**2021 Wetland Program Plan Update**

**Introduction:**

Washington’s Wetland Program Plan (WPP) was adopted in March of 2015, with a six-year planning horizon. The WPP is a comprehensive strategy that articulates what the state plans to focus on in its wetland program during the 2015-2021 period. Led by the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology), the initial plan was developed by a collaborative group of state agencies called the WPP Interagency Work Group (IWG). This IWG included the following state agencies:

Department of Natural Resources (DNR)

Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)

Department of Transportation (WSDOT)

State Department of Commerce (Commerce)

Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO)

Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)

State Conservation Commission (WSCC)

State Parks (Parks)

Department of Agriculture (Agriculture)

The IWG also received valuable with input from local governments, tribal governments, Washington citizens, and federal agencies.

The structure of Washington’s plan is based on EPA’s Core Elements Framework, which includes goals, objectives, actions, and activities centered on the four elements identified for a state wetland program. The initial WPP Interagency Work Group added two more elements to the plan.

The following is a list of Washington’s six core elements, along with the goals and objectives for each element. These attributes of the plan reflect some changes from the original 2015 WPP. They reflect edits in support of an update to the WPP. However, many are essentially unchanged and are carried forward in this update.

**1. Regulation**

Three key components to a regulatory program are identified: a clear and comprehensive jurisdictional scope, a method to authorize impacts to aquatic resources, and a strategy to assure compliance. Washington has a well-established regulatory program that addresses these components through four levels of government: local, state, federal, and tribal. Coordination among these governments is critical to improve wetland management and reduce redundancy for project proponents.

Goal: To increase protection at the landscape and site scale by avoiding, minimizing, and where there are unavoidable impacts, ensuring adequate compensation for wetland loss.

Objectives:

* Promote efficient and consistent administration of regulatory activities through coordination among state and federal agencies and support to local governments.
* Increase wetland protection and reduce wetland impacts through better application of avoidance and minimization practices.
* Develop successful compensatory mitigation strategies for unavoidable wetland impacts.
* Evaluate the state regulatory program and state regulated activities to ensure adequate protection of wetlands at the landscape and site scale.

**2. Voluntary Restoration and Protection**

Much of the restoration and conservation work in the state is being performed by non-profit organizations, community groups, and interested landowners through various grant programs and other funding mechanisms. Most of these programs encourage or require partnerships or collaboration to achieve conservation goals. However, the state has taken an active role in supporting voluntary restoration and protection through implementation of several programs, including National Estuary Program and Floodplains by Design funding. There is a significant opportunity to enhance the state’s role in helping voluntary wetland protection efforts and to foster and support coordination of the restoration and protection efforts in the state.

Goal: From a watershed perspective, increase the quantity, condition, and function of wetlands and their ecosystems through voluntary restoration and protection.

Objectives:

* Clearly and consistently define restoration and protection goals throughout the state using a multi-scale watershed approach.
* Support and promote restoration efforts through state-managed or state-sponsored grant programs.
* Protect against the loss of wetland area, restore wetland acres, and improve wetland condition and function.
* Evaluate successes and failures of these efforts, and modify practices as appropriate.

**3. Monitoring and Assessment**

As a result of the initial WPP, Washington State has developed a Wetland Monitoring and Assessment Work Group. This group functions through regular meetings to foster collaboration with entities involved in these activities, as well as with those who use wetland information. The group’s work contributes to the development of a state-wide, long-term monitoring and assessment program and state strategy.

Goal #1: To establish the extent and types of wetlands, their level of function and condition, to detect changes and stressors, and to characterize trends over time to inform better decision making.

Objectives:

* Develop and maintain a coordinated monitoring and assessment strategy relevant to the goal.
* Build upon current monitoring and assessment efforts to address monitoring questions.

Goal #2: To evaluate the effectiveness of each of the six core elements and the effectiveness of the Wetland Program Plan as a whole.

Objective:

* Develop a system for evaluating the Wetland Program Plan for effectiveness in all core elements.

**4. Water Quality Standards**

Washington has designated beneficial uses and anti-degradation policies for waters of the state, including wetlands. To date, narrative standards have been adequate for protecting wetland resources and beneficial uses. However, changes to federal regulations in 2019 and 2020 have caused Washington to reconsider whether its existing narrative standards adequately meet the need of the regulatory agencies and regulated community. Washington is evaluating options to address an increased workload and reduced oversight that are results of the recent federal rule changes.

**5. Outreach and Education**

Public support for protecting the environment is vital for protecting, maintaining, and enhancing our wetland resources. The state has long recognized the importance of outreach and education regarding wetlands, both directly through teaching opportunities and indirectly through technical assistance. Outreach and education is particularly critical in communities with wetlands that are facing pressure from development.

Goal: Directly engage with identified key stakeholders to foster Washington State citizens who understand the role that wetlands play in the landscape, and as a result, value and protect wetlands.

Targeted Audiences and Outcomes:

* Landowners recognize, value, and protect wetlands on their property.
* State and local decision makers understand and make decisions that reflect the value of wetland ecosystem services, and the costs associated with loss of wetland functions.
* Local government permit and technical staff protect wetland ecosystem services using the latest scientific information consistently to advise applicants according to state laws, jurisdictions, and statutes.
* Consultants correctly and accurately employ agency tools and guidance in support of regulatory process.

**6. Sustainable Financing**

A critical component of the success of any wetland program is adequate and consistent funding. A fundamental and challenging part of program development is securing the necessary financial resources to implement the Wetland Program Plan. Many of the actions and activities identified in the plan can only be carried out when funding is obtained.

Goal: To provide stable and consistent funding for implementation of the wetland plan.

Objective: Build capacity and resources within the program.

**Additional Plan features**

The WPP also includes:

* Background on wetland management in Washington, including agencies involved and regulatory and non-regulatory methods.
* Current status of the state’s wetland program, its strengths and challenges.
* Opportunities for collaboration within state resource agencies and with federal, tribal, and other public and private entities.

In the initial WPP, we acknowledged that not all activities and actions would be accomplished in the six-year time frame specified by the EPA. The WPP Interagency Work Group, convened to develop the plan, identified priority actions on which to focus, as well as obtaining resources to implement them.

The initial plan intended that the work group would also review progress toward achieving the goals and objectives of this plan, as well as re-assess priorities for the coming year. Periodic reviews were envisioned to maintain the momentum for task completion and encourage agencies to be accountable to their commitments. In addition, the plan was intended to be updated as actions were accomplished and new ones were established. Finally, the ability to implement actions in this plan was noted to be contingent on adequate funding.

The Periodic Plan Review section of the initial WPP did not manifest as expected. Staffing and funding reductions limited the ability of Ecology and other state agencies to conduct regular meetings and review progress. Nonetheless, as demonstrated later in this document, much of the priority work identified in the plan was achieved, and many advancements and successes were attained.

**Results of the Wetland Program Plan 2015-2020**

From March 2020 through January 2021, the IWG met to discuss the results and accomplishments of the Plan during its first five years (2015-2020), and to scope an update to the Plan. Many program elements include actions and activities that are best described as ongoing and “regular business”. These include:

* Continuing to coordinate among agencies, programs, industry, tribal governments, and local governments to reduce duplicative efforts and increase consistency.
* Continuing to provide technical assistance to local governments.
* Using mitigation and in-lieu fee programs for compensatory mitigation
* Continue to expand the use and development of watershed scale planning tools

These items are part of the agencies core mission and occur in addition to activities and actions that were prioritized in the Plan.

The initial IWG meeting was focused on review of an Annotated Implementation Schedule (AIS), which evaluated those items in the Plan that were identified as priorities for implementation. That AIS served as a “self-check” for the state through which the IWG discussed, revised, and considered accomplishments in the Plan, work that remained, and items that may need further consideration.

The AIS reflects those priority items that either were completed or are ongoing work. The few items that were not completed or addressed are also noted. It is attached to this update as Appendix A.

Below are some of the highlights of the activities and actions taken during the 2015-2020 period, in the context of the relevant program elements.

**Regulatory**

* Ecology provided technical assistance and Critical Areas Ordinances (CAO) comments on 142 local government CAOs since 2016.
* Ecology has developed and expanded wetland/401 enforcement boilerplates, established protocols for intra-agency review of enforcement actions, and convened quarterly meetings to coordinate enforcement efforts in the Shorelands and Environmental Assistance program and with other agencies.
* The wetland mitigation compliance program is an on-going program that began in 2006. For Ecology-issued wetland permits issued since 2004, the program has tracked approximately 280 projects with traditional mitigation requirements, and 100 projects using alternative migration such as mitigation bank credits, advance mitigation, or in-lieu fees.

Ecology provides recommendations in formal follow-up letters from site inspections; reviews reports (as-built and monitoring reports); tracks deadlines; and ensures reports have complete information per Ecology’s Order.

The program includes site inspections at several stages: “As-built” stage, after the mitigation project is first completed; mid-monitoring; and at project closeout (typically ten years). At closeout, the site inspection informs whether the site has met its goals, objectives, and performance standards. Approximately 269 site visits were conducted since 2016.

