



Permanent Emergency Drought Relief Rulemaking

Danielle Gallatin, WR Rule Development Lead

Oct. 24, 2024, and Oct. 30, 2024

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Summary:

Why are we here today?

- Ecology is amending the Emergency Drought Relief rule (WAC 173-166)
- Discuss goals of rule amendment
- We are looking for feedback from you to help inform draft rule language



What the existing rule currently states:

- Ecology's drought declaration process
- Drought relief management

WAC 173-166

**Emergency
Drought
Relief Rule**

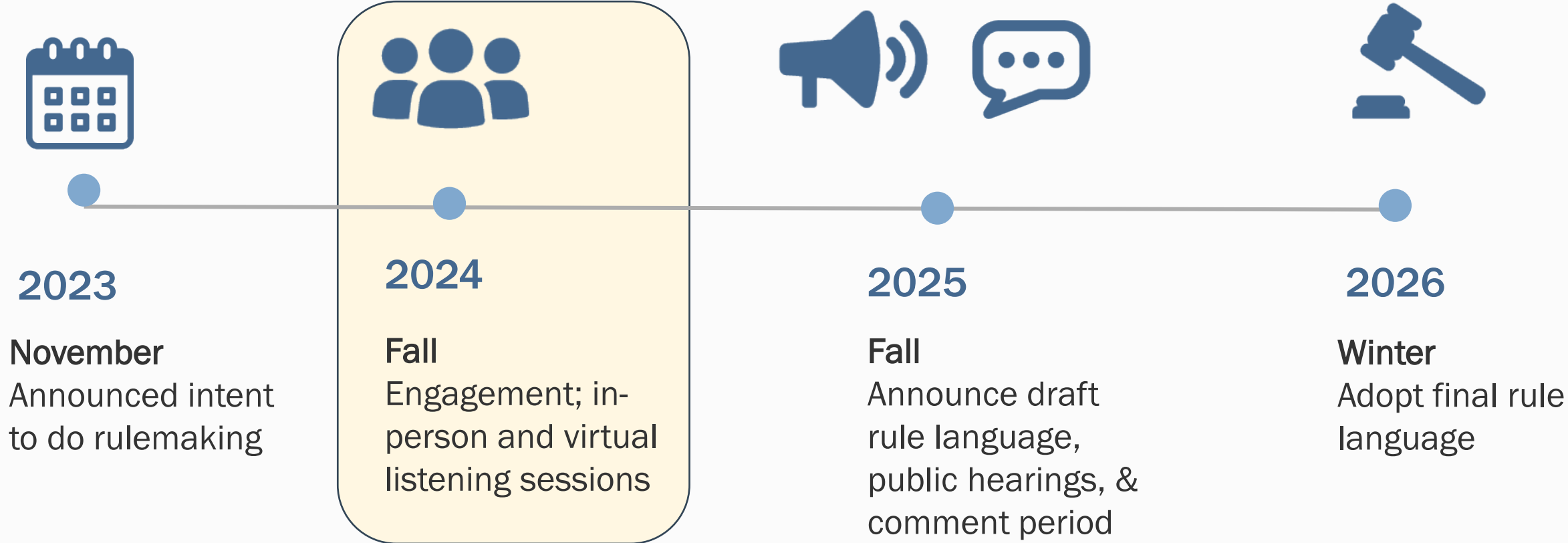
Opportunity to provide clarification:

- Grant funding administration
- Grant criteria
- Roles of different state agencies
- Undue Hardship considerations

**Emergency
Drought
Relief Rule**

Timeline for Rulemaking

Anticipated timeline for rulemaking and adoption



Drought Declaration



When do we declare a drought emergency?

- When the state, or specific geographic area, is receiving or is forecasted to receive less than 75 percent of normal water supply *and*,
- water users and the environment are or are expected to experience undue hardship because of drought



See: [RCW 43.83B.405](#) and [WAC 173-166-050](#).

