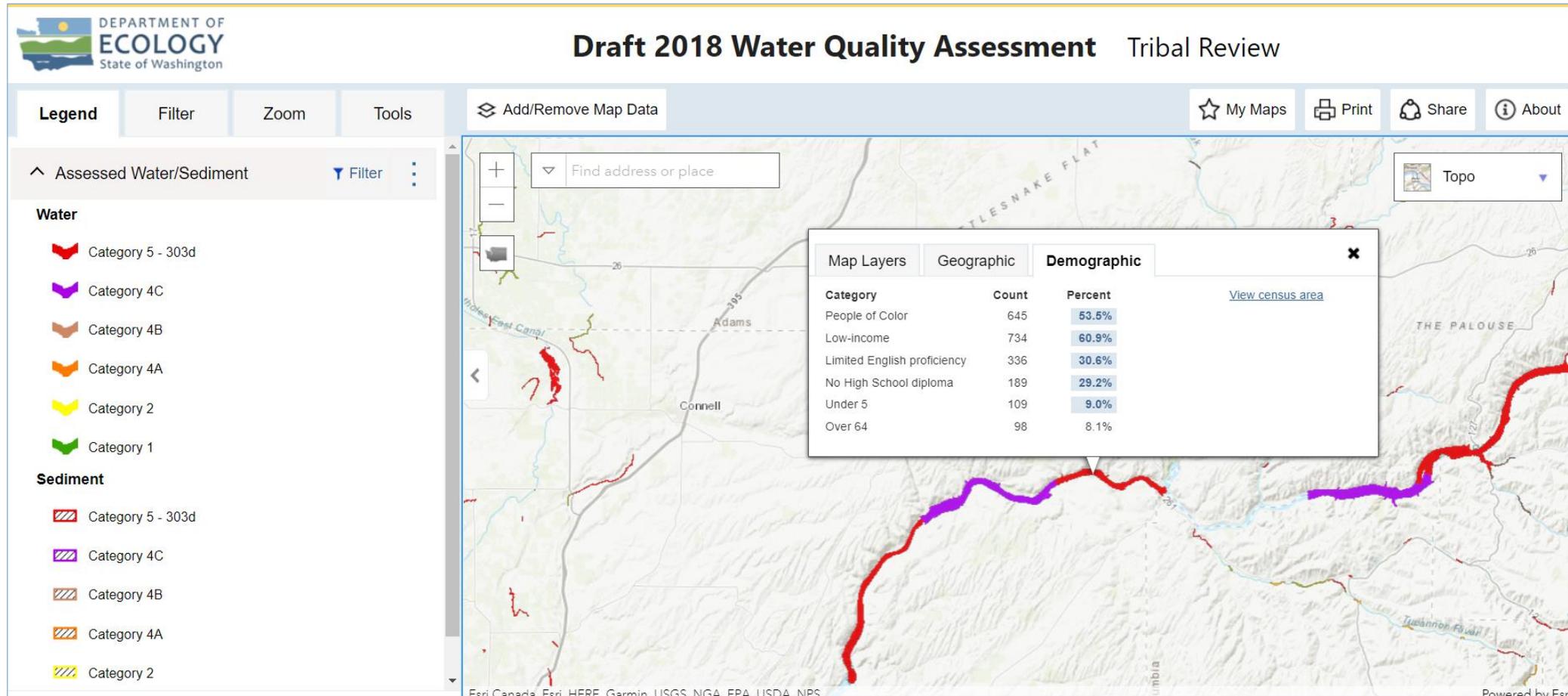
Significant improvement in accuracy
Changes in extents of some AUs



What's New: Water Quality Assessment Automation (WQAA)



What's New: Application Accessibility Updates



Internal Review: January – February 2021

- Target Audience: Regional TMDL and other Ecology staff
- Comments focus: new 303(d) listings in approved TMDLS

Tribal/EPA Preview: February – March 2021

- Target Audience: Tribes and EPA
- Webinars: Statewide and NWIFC
- Met individually with Tribes
- Received few comments
- Corresponded directly with EPA to address concerns

Public Review: April 2021 – June 2021

- **Target Audience:** Any concerned party
- Public notified via listserv, press release, State register
- State-wide public webinar
- Comments from 34 unique entities
- Response to comments provided on website

Candidate WQA and 303(d) List Submittal

Submitted to EPA August 31, 2021

- ATTAINS

Ecology updates applications

- Draft WQA Search Tool
- Draft WQ Atlas

Website updates:

- response to comments
- supporting information

View the candidate Water Quality Assessment

We held a public comment period on the draft Water Quality Assessment from April 8 to June 4, 2021. We then refined the assessment results based on comments received and submitted an updated "candidate" Water Quality Assessment to EPA for approval on Aug. 31, 2021. This version of the assessment can be viewed through the [Draft Water Quality Assessment Review Tool](#) or the [Draft Water Quality Atlas](#), an online mapping application.

[Read our response to comments](#) on the draft assessment and [supporting information](#).

[See our timeline](#) for how we developed this draft assessment.

Draft assessment documents

- [Draft Water Quality Assessment Review Tool](#)
- [Draft Water Quality Atlas](#)
- [Response to Comments](#)
- [Supporting information for the 2018 Water Quality Assessment](#)
 - [Appendix A: Sediment Category 4B Cleanup Sites](#)
- [Guidance for public review](#)
- [Focus sheet](#)



[View our online database for the latest assessment results.](#)

Next Steps

EPA 30 days to take action

- Approved –new 303(d) list for CWA regulatory purposes
- Updated in “How’s My Waterway”

Update Ecology applications

Updates to Policy 1-11 for Salmon Spawning Rule

Call for Data for 2020-2022 assessment



Questions?

Jeremy Reiman

303d@ecy.wa.gov

360-819-0197



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington