

Water Quality Partnership

October 2, 2025



Topic	Presenter	Time
Welcome	Jon Kenning	10:00 – 10:15
General Permit Updates	Lucienne Banning	10:15–10:35
Rulemaking for the State Waters Alteration Permit	Teresa Opolka	10:35–11:00
Watershed Management Updates	Chad Brown/staff	11:00–11:30
Stormwater Action Monitoring update	Raghu Namburi	11:30–11:45
Roundtable and Wrap up	Colleen Keltz	11:45–12:00



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Welcome & Updates

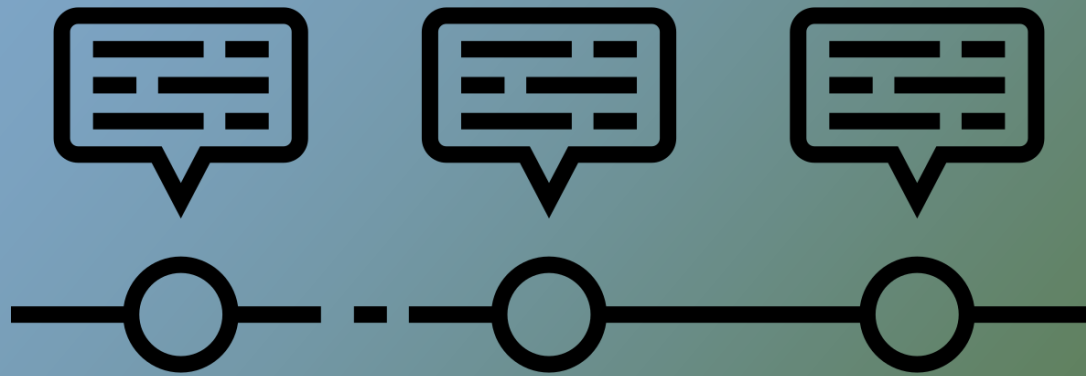
Jon Kenning



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General Permit Update

Lucienne Banning



Permit Issuances to Date

- *Zostera japonica*



General Permit Appeal Updates

- CAFO General Permits
(Combined and State
only)
- Industrial Stormwater
General Permit
- Puget Sound Nutrient
General Permit





Puget Sound Nutrient General Permit

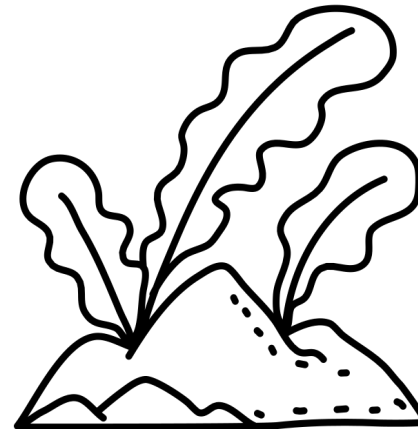
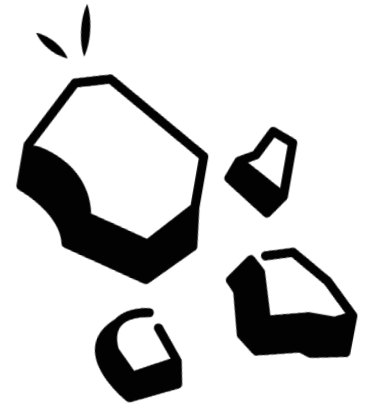
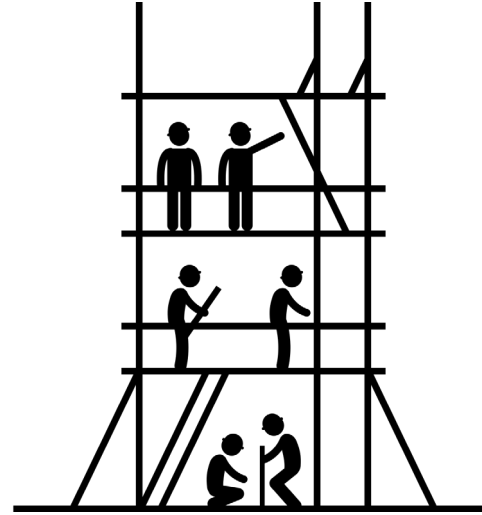
- Comment period ended

Permit Draft Public Comment Periods

Construction Stormwater
GP (concluded)

Sand & Gravel GP
(ongoing)

Aquatic Plant & Algae
Management GP (ongoing)





General Permits On the Horizon

- WSDOT Muni
- Bridge & Ferry Terminal Maintenance
- Fresh Fruit Packing
- Upland Fin Fish

Thank You!

Lucienne Banning
General Permits Unit Supervisor
Lucienne.Banning@ecy.wa.gov



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Proposed rule to establish new State Waters Alteration Permit

Teresa Opolka

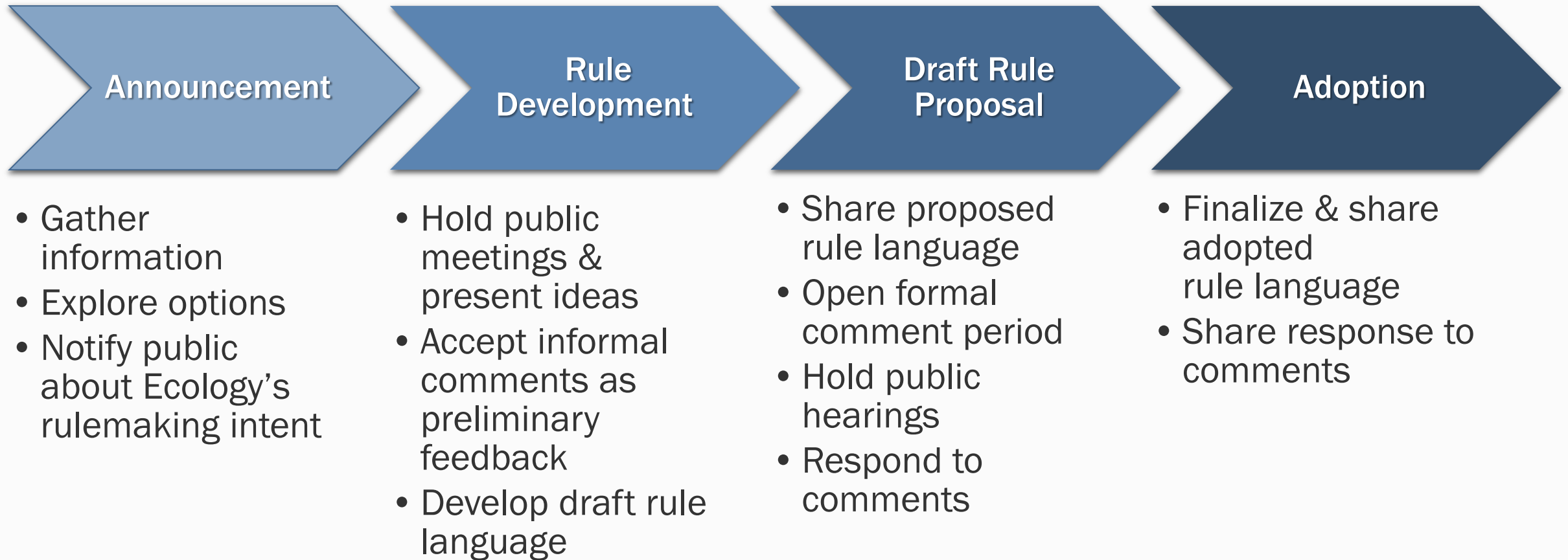
Ecology staff

- **Lauren Driscoll:** wetlands section manager & rulemaking manager
- **Sonal Gangawala Khanna:** rulemaking lead
- **Teresa Opolka:** wetlands policy lead

Rulemaking terms

- **Revised Code of Washington (RCW)** – State laws passed by Washington Legislature.
- **Washington Administrative Code (WAC)** – Agency rules & regulations implementing state laws.
- **Rulemaking process** – Public process state agencies use to formulate & adopt state rules.

Rulemaking process overview



Rulemaking timeline

- **June 10, 2025:** Rulemaking announcement
- **June 2025 - Summer 2026:** Rule development
- **Summer 2026:** Draft rule language (Open comment period)
- **Fall 2026:** Rule adoption
- **31 days after adoption:** Final rule would take effect

What are we proposing?

Establish new Ecology permit program.

- Evaluate & authorize impacts to wetlands, streams & other state waters.
- Replace & streamline current regulatory process

▪



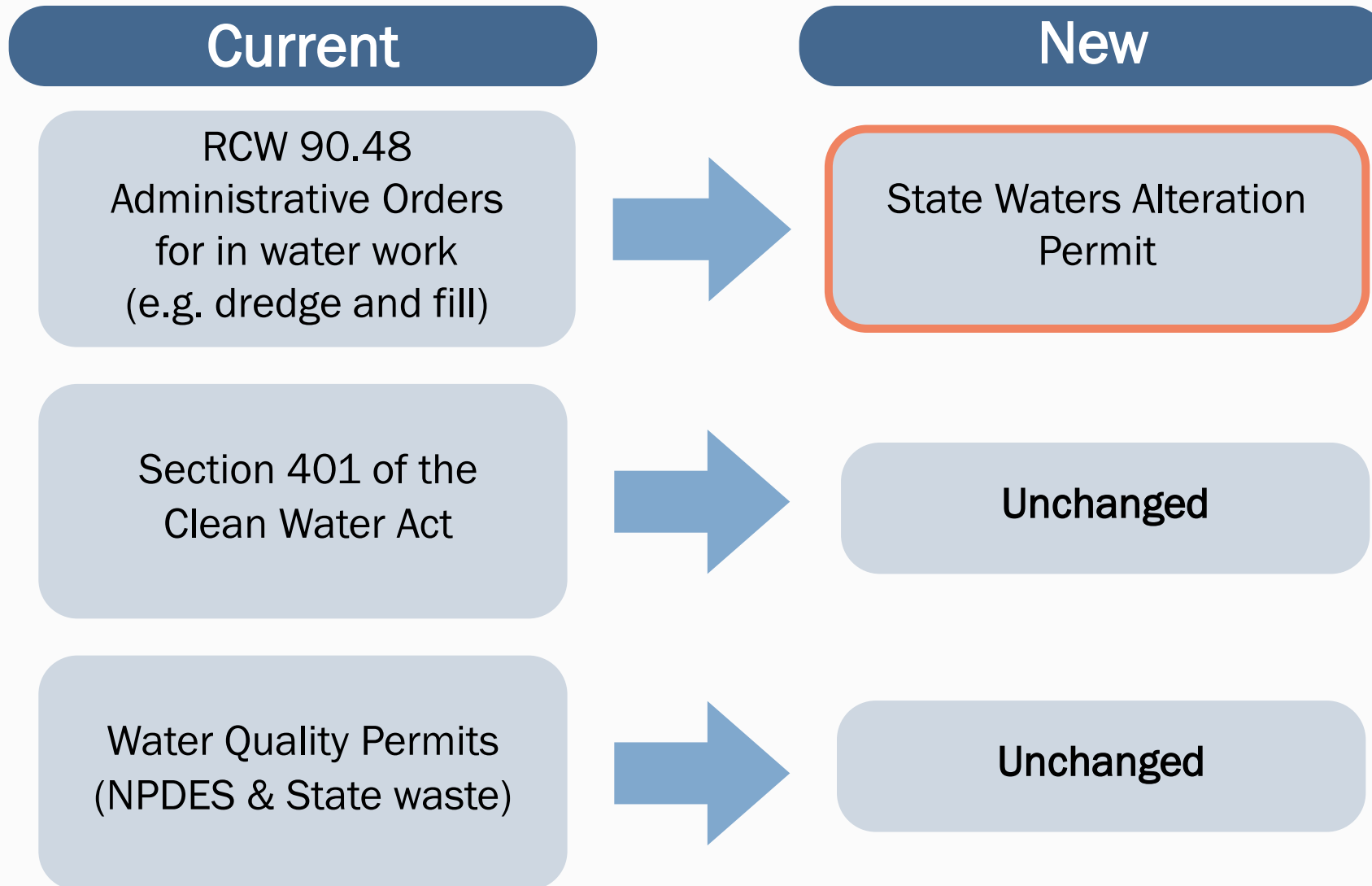


Ecology's regulatory authority over state waters will not change

Still protect waters of the state:

- State Water Pollution Control Act (RCW 90.48)
- State Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58)
- Section 401 of federal Clean Water Act

Proposed Regulatory Process Change



Improve Customer Service

- Providing better clarity and predictability about our actions and requirements.
- Creating general permits to streamline approvals for projects with minor impacts.
- Establishing opportunities for public review.
- Setting timelines for decisions



Permit scope

Surface waters of the state
including wetlands

Regulated Activities

Work affecting wetlands

Work below the ordinary high water
mark in state waters including

- Streams
- Ponds
- Lakes
- Marine waters



Exemptions

- Federally regulated waters receiving a Section 401 Water Quality Certification
- Other exemptions are being considered but no proposal yet.



Your participation is valuable!

- Stay informed

[WAC 173-217 - Washington State
Department of Ecology](#)

- Sign up for notices

[GovDelivery](#)

- We want to hear from you

SWAPrulemaking@ecy.wa.gov



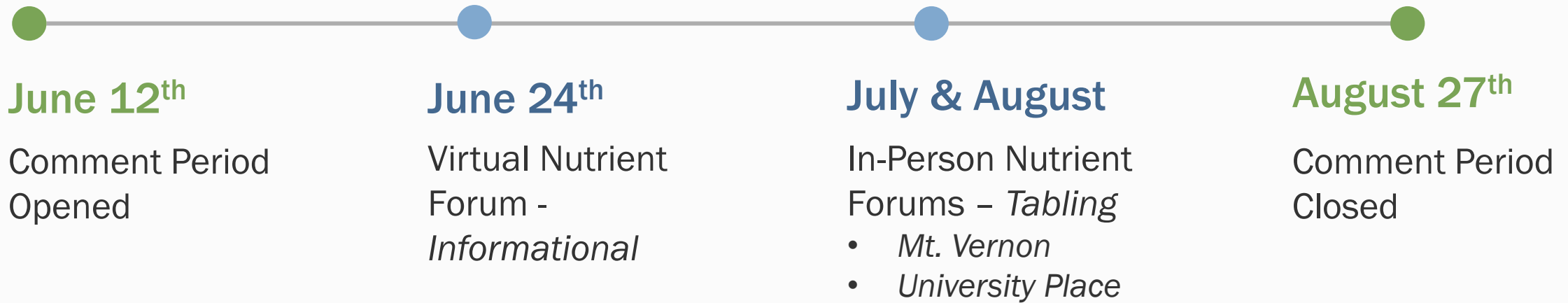


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Watershed Management Updates

