

Draft Agenda for AC Meeting #3

Wednesday, June 10, 2020 from 9:30 a.m. to 12:00 p.m.

Digital Platform Login: <https://global.gotomeeting.com/join/662933517>

ROLE OF ADVISORY COMMITTEE:

To advise Ecology's permit writer as to which **conceptual approaches** are preferred for reducing nutrient loads from WWTPs discharging directly to Puget Sound through a general permit, and the reasons why.

- This committee will not be drafting permit language; that is the job of the permit writer.
- Ecology envisions a continuing role for this committee in providing a venue and voice for input during the active permit term.

THE MEETING'S GOALS:

1. Continue to get to know each other and make progress towards our goals
2. Share feedback on PSNGP conceptual approaches that members gathered from their constituents
3. Begin to further understand, discuss, and gather feedback about the optimization requirement
4. Continue to discuss possible approaches or alternatives to the cap requirement
5. Work towards areas where the AC can come to agreement
6. Begin to formulate draft recommendations for further discussion
7. Discuss future AC meeting schedule and agree on next steps

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9:20 Log onto meeting platform and troubleshoot any technical issues

9:30 Welcome and introductions; review the meeting's agenda, goals (chair)

- Do members have any questions or concerns about today's agenda?

9:35 Share feedback gathered from PSNGP AC caucus groups (facilitator)

- Each PSNGP AC caucus lead, in turn, will share an overview of the feedback gathered in discussions with constituents since our last AC meeting. Caucuses were asked to discuss:
 - Does one of Ecology's proposals for cap calculation seem better than the other?
 - *What is missing in the calculation consideration?*
 - *What averaging period is most appropriate for a cap on nutrient loads?*
 - *What constitutes a representative load?*
 - What concepts/principles do advisory group members agree with, and why?
 - What concepts/principles do advisory group members disagree with, and why?
- What do caucus members think might be the biggest challenge this committee faces in developing recommendations for a PSNGP that will make meaningful progress towards reducing nutrient loadings?
- Do caucus leads think it would be feasible to provide written summaries of their discussions in advance of future meetings?

10:00 Begin our discussion about optimization (permit writer)

- The **goal** for this portion of the agenda is to further discussions about the role of optimization in helping plants achieve nutrient load reduction while continuing to support smart growth in this first permit cycle.
- In the March 4 webinar and at our last meeting on May 13, we started talking about optimization concepts. There was an emerging area of agreement over optimization being a primary focus of the PSNGP. Optimization

is complementary to a nutrient cap and should be a means for compliance with the cap. It should not drive major capital investment. There is also a need to connect optimization with short and possibly long-term planning efforts at each plant.

- Optimization is an Adaptive Management Strategy to limit the discharge of TIN to the greatest extent possible for the plant's design and stay below the load cap.
 - How would you define optimization?
 - Do you understand the goal of optimization and the proposed components?
- Optimization can mean a range of activities with a range of associated costs. Some optimization approaches require planning, others do not.
 - Ecology envisions these possible optimization plan contents
 - *Evaluate possible operational adjustments to drive nitrification/denitrification*
 - *Investigate minor retrofits (i.e., < 5% equipment budget)*
 - *Evaluate septage receiving policies and procedures*
 - *Evaluate side-stream management process changes*
 - What other optimization options could be considered?
 - Where might the challenges lie?
- We need to structure optimization in a way that doesn't penalize plants that are already using nutrient removal technologies or do not have a treatment type that is amenable to increased nutrient removal. Together let's identify common elements of optimization and start to put together a framework.
- Key questions for AC members to gather feedback from constituents on optimization:
 - What concepts/principles do you agree with? Why?
 - What concepts/principles do you disagree with? Why?
 - What are universal optimization requirements that could apply to all dischargers?

10:45 Break

11:00 Continue our discussion about the cap (permit writer)

- At our last meeting we discussed different options for the cap calculation focusing on three possible approaches. How does the feedback you heard from constituents after last month's meeting – and heard from the other caucuses earlier today – shape this discussion?
 - The AC generally agreed on a common goal to set an achievable limit in the first PSNGP and the importance of getting an actual, not perceived, water quality improvement.
 - How can we best address the variability of data available for all the facilities that we're proposing to cover under the general permit before we get new monitoring data?
 - There was not yet a consensus on how to pick an approach to calculate a cap, but the discussion focused on a non-parametric 95% confidence interval.
 - What are AC members' emerging thoughts on this approach?
 - The AC needs to agree on an averaging period: seasonal (May – October?) or annual.
- An alternative method using percent removal was mentioned as a possible approach. Are there any other ideas about this approach?
- What do AC members think about how compliance should be assessed – i.e., as a target or as a limit?
 - What do AC members think about using the expression of the cap together with optimization requirements as an opportunity to achieve the nutrient reduction through adaptive management?
 - How can this approach both accommodate plants' contracted capacity and achieve nutrient reductions?
 - Would the contracted capacities be better determined by facility or geography (e.g., by county)?
 - While most plants might want the highest cap possible, do AC members agree that the approach should focus on a plant's overall pattern, not a single maximum day discharge?

11:30 Open Public Comment (facilitator)

- People will be called upon in the order in which we received your request to comment as indicated upon registration for today's virtual meeting platform.
- Please limit your comment/question to about 30 seconds

11:40 Future AC meetings and expected discussion topics (chair and facilitator)

- Meetings are scheduled on July 16, August 20, September 30, and October 21. Please mark your calendars!
 - These meetings will be held from 9:30am-3pm with a one-hour lunch break.
 - When we are able to meet in person, meetings will be held at rotating locations around Puget Sound.
- Here are the proposed discussion topics for future meetings:
 - Thursday, July 16: introduce short and long-term planning; continue with cap and optimization (we are working to include local planners in this discussion)
 - Thursday, August 20: introduce monitoring and compliance; continue with cap, optimization, and planning (we are working to include local planners in this discussion)
 - Wednesday, September 30: finalize draft recommendations
 - Wednesday, October 21: review and adopt final recommendations. This will be our last meeting prior to Ecology issuing draft permit language for an informal public review.
- Process reminder: We will discuss each topic during at least two meetings, so that we can discuss evolving recommendations with our colleagues before finalizing our draft recommendations.

11:50 Recap of today's meeting (chair and facilitator)

- Summarize emerging agreements, decisions, action items, and next steps from today's meeting

12:00 Adjourn