



To: WRIA 15 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee

From: Stacy Vynne McKinstry, Committee Chair

Date: March 5, 2020

Re: Timeline and Expectations for Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Plan Development, Review and Committee Approval

The WRIA 15 Chair is providing this memo to the WRIA 15 Committee to clarify the development, review and approval process of the watershed restoration and enhancement plan. Ecology will follow the same process across each WRIA participating in the RCW 90.94.030 planning process. This document outlines two key items:

- 1) Roles and responsibilities for committee members and Ecology during plan development, review and approval; and
- 2) Anticipated timeline for plan development, review and approval.

Ecology, in collaboration with the committee, has begun preparing sections of the plan, and we expect the plan writing process to continue through the summer. ***Ongoing, thorough input from all committee members is critical throughout this process.*** A timeline is included in this memo to keep all members aware of the process while ensuring the maximum amount of time for:

- Committee members to provide ongoing, thorough review and vetting of draft components of the plan, the initial draft plan, and the final draft plan;
- The committee to make revisions to the plan based on feedback from members; and
- The committee to reach plan approval for timely submittal to Ecology for Net Ecological Benefit Determination (NEB) prior to the statutory adoption deadline of June 30, 2021.

Throughout the process, our committee has discussed targeting early 2021 for final plan approval. This memo formalizes those discussions and sets ***February 1, 2021 as the target date by which the chair, on behalf of the committee, will submit an approved plan to Ecology. While this date is not required by statute, Ecology believes it maximizes the likelihood for an adopted plan.*** If committees are unable to approve a plan by February 1, 2021, Ecology will consider and review plans in the order they are received, with the recognition that Ecology is required to make a determination on plan adoption by June 30, 2021.

Ecology anticipates needing to simultaneously review eight watershed plans by the statutory deadline of June 30, 2021. The review timeframe has been carefully designed to balance the important and difficult work of the committee while allowing Ecology the necessary time to complete plan review, including NEB determination, by the statutory deadline. We feel that it is important to provide as much advance notice, so that our committee can plan appropriately.

The next section outlines the step by step process and timeline for plan development, review, and committee approval. Note that our committee can complete the work prior to the dates identified.

REVIEW PROCESS FOR 90.94.030 WATERSHED RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT COMMITTEES

1. As we have been doing throughout this process, the chair will distribute technical memos to the committee for comments and corrections. We will distribute memos as they are developed by the technical consultants. The technical memos describe the process, methods, and in some cases the decision/agreement for technical components of the plan. Technical memos will be included as appendices in the plan and a summary provided in the plan body. See Table 1 for the list of technical memos. This is ongoing from now through mid-summer.
2. Ecology staff will develop, and the chair will share with the committee, draft plan sections that do not have associated technical memos. See Table 1 for the list of non-technical plan sections. This is ongoing from spring through mid-summer.
3. Committee members will vet all draft plan components with appropriate decision makers within their entity to seek ongoing, thorough review and approval of plan components. This task is ongoing from spring 2020 through early fall 2020.
4. The chair will compile the plan components previously reviewed by the committee and send out an initial draft plan by the target date of **August 14, 2020**. The committee will likely have an approved project list by this time, but the committee may still be working on some plan components into the early fall (project details, NEB evaluation, details on adaptive management and implementation, etc).
5. From August 2020 through January 31, 2021, the committee will need to complete the steps identified below. The process and timeline for these steps may vary among WRIAs based on committee specific needs:
 - a. Review and revise the draft plan.
 - b. Committee meetings to address revisions.
 - c. Committee meetings to finalize project list and NEB evaluation (as needed).
 - d. Committee prepares final plan for distribution to local decision makers.
 - e. Distribution of final plan by committee representatives to local decision-makers that require review/approval.
 - f. Committee meeting for final approval of the plan. Committee member are expected to vote in person.
6. Once the plan is approved by all members of the committee, the committee chair will submit the final approved plan to Ecology to begin the review. Note that Ecology has established a target date of February 1, 2021 for plan submission.
7. Ecology will begin its review of the plan and NEB determination following submission of the plan. Ecology will complete its review and decision on whether or not to adopt the plan by the statutory deadline of June 30, 2021. During the review time:



- a. Ecology will not make changes to the plan nor allow changes after the plan submission.
- b. Ecology will prepare staff and program leadership recommendations.
- c. The committee chair will communicate with the committee on an ad hoc basis to provide a review status update.
- d. The Director will determine agency action on each of the eight plans.

Table 2 provides a summary timeline of the above steps.

Ecology recognizes the incredible, collaborative work that has gone into this process. We sincerely appreciate the dedication and hard-work of all committee members.

TABLE 1. PLAN COMPONENTS FOR COMMITTEE REVIEW

Title	Description	Delivered by	Reviewed by
Subbasin delineation memo/chapter	Considerations and agreement for subbasin delineation. Provides the final map.	Early Spring 2020	Mid-Spring 2020
Growth projections memo/chapter	Documents methods, data used and results.	Early Spring 2020	Mid-Spring 2020
Watershed overview chapter	Provides a brief overview of the watershed; relevant history around water resources and planning efforts; applicable information as it relates to historic, current and future climate and water availability.	Late Spring 2020	Early Summer 2020
Consumptive use estimates memo/chapter	Documents methods, data used and results.	Spring 2020	Early Summer 2020
Adaptive management and implementation recommendations	If Committee chooses to, provide the Committee’s recommended approach to implementation and adaptive management.	Optional	Early Summer 2020
Policy and regulatory actions recommendations	If Committee chooses to, provide the Committee’s recommended policy and regulatory changes.	Optional	Early Summer 2020
Project and actions list, memo and chapter	List of projects and actions with brief descriptions and their contribution to offsets and NEB.	Spring 2020	Summer or Early Fall 2020
NEB evaluation memo/chapter	If Committee chooses to, describe the NEB evaluation and results and a statement on whether the plan has met NEB.	Optional	Summer or Early Fall 2020

Committee Chair

Committee

TABLE 2. TIMELINE FOR PLAN REVIEW AND APPROVAL

	Spring 2020	Summer 2020	Fall 2020	Winter 2020/2021
Committee Chair	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Subbasin Delineation Memo/Chapter. • Provides Growth Projections Memo/Chapter. • Provides Watershed Overview chapter. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Provides Consumptive Use Estimates Memo/Chapter. • Provides NEB Evaluation Memo/Chapter • Provides Project and Action List Memo/Chapter. • Provides initial draft plan by August 14, 2020 (target date). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops meeting agenda and schedule based on plan review comments. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develops meeting agenda and schedule based on plan review comments. • Provides Final Plan and cover memo for local entity approval. • Submits final plan to Ecology by February 1, 2021 (target date).
Committee	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews Subbasin Delineation Memo. • Reviews Growth Projections Memo. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews Watershed Overview chapter. • Reviews Consumptive Use Estimates Memo/Chapter. • Reviews Project and Action List Memo/Chapter. • Reviews NEB Evaluation Memo/Chapter. • Finalizes Adaptive Management plan recommendations. • Finalizes Policy and Regulatory Actions recommendations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and revises plan. • Finalizes Project and Action List (if not completed earlier). • Finalizes NEB Evaluation Memo/Chapter (if not completed earlier). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Reviews and revises plan. • Sends Final Plan to local decision makers if required. • Meets as Committee to vote on approval of final plan.