Chad Brown

Recent Engagement on Nutrient Reduction Plan



What we heard from public comment

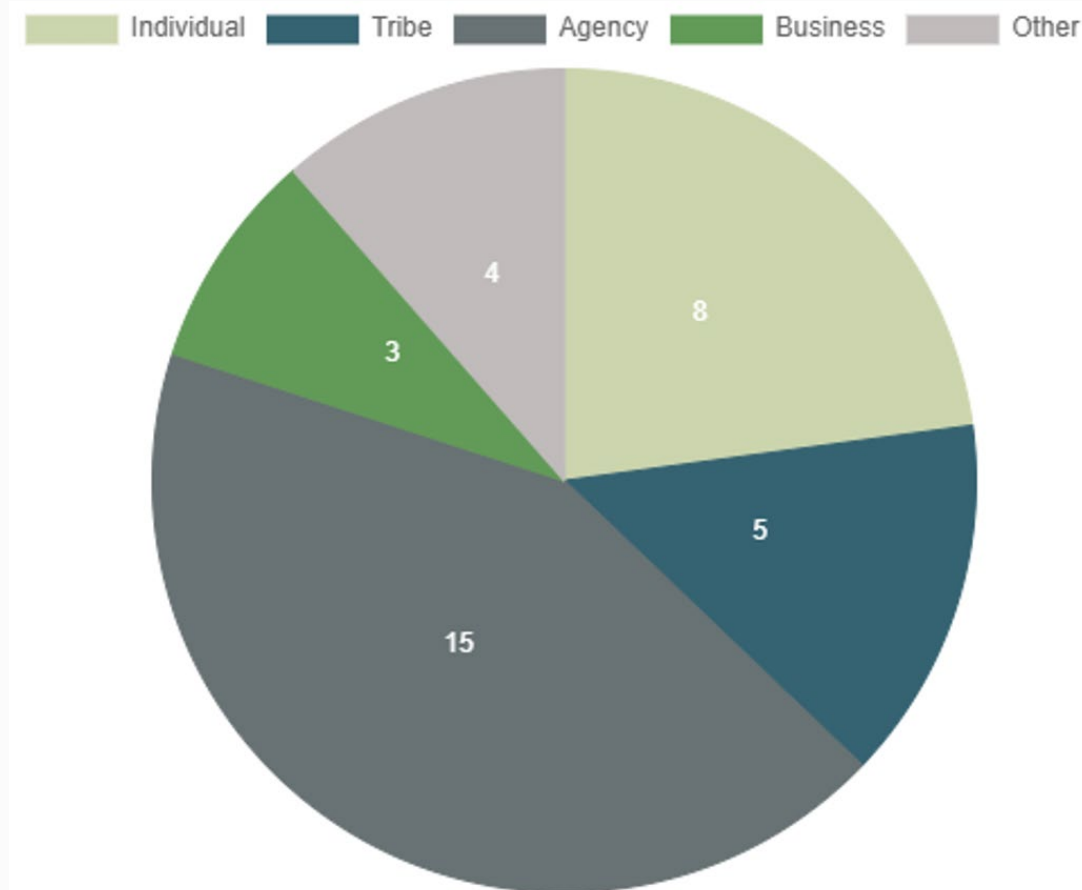
Ideas for model scenarios/model updates to inform targets

Requests for cost estimates/financial considerations

More information on permitting strategy

Feedback on timeline

Continued engagement



35 Submissions

Where we're going

- **Currently:** reviewing and analyzing feedback
- **Next Steps**
 - Consider how we address feedback
 - Update plan accordingly
 - Draft response to comments



Nonpoint Program Updates: Nonpoint Plan and Clean Water Guidance

Water Quality Partnership

October 2025

What we'll cover today...

1

2025 Nonpoint Plan Update

- Update process
- Comment period recap
- Next steps

2

Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture

- Process to develop chapters
- Timeline and upcoming comment period



Process to update the Nonpoint Plan



Timeline overview

Our process began at the end of 2023 and includes key stages:

Draft plan updates

- Coordination with:
 - Other Ecology programs
 - Other state agencies
 - Implementation partners
- Partner surveys
- Provide updates at Ag/WQ Committee & other external meetings

Comment period

- Open: May 22, 2025
- Close: August 29, 2025
- Informational public webinar held on June 11
- Maintained offer to meet

Finalize

- Review feedback
- Make any needed edits
- Prepare response to comments
- Submit to EPA by:
December 31, 2025