What does declaring a drought emergency do?

Allows Ecology to provide emergency drought relief by:

- Expedite the processing of Emergency Drought Permits.
- Expedite processing temporary transfers of water rights.
- Provide drought relief funding assistance for public entities (municipalities, irrigation districts, PUDs, etc.).



Grants to public entities:

- Federally recognized tribes
- Counties, cities, and towns
- Water and sewer districts
- Public utility districts
- Port districts
- Conservation districts
- Irrigation districts
- Watershed management partnerships

Interagency agreements to state agencies

**Emergency
response
funding**

Goals for rulemaking: WAC 173-166 Emergency Drought Relief

- Streamline administration of emergency drought relief
- Clarify funding criteria & definitions
- Integrate equity considerations into funding distribution
- Negates the need for emergency rulemaking each year an emergency drought is declared



Washington State Drought Law

Some elements related to drought relief are already in law, such as:

- Emergency drought declaration process
- Entities eligible for drought response grants



Your input!

- Inform draft rule language
- Feedback to discussion question responses
- Survey available Oct 7 – Nov 22

<https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Drought-rule>



Questions?



Before we move on to questions and discussion

Discussion Questions:



1) How have you experienced impacts from drought, and how do you anticipate future impacts from drought in a changing climate?



2) What factors do you consider when determining the level of drought impact to plan for within a drought year? When do you start planning for potential drought impacts?



3) Are there equity considerations you would want to be included in drought relief funding decisions?

Discussion Questions:



4) What are barriers to accessing emergency drought relief during a declared drought emergency?



5) Are there improvements you'd like to see to the administration of grant funds? (Note, a drought response project must address impacts for a currently declared drought.)



6) Are there any other consideration for emergency drought relief you would like us to consider for this rulemaking?

How to stay connected

- Sign up for our email list: <https://ecology.wa.gov/WRP-updates-subscribe>
- Webpages: <https://ecology.wa.gov/wac-173-166>
- Survey: <https://www.surveymonkey.com/r/Drought-rule>

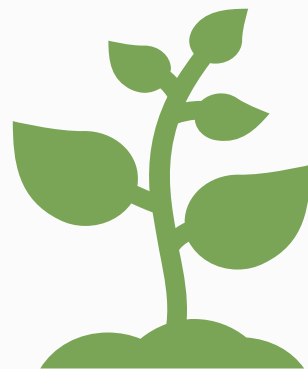
Email Danielle @ Danielle.Gallatin@ecy.wa.gov

Public Virtual listening sessions:

- Oct. 24, 2024, via Zoom @ 3 p.m.
- Oct. 30, 2024, via Zoom @ 6 p.m.



1) How have you experience impacts from drought, and how do you anticipate future impacts from drought in a changing climate?



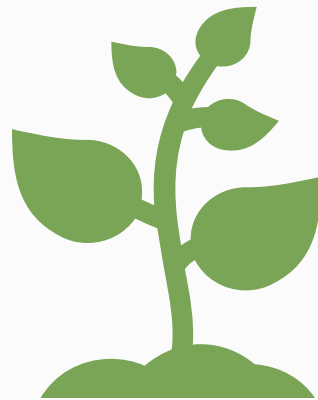
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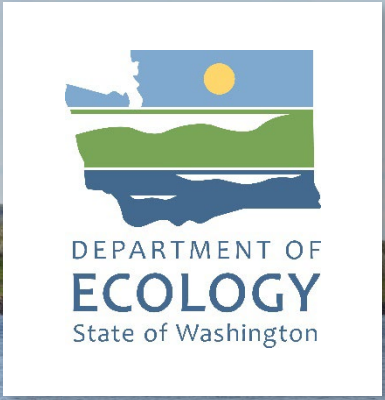


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Thank you

Danielle Gallatin

Danielle.Gallatin@ecy.wa.gov

425-516-3012



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