* Five new mitigation banks certified since 2016 w/ name & location: Weatherwax (Ocean Shores), Coweeman Joint Clean Water Act (CWA)/Endangered Species Act (ESA)(Kelso, Cowlitz County), Terrace (Vancouver, Clark County), Keller Farm (Redmond, King County), and Upper Clear Creek Joint CWA/ESA (Port of Tacoma, Pierce County).

**Voluntary Restoration and Protection**

* Ecology coordinates with partners to obtain funding through the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service National Coastal Wetlands Conservation grant program for acquisition and/or restoration projects. We have helped conserve and restore over 4,000 acres of coastal wetlands, received 21 grants totaling $18 million, and applied for another $5 million of new funding for seven projects in 2019. Specifically, from 2016 – 2019:
* 21 grants awarded
* $18 million in NCWC funding received
* 36 properties acquired
* 3,510 acres acquired
* 5 restoration projects
* 497 acres restored

**Monitoring and Assessment**

* Continued current and complete additional phases of Level 1 analyses of landscape-scale changes using NAIP-based land-cover change analyses, specifically through WDFW’s High Resolution Land Use Change analysis.
* Ecology worked with multiple partners (UW, WDNR-NHP, USFWS, EPA) under an EPA Wetland Grant/Cooperative Agreement to develop improved modeled mapped wetland layers and FGDC-compliant updated NWI + maps for 2 pilot areas (Puyallup River Basin and Kittitas County). This work included adding WA HGM classes to the updated NWI in these two demonstration areas. The UW, under contract to Ecology, produced improved remotely sensed maps with wetland/upland probability values. UW also worked with TerrainWorks under funding from Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation and Research committee to develop the Wetland Intrinsic Potential Tool.
* Several tribes in Washington State (Colville, Tulalip, Quinault) worked on updating wetland inventory maps. Notably the Tulalip Tribe hired an expert from the USFWS NWI staff to work for them and update their wetland maps with detailed field survey site verifications.
* Participated in EPA’s 2016 National Wetland Condition Assessment (NWCA).

**Outreach and Education**

* Wetland ratings trainings, Credit-Debit Method, selecting mitigation sites using a watershed approach, plant ID, OHWM (associated wetlands), and field indicators for hydric soils.

**Activities involving multiply core elements**

* DNR’s NHP Wetlands of High Conservation Value Mapper is live.
* DNR and Ecology provided wetland classification training- pilot class in October. Another is planned for April. The class will go live through Coastal Training in May. NHP also developed a training for their EIS (incorporating WHCV) and offered it through Coastal Training.

**Updating the WPP**

In updating the wetland program plan, we continue to assert the importance of our wetland resources. Washington is home to many diverse wetlands throughout the state. These wetlands offer unique and valuable characteristics that are critical to a healthy economy and environment. Wetlands provide irreplaceable services like flood management, erosion control, pollution reduction, and aquifer recharge. They serve as essential habitat for fish, wildlife, and plants, including state and federal endangered and threatened species. Additionally, wetlands provide excellent recreational, cultural, and educational opportunities that increase the quality of life for Washington citizens.

The Plan retains, with minimal alteration, much of its original content. The Plan continues to incorporate and address six Core Elements (Regulation, Voluntary Restoration and Protection, Monitoring and Assessment, Water Quality Standards, Outreach and Education, and Sustainable Financing.

The goal of the state’s wetland program remains to achieve no overall net loss in acreage and function of Washington’s remaining wetlands and to further the long-term goal to increase the quantity and quality of Washington’s wetlands resource base. The plan will be continue to be used to further this goal by:

* Increasing coordination among state agencies and between state agencies, local governments, tribal governments, federal agencies, and non-governmental organizations.
* Applying for grant funding to finance activities and actions that promote the goal.
* Addressing gaps in the state wetland program.

Thus, this update is targeted action to update discrete sections of the Plan, while purposefully retaining and recommitting to existing activities and actions.

One of the Core Elements of the Plan (Monitoring and Assessment) included an Action to update the Plan and submit it for re-approval before its expiration in 2021. Consistent with the Activity associated with this Action, Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) staff engaged in a mid-plan review meeting with EPA staff in 2019. Subsequent to this review, Ecology convened an Interagency Work Group (IWG) to collaborate on an update to Plan, with a goal to submit to EPA for re-approval in 2021. It should be noted that the original goal was to submit the update in 2020 but staffing limitations delayed the start of the update process until mid-2019.