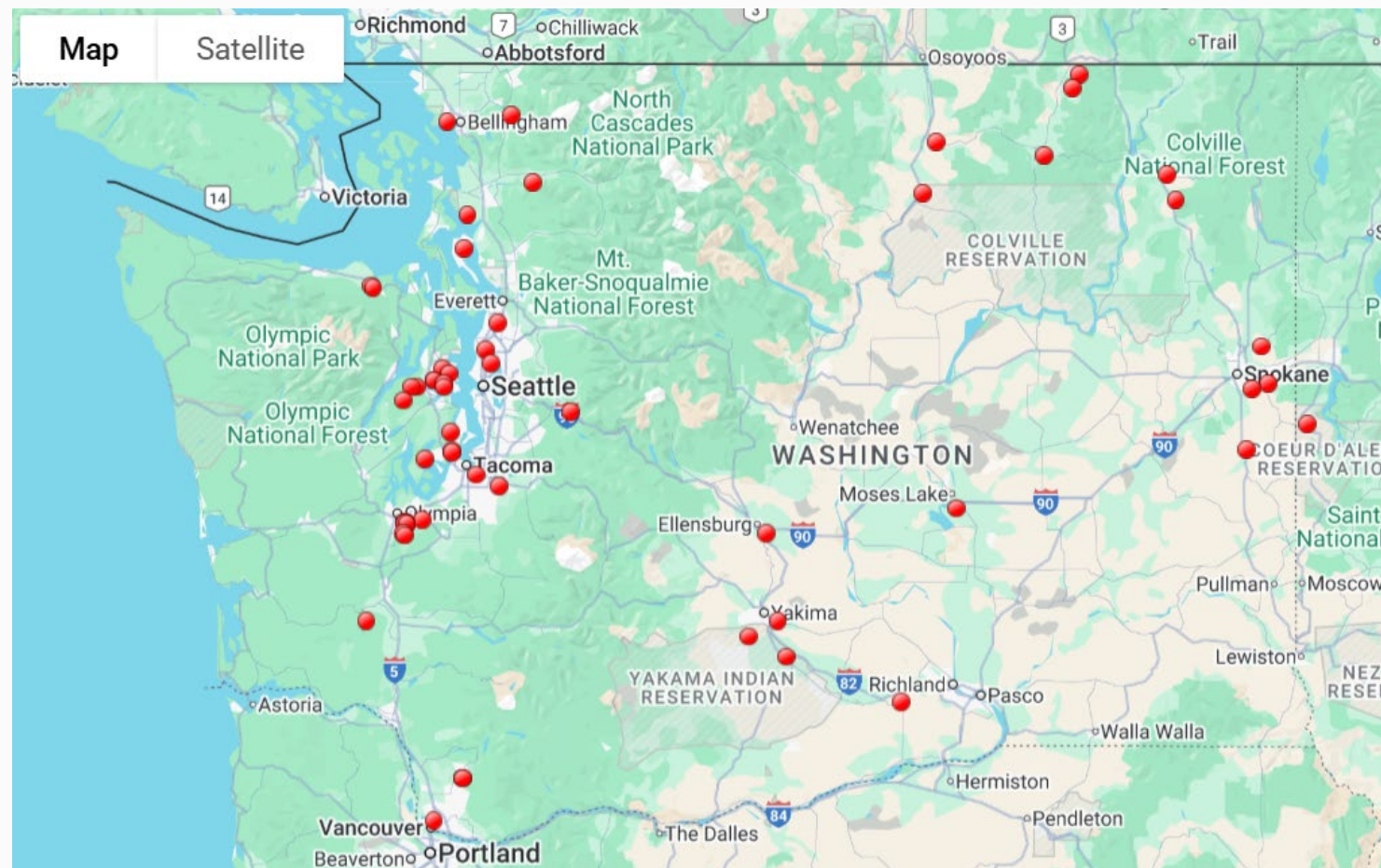
Comment Period Summary

May 22- August 29, 2025



Comments overview

- We received 64 comments on the draft 2025 Nonpoint Plan
- Had respondents across the state



Comments received

Organizations

- Yakima County Cattleman's Association
- Okanogan County Farm Bureau
- Mukilteo Water and Wastewater District
- WA Cattleman's Association
- WA State Potato Commission
- WA Forest Protection Association
- WA PUD Association
- WA State Water Resource Association
- Yakima-Klickitat Farm Association
- Spokane County Cattlemen
- Joint letter
 - Northwest Agricultural Cooperative Council
 - WA Farm Bureau
 - WA Friends of Farms and Forests
 - WA Association of Wheat Growers
 - WA Cattlemen's Association
 - WA Potato & Onion Association
 - WA State Dairy Federation
 - WA State Tree Fruit Association
 - WA State Water Resources Association
 - WA Winegrowers Association
 - Work and Farmer Labor Association
 - Yakima-Klickitat Farm Association

Comments received

Agencies

- WA State Dept of Health
- WA State Dept of Agriculture
- WA State Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- WA State Dept of Natural Resources

Tribes/Tribal Organizations

- Snoqualmie Indian Tribe
- Nooksack Indian Tribe
- Lummi Nation
- Swinomish Indian Tribal Community
- Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission

Individuals

- 39 individual commenters

Comment highlights (so far)

