



Water Resources Program Strategic Plan for 2016-2020

Program Mission

We manage water resources to meet the needs of people and the natural environment, in partnership with Washington communities.

Authorizing Laws

- *RCW [18.104](#), Water Well Construction Act (1971)*
- *RCW [43.21A](#), Department of Ecology (1970)*
- *RCW [43.27A](#), Water Resources (1967)*
- *RCW [43.83B](#), Water Supply Facilities (1972)*
- *RCW [43.99E](#), Water Supply Facilities – 1980 Bond Issue (Referendum 38) (1979)*
- *RCW [86.16.035](#), Department of ecology control of dams and obstructions (1935)*
- *RCW [90.03](#), Water code (1917)*
- *RCW [90.08](#), Stream patrolmen (1925)*
- *RCW [90.14](#), Water rights claims registration and relinquishment (1967)*
- *RCW [90.16](#), Appropriation of water for public and industrial purposes (1869)*
- *RCW [90.22](#), Minimum water flows and levels (1969)*
- *RCW [90.24](#), Regulation of outflow of lakes (1939)*
- *RCW [90.28](#), Miscellaneous rights and duties (1927)*
- *RCW [90.36](#), Artesian wells (1890)*
- *RCW [90.38](#), Yakima river basin water rights (Trust Water) (1989)*
- *RCW [90.40](#), Water rights of United States (1905)*
- *RCW [90.42](#), Water resource management (Trust Water) (1991)*
- *RCW [90.44](#), Regulation of public groundwaters (1945)*
- *RCW [90.46](#), Reclaimed water use (1992)*
- *RCW [90.54](#), Water resources act of 1971 (1971)*
- *RCW [90.66](#), Family farm water act (1977)*
- *RCW [90.80](#), Water conservancy boards (1997)*
- *RCW [90.82](#), Watershed planning (1997)*
- *RCW [90.86](#), Joint legislative committee on water supply during drought (2005)*
- *RCW [90.90](#), Columbia River basin water supply (2006)*
- *RCW [90.92](#), Pilot local water management program (Walla Walla) (2009)*

Case law

Washington case law plays a vital role in providing determinations and rulings that also govern water resources management. The Water Resources Program's website on laws, rules, and case law can be found at <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/rules/rul-home.html>.

Introduction

In January 2015, the Water Resources Program began a strategic planning effort. We chose to use the **Balanced Scorecard**, a widely used tool developed by Harvard Business School. The Balanced Scorecard is a strategic management system that looks at an organization's four key business areas.

- Financial (How do we look to ourselves?)
- Customers (How do our customers see us?)
- Internal business processes (What should we be best at?)
- Learning and growth of our people (How can we improve and create value?)

We began by convening meetings with our Program Leadership Team (PLT) to accomplish the following:

- Review of background materials from previous planning efforts 1999, 2004, and 2010.
- Review of timeline of past 15 years of WR case law, statutory law, and rule adoption.
- Review and revise our Mission, Vision, and Values.
- Review our performance measures, employee survey results, and customer survey results.
- Conduct a SWOT analysis (identifying our strengths, weaknesses, opportunities, and threats).
- Develop draft goals and objectives.

We then sought feedback from program staff.

- Members from PLT met with each WR section at HQ and region (~80% staff attended) to discuss employee survey results, customer survey results, and get staff's comments on draft goals and objectives.
- We incorporated staff feedback, and developed accountability measures and strategies needed to accomplish goals and objectives.
- We solicited final staff review and again incorporated comments.
- And finally, PLT reviewed the final draft and incorporated final comments.

The culmination of this work is the strategic plan that follows. We welcome feedback on the plan. Comments can be sent to Barb.Anderson@ecy.wa.gov.

Water Resources Program

Mission, Vision, Values

Mission:

We manage water resources to meet the needs of people and the natural environment, in partnership with Washington communities.

Vision:

Washington State's water resources support healthy watersheds and a vibrant economy.

Values:

- **Dedicated/Motivated:** *We come to work each day prepared and determined to address challenges and solve problems.*
- **Excellence:** *We use our technical expertise and proficiency to produce high quality work and deliver exceptional service.*
- **Integrity:** *We act with honesty, objectivity and accountability in our work. We hold ourselves to the highest ethical standards.*
- **Innovation:** *We seek creative solutions and are committed to continuous improvement.*
- **Communication:** *We listen well and value others' ideas.*
- **Collaboration:** *We work together with our customers, partners, and other governmental agencies to achieve shared goals.*

Water Resources Program Strategic Plan

People

One of our greatest assets is our people. Our goals are aimed at retaining our staff and improving job satisfaction. We intend to invest in training, implement hiring and retention strategies to ensure that key positions are filled with qualified staff, and measure our success.

	Goals	Objectives	Accountability Measures
People	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Retain and recruit highly qualified and competent staff that are dedicated to our mission • Maintain and improve job satisfaction 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create training opportunities to improve employee satisfaction and retention • Ensure continuity of key program functions by developing hiring strategies to identify key positions and business processes • Maintain and improve key metrics related to job satisfaction on the employee survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Update and implement program training plan: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Hire training coordinator ○ Update plan ○ Track attendance ○ Evaluate courses • Implement hiring and retention strategies: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Identify key positions ○ Track vacancies and recruitment approaches ○ Identify internship goal and track • Maintain or improve metrics on the following: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Opportunities to learn and grow ○ Encouraged to come up with better ways of doing things ○ Ongoing feedback that helps improve performance ○ Recognition for a job well done
	<p><u>Strategies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Hire program training coordinator: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Clearly identify and communicate training budget to all program staff. ○ Continue to implement and improve the training plan: Sponsor conferences, commit to staff workshops, hiring guest speakers/trainers, partner with other entities (consortium of experts, universities, etc.) to create training opportunities. ○ Make sure formal training plans are communicated to all new staff. • Be clear to program staff about our goals and objectives, and progress in implementing the Strategic Plan. Increase in person Program Leadership Team (PLT) meetings to 6 		

	<p>times/year, allowing one meeting at each region and two at HQ. Section staff would be invited to have lunch with PLT and set aside an hour to talk about current issues and progress on Strategic Plan.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Section managers will use the following tools to help with staff retention and promotional opportunities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Evaluate every vacant position for possible internal only recruitment to maximize promotional opportunities and geographic relocation options. ○ Provide in-training programs. ○ Use Internships (may require additional work with HR to be effective as a recruitment tool). ○ Provide recognition and ongoing feedback (from Employee Survey). ○ Mentor new staff. ○ Treat each other with dignity and respect. • Managers will communicate PLT issues and decisions to staff regularly.
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Customers

The Water Resources Program has a wide range of customers from dam owners to well drillers, from senior water right holders to water right applicants, from conservancy boards to certified water right examiners. The list is long, and the needs and wants are diverse. Our staff does an excellent job of meeting the needs of these customers and many others. In looking for additional ways to improve our customer’s experience, we will provide opportunities for staff to get training and continue to use Lean. We will also look at ways to improve our web presence.

	Goals	Objectives	Accountability Measures
Customers	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a positive customer experience 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintain and improve customer satisfaction based on key metrics related to customer survey 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Measure success with improved customer survey results • Lean workgroup will identify at least one project per year • Increase number (%) of staff receiving customer service or communications training
	<p><u>Strategies</u></p> <p><u>Communication</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communications training will be made available to all staff and managers (e.g., crucial conversations, risk communication). • Managers will model great communication. • All staff will be encouraged to take customer service training. 		

	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • We will offer customer service training at our next all-staff workshop. • Continue to improve the web presence and usability. Implement recommendations from recent agency evaluation of the web, including providing better access to data. <p><u>Lean</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Use Lean to analyze business processes and implement changes that result in measurable improvement. • Streamline public notice requirements to allow web posting. • Evaluate approaches to reduce backlog, to accompany making 500 decisions.
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Financial

In order to lessen the Water Resources Program’s dependency on state general funding, we will develop recommendations for potential new revenue sources and evaluate our existing fees to determine whether they are adequate.

	Goals	Objectives	Accountability Measures
Financial	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Obtain resources needed for funding sufficient to support our program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify potential targeted fee for service opportunities and ways to use our resources more effectively 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Create a successful legislative proposal with revenue enhancements
	<p><u>Strategies</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop recommendations for potential new revenue sources to support the program. • Be prepared to propose legislation for program funding, either as a stand-alone proposal, or a part of a legislative study (also links to business processes). • Evaluate whether and when to raise fees for well construction and licensing, periodic dam inspections, and applications for water rights to more closely reflect actual staff time involved. 		

Business Processes

The Water Resources Program has the unique challenge of providing both resource allocation and resource protection. A number of program areas were targeted for improvement and to provide better access to data.

Business Processes	Goals	Objectives	Accountability Measures
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Protect the natural resource base • Provide timely and legally-defensible decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Ensure compliance with water law, dam safety law, and well construction law • Obtain high quality data to support good decision-making and long-term planning • Continue to make defensible, high quality permitting decisions 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Report water resource metering data • Meet our OFM measures, including making 500 water right decisions • Follow up on 100% of water resource-related complaints that we determine are valid • Ensure we have sufficient data to support our compliance actions and prevail at PCHB hearings when our decisions are appealed • Identify areas of surface and ground water availability in Washington, and those areas where water is not available
	<p><u>Strategies</u></p> <p><u>Resource Protection</u></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Develop an integrated groundwater monitoring strategy. • Resume instream flow rulemaking once rural water management strategies are identified. • Seek partnerships with other entities that already collect or evaluate data to supplement our data needs. • Create and follow clear QA/QC process for data collection and data entry activities. • Enforce laws and rules consistently across the state, including taking appropriate compliance actions. Would link to performance measure. • Evaluate trust water program and water acquisitions program to determine how it can be most effective. • Continue to purchase and accept donations of water that protects and enhances critical fish and wildlife habitat. • Evaluate GIS tools to enhance access to information about water availability, and ensure that data we have published remains current. • Analyze program efforts around water marketing/banking and determine whether statutory changes are needed. • Develop/update climate change adaptation strategy. 		

Resource Allocation

- Reduce the backlog of water right applications by using multiple strategies to process existing applications more quickly and reduce new submittals in areas where resources are not available.
- Evaluate Conservancy Board rule and program to address quality of reports submitted to Ecology.
- Evaluate Cost Reimbursement program requirements for report requirements submitted to Ecology.
- Update application form requirements to ensure that we get what we need for permit processing.
- Improve metering database and transition to electronic submittal of metering data.
- Evaluate ramifications of key Supreme Court rulings and develop legislative proposal as appropriate.
- Develop recommendations to study water code improvements needed after “100 years of water management.” Would also link to financial.
- Conduct basin-specific needs assessments and focus data collection where need is highest.
- Continue to scan water right documents to provide better access.

Water Resources Program Strategy Map

