

The Regional Stormwater Monitoring Program

An independent stakeholder committee developed a new, collaborative regional approach for stormwater monitoring in western Washington. The Regional Stormwater Monitoring Program (RSMP) provides an efficient, focused, and transparent monitoring option for municipal stormwater permittees. This collective approach allows local governments to pool money and resources for monitoring activities rather than individually-resourcing monitoring activities.

This effort should help to provide an unbiased assessment of whether stormwater management actions are resulting in genuine progress towards regional conservation targets. The process is focused on the Puget Sound region, but includes involvement by southwest Washington jurisdictions that are developing their own monitoring strategy for receiving waters during this permit term. A similar monitoring forum is being considered in eastern Washington.

Monitoring priorities and components

The RSMP is based on stakeholder priority setting and shared costs among permittees. Where possible, the monitoring program takes advantage of opportunities to leverage other monitoring efforts.

RSMP components include monitoring wadeable streams and nearshore areas in Puget Sound, conducting stormwater management program effectiveness studies applicable to all of western Washington, and developing a pollutant source identification information repository that will be useful across western Washington and eventually the entire State.

Benefits of regional monitoring

The benefits of a regional approach include:

- More useful, transferable information collected.
- Consistent methods providing comparable and valid data.
- Lower overall costs per jurisdiction.
- Small jurisdictions can avoid hiring consultants and specialized staff.
- Efficiencies from less duplication of efforts.

Ultimately the goal is to collect useful water quality information for local governments, Ecology and others.

WHY IT MATTERS

Washington State and local governments spend millions of dollars a year on stormwater management programs. It is important to know if water quality is getting better or getting worse as a result and what strategies are most effective.



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Special accommodations

If you need this document in a format for the visually impaired, call the Water Quality Program at 360-407-6600.

Persons with hearing loss, call 711 for Washington Relay Service. Persons with a speech disability, call 877-833-6341.

RSMP collaboration

In fall 2013, permittees chose either to participate in the RSMP or to conduct individual monitoring per requirements in the permits. All western Washington permittees chose to participate in either RSMP effectiveness studies or RSMP status and trends monitoring, or both. Ecology is the service provider to administer contracts with permittees and others to conduct RSMP activities. Permittees participate in a formal oversight committee to provide credible and transparent accountability for spending funds to implement the RSMP. For more information:

<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/stormwater/municipal/rsmp.html>

Ecology invoices permittees in May annually for payments due August 15th. For questions about invoicing, contact Terrie Fields at terrie.fields@ecy.wa.gov, or 360-407-7494.

Grant funding available for cost-sharing

Capacity grant funding can be used for reimbursement for RSMP funding contributions during the 2013-2015 biennium. For questions regarding the use of capacity funds, contact Layne Slone, layne.slone@ecy.wa.gov, 360-407-6225, or Kyle Graunke, kyle.graunke@ecy.wa.gov, 360-407-6452.

Timeline for permittee-funded work**Status and Trends Monitoring in the Puget Sound Ecoregion**

Goal: To measure whether water quality and habitat are getting better or worse and identify patterns in healthy and impaired Puget Lowland streams and Puget Sound urban shoreline areas.

Lowland Streams

- Water quality monitoring in 2015
- Benthic macro invertebrate, habitat and sediment monitoring in summer of 2015

Marine Nearshore

- Sediment monitoring in summer 2016
- Nearshore bacteria monitoring in 2015
- Mussel monitoring in winter 2015 - 2016

Effectiveness Studies in Western Washington

Goal: To provide widely applicable information about how to improve stormwater best management practices (BMPs), and which practices work best or do not work well in certain situations. Successful proposals will be funded beginning summer 2014 thru the end of the permit cycle.

Source Identification Information Repository

Goal: To provide information about pollutant source identification and elimination methods and identify opportunities for regional solutions to common illicit discharges and pollution problems.

Active in early 2014 thru the end permit cycle.