- Comments around regulatory authorities:
 - There is too much focus on regulation, overreach of authorities
 - There is too much focus on voluntary strategies, need to utilize regulatory authorities more
- Voluntary and technical assistance tools:
 - More reliance on voluntary programs/support for VSP
 - Too much reliance on voluntary programs/tools
- Increase funding for agricultural BMPs
- Constitutional concerns/property rights

Comment highlights (so far)

- Want for more transparency around actions taken, BMP implementation, monitoring
- Too much of a focus on agriculture
- Forestry Tier II Analysis concerns
- Concerns around addressing elevated temperature (lack of shade)
 - Temperature not a pollutant
 - Temperature is a pollutant, and we need to do more to address it

Comment highlights (so far)

- Increased outreach and education to the regulated community
- More opportunities to provide feedback on the plan/program
- Increase emphasis on protection of relatively unimpacted waters
- Importance of site-specific BMP solutions
- Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture
- Concerns around long-term impairments
- General questions and concerns around WQ trading

Next steps

We are currently reviewing comments & preparing to submit to EPA

Draft plan updates

- Coordination with:
 - Other Ecology programs
 - Other state agencies
 - Implementation partners
- Partner surveys
- Provide updates at Ag/WQ Committee & other external meetings

Comment period

- Open: May 22, 2025
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Finalize

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- Make any needed edits
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December 31, 2025

More information

Comments received are available online:

<https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/comment/extra?id=7sdJeBRtM>

2025 Nonpoint Plan Reading Guide:

<https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2510042.pdf>

Connect with us!

Email nonpoint@ecy.wa.gov

Comments received:



Reading guide:





Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture



Voluntary Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture

- Technical resource that describes Ecology's recommended best management practices (BMPs) to protect water quality.
- Practices support healthy farms while helping producers meet clean water standards.
- Chapters developed in consultation with external advisory groups e.g., state agencies, EPA, NWIFC, NRCS, WSU, WSCC, industry representatives & CDs.
- The chapters complement existing guidance, are used by nonpoint field staff, and inform grant funding guidelines.

Voluntary
Clean Water
Guidance for
Agriculture

March 2020



Clean Water Guidance chapters

Completed Chapters

- Pasture & Rangeland Management
- Tillage & Residue Management
- Riparian Areas & Surface Water Protection
- Sediment Control (Structural)
- Animal Confinement & Manure Management

Remaining Chapters*

- Agricultural Facility Runoff Management
- Irrigation Management
- Sediment Capture (Vegetative)
- Nutrient Management
- Crop Systems
- Subsurface Drainage Management
- Pesticide Management
- Suites of Practices

**Remaining chapters to be submitted to EPA by Dec. 31, 2025*

Clean Water Guidance chapters

- 6 of 8 remaining chapters are available for review
- Currently accepting comments on draft chapters
- Comments can be submitted until 11:59pm on November 21, 2025

Remaining Chapters

- **Agricultural Facility Runoff Management**
- **Irrigation Management**
- **Sediment Capture (Vegetative)**
- **Nutrient Management**
- **Crop Systems**
- **Subsurface Drainage Management**
- **Pesticide Management**
- **Suites of Practices**

Update & Timeline

- As chapters are completed, we have been posting them on a rolling basis for review and comment to allow as much time as possible
- Remaining chapters will be made available: week of October 20th
 - Notification via GovDelivery email
 - Notification to Ag&WQ committee members via email
 - Host a public webinar on week of November 3rd
- We will accept comments until November 21st
 - Review comments, make needed edits, develop response to comments document
- Submit all chapters to EPA by December 31, 2025

Review draft chapters

Chapters available online:

<https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/plans-policies/plan-to-control-nonpoint-sources-of-pollution>

How to comment:

- Comment online:
<https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=DpetQPJBW>
- Send comments by mail to:
Ron Cummings
Department of Ecology, Water Quality Program
PO Box 47696
Olympia, WA 98504-7696

CWG chapters:



Comment online:



Learn more about our program & work

Visit our webpages:

- Nonpoint Program: <https://ecology.wa.gov/water-shorelines/water-quality/nonpoint-pollution>
- Nonpoint Plan & Clean Water Guidance for Agriculture: <https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/plans-policies/plan-to-control-nonpoint-sources-of-pollution>

Nonpoint Program:



Nonpoint Plan & CWG:



Questions?