Participants in the IWG included representatives from the following agencies, organizations and tribes:

* Department of Ecology
* Department of Natural Resources
* Department of Fish and Wildlife
* Department of Transportation
* State Conservation Commission
* Department of Commerce
* Department of Agriculture
* Parks and Recreation Commission
* Tribal Wetlands Work Group
* Tulalip Tribe

There was consensus among the IWG that the existing plan is very comprehensive and continues to address the majority of Washington’s Wetland Program. However, some particular and significant additional activities and actions were added to the Plan. Also, some actions and activities, which emerged as priorities over the past six years, were promoted to the Implementation Schedule for 2021-2027. Those additions fell within existing Core Elements and are reflected in the revised Implementation Schedule.

In general, the changes and additions fell under three (?) Core Elements, as follows:

* Regulatory
* Voluntary Restoration and Protection
* Monitoring and Assessment

In particular, the Regulatory element was heavily augmented in response to changes in federal regulations and authorities. Some of the changes to federal jurisdiction under the Clean Water Act (CWA), along with changes to the Section 401 rule pursuant to the CWA, have increased the regulatory burden on the state. This new burden requires the state to examine, augment and revise its regulatory approach and capacity. DESCRIBE MORE HERE

In addition, Washington intends to expand its examination and understanding of voluntary restoration projects through addition of Monitoring and Assessment activities and actions.

**Format of this update:**

To preserve its history and retain continuity of purpose, contents of the first 14 pages of the initial Plan are carried forward by reference into this new iteration. Changes and updates to specific Core Element Actions are captured in a revised Implementation Schedule (Appendix B). A narrative explanation of the new Core Element Activities, along with a detailed description of the new Actions, is provided below.

As previously noted, the majority of the six Core Elements and their associated Tables will continue to be attributes of the Plan. The following subsection describes the new activities and actions under relevant program elements.

**Regulatory:**

**Waters of the United States:**

Washington will need to develop state capacity and processes to address wetland impacts no longer regulated as Waters of the United States (WOTUS).

In June 2020, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) and U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) enacted a new rule redefining which water bodies qualify as “waters of the United States,” and are subject to federal Clean Water Act protection. This rollback means thousands of wetlands, streams that flow only intermittently in response to rainfall, and other waters have lost federal protection. The new rule also means EPA and the U.S. Coast Guard no longer offer resources or financial support to states responding to toxic spills to waters now outside of federal jurisdiction. Under the new rule, about 29% of wetlands and 14% of streams in Washington will lose federal protection – but are still protected by the state Water Pollution Control, Shoreline Management, and Growth Management acts, and other state environmental regulations. While projects affecting non-federal wetlands and waters may no longer need Clean Water Act permits, they must meet state laws. Ecology estimates needing to issue at least 300 more state administrative orders annually to ensure development does not damage water quality in these areas.

The new federal rule creates an unprecedented workload for both Ecology and project proponents seeking timely, effective decisions. It also removes a well-established process, in which Ecology and the Corps worked closely to evaluate projects in a streamlined fashion under Clean Water Act Section 404. When projects fell outside federal purview, we issued a handful of administrative orders annually to address wetland impacts and identify mitigation requirements. For projects meeting state requirements, the Corps issued many permits without our review. Now, Ecology will need to review projects that previously would have received a streamlined Nationwide Permit.

To protect all state waters and wetlands, we need a streamlined review pathway to ensure projects do not violate state law. Ultimately, a state permitting program similar to the Corps’ Nationwide Permit program, would provide the best structure and streamlining options while ensuring projects meet state laws.

**Section 401:**

Washington will need to develop process guidance, forms, and permit templates to address regulatory changes associated with 2020 Section 401 Rule. In September 2020, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) implemented a Clean Water Act Section 401 Certification Rule under the 1972 federal Clean Water Act. This federal rule has changed the process for submitting requests for Section 401 water quality certifications.

As the clean water certifying agency, Ecology has the authority in Washington under Section 401 of the U.S. Clean Water Act to review and approve, approve with conditions, or deny proposed projects, actions, and activities directly affecting waters of the United States. Tribal governments and EPA also have this authority on tribal and non-state lands.

Under Section 401, federal agencies cannot issue a license or permit before we make a determination on a water quality certification request or waive our right to review. Any conditions that the certifying agency sets then become conditions of the federal permit or license.

Under the EPA's rule, all project proponents requesting a Section 401 water quality certification must first file a pre-filing meeting request with Ecology at least 30 days before submitting a 401 request. We have three different water quality certification processes based on the type of project. However, effective Sept. 11, 2020, all requests must follow specific steps to begin the 401 water quality certification review and decision process.

**Compliance and enforcement:**

Washington will need to evaluate options and develop permitting methods to ensure state oversight of water quality certifications, and any requisite mitigation sites. EPA’s rule does not authorize states to independently enforce a certification or specific certification conditions.