Hannah Coe

Nonpoint Plan Lead

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Ron Cummings

Clean Water Guidance Lead

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(360) 502-5304





Stormwater Action Monitoring updates

Raghu Namburi



Stormwater Action Monitoring (SAM) Program



Established 2013

- Collaborative
- Statewide
- Funding
- SAM's goal with monitoring

SAM -Studies

SAM funded studies started in 2014

Categories

- Status & Trends (Receiving Waters)
- Effectiveness (Management Practices)
- Source Identification & Control

SAM -General process for studies

Effectiveness & Source Control Studies

- Two rounds in each permit cycle
- Third permit cycle is 2024-2029

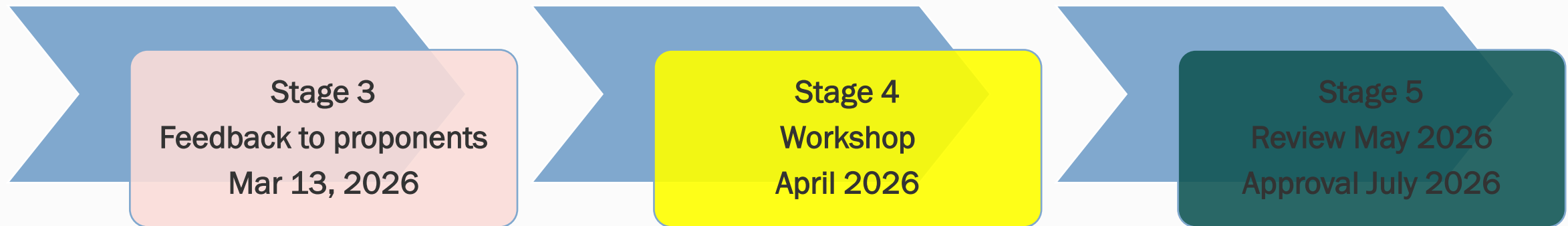
SAM -General process for effectiveness studies

Round 5 consists of 6 stages (0-5)



SAM -General process for effectiveness studies

Round 5 consists of 6 stages (0-5)



SAM – Eligibility

To be considered for this program, proposals shall:

- Address the preferred topics for Round 5 (Appendix A), and
- Advance regional implementation of stormwater management programs, and
- Contain a purpose, objective, study design, anticipated methods, and anticipated outcomes, and
- Articulate how the study or project will inform future permit requirements or permittees' implementation of current permit requirements, and
- Be relevant to multiple permitted jurisdictions.

SAM –Solicitation Process Stages

Request for Proposal

[Guidelines for SAM Effectiveness Study Proposals](#)

Study topic areas

- Permits
- Source Control
- Maintenance/Manual
- Effectiveness Study

SAM studies



SAM funded R5 studies

- After July 2026 after SWG approves
- Project prioritization and contracts-late 2026
- Rollout and Manage projects based on staff resources

Learning about SAM's web presence

- www.ecology.wa.gov/SAM
- Main landing page
- Three main study categories have own home pages
- Active projects has a dedicated page to follow along
- Completed projects archived in 'accordions'
- Communications grouped for easy access



Stay Informed

SAM webpages www.ecology.wa.gov/SAM
[Stormwater Work Group \(google.com\)](http://www.ecology.wa.gov/SAM/StormwaterWorkGroup)

Sign up for SAM and SWG Emails

GovDelivery [Subscriber Preferences Page](#). Enter your email address, click to add subscriptions, and navigate to the Water Quality Program list to find:



SAM Team

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Roundtable



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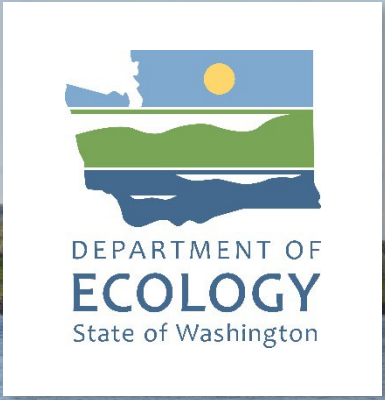
Wrap up

Colleen Keltz



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**Next meeting:
Dec. 11, 2025**



Thank you!