**Stream functional assessment:**

Washington will explore modifying the Stream Functional Assessment Method (SFAM), developed in Oregon, for use in Washington. SFAM is composed of four components (User Manual, Excel Workbook, Scientific Rationale, web-based SFAM Map Viewer), which together meet the requirements of a rapid, repeatable, consistent, defensible, and science-based method for assessing streams in support of compensatory mitigation decision-making. Washington jurisdictions administer several stream-related regulatory authorities including the Hydraulic Code (RCW 77.55) , State Water Pollution Control Act (RCW 90.48), Shoreline Management Act (RCW 90.58), and Growth Management Act (RCW 36.70A). These laws and rules include consideration of best available science when establishing and administering regulations to protect critical area functions and values. There is currently no quantitative method for evaluating stream functions and values in use in Washington.

SFAM was developed considering its transferability. In its current form, many measures are applicable to Washington, because the standard performance indices for each of the function measures considered data, literature, and current scientific understanding of stream system function from across the Pacific Northwest. However, certain Washington-specific data layers would need to be incorporated.

**Voluntary Restoration and Protection:**

**Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda:**

Washington will track and support the Action Agenda for Puget Sound. The Action Agenda charts the course to recovery of our nation's largest estuary–it complements and incorporates the work of many partners from around Puget Sound to describe regional strategies and specific actions needed to recover Puget Sound. These strategies and actions provide opportunities for federal, state, local, tribal, and private entities to better invest resources and coordinate actions.

In particular, the Near-Term Actions (NTAs) will be highlighted and increased agency coordination in support of these actions will occur. See: <https://actionagenda.pugetsoundinfo.wa.gov/> for a list of NTAs.

Many types of discrete, measurable actions constitute NTAs. The term “action” is broadly defined to include projects, initiatives, or programs. NTAs can also be large or small in scale and can be a portion (or phase) of a larger, longer-term effort. For the 2018-2022 Action Agenda, the following three categories of actions are considered to be NTAs:

* New actions that achieve new recovery outcomes. These may also be new one-time investments aimed at launching a new ongoing program.
* Expansions or enhancements of existing programs to achieve better recovery outcomes. These are discrete actions aimed at expanding the scope or scale of an existing program (not maintenance of current level of scope or scale).
* Continuation of an ongoing action that currently lacks secure ongoing funding to maintain baseline operations, such as a project to acquire funding for a critical program that is operating on year-to-year grant funding.

**Supporting incentive-based approaches to restoration and protection:**

With over 60% of Washington land in private ownership, incentive programs support and enhance many of the voluntary conservation efforts in Washington. Several government and foundation programs offer incentives to private landowners in Washington to promote conservation, protection, or improvement of wetland resources on their property. These range from direct financial incentives, like tax breaks, grants, or subsidized loans, to recognition-based incentives that reward landowners for pursuing conservation activities. In addition to these programs, many of the organizations and agencies listed above provide technical assistance in applying for grants or loans, developing conservation plans, and providing regulatory assistance.

Incentives can be incorporated into regulatory programs. Under GMA, local governments are responsible for designating and protecting wetlands by adopting Critical Areas Ordinances and are encouraged to augment regulatory protection with incentives for voluntary conservation. The Voluntary Stewardship Program is a alternative planning process that uses incentives instead of regulations to promote environmental stewardship on agricultural lands. Counties opting in to this program are eligible for funding for the development of watershed work plans to set goals and benchmarks for protection and enhancement of wetlands and other critical areas on agricultural lands.

In coordination with state efforts to address the expanded regulatory responsibility from the new WOTUS rule, Washington can consider whether it can develop State Programmatic General Permits (SPGPs) or Regional General permits (RGP) as a method to increase efficiency of the program, and explore incentives (permit fee waiver, permit goes first in line) for projects which avoid or minimize wetland impacts below specific thresholds.

**Monitoring and Assessment:**

**Complete Monitoring & Assessment Strategy:**

Washington State currently does not have a coordinated monitoring or assessment program for wetlands and seeks to develop a strategy through a broad, collaborative approach that supports different management, monitoring, and protection goals. The overall goal of the wetland monitoring and assessment strategy is:

*To establish the extent and types of wetlands, their level of function and condition, to detect changes and stressors, and to characterize trends over time to inform better decision making.*

**Monitor Voluntary Restoration and Protection projects:**

To further the long-term WPP goal to increase the quantity and quality of Washington’s wetlands resource base, regulatory agencies will develop and employ monitoring strategies for voluntary restoration projects whereby restored wetland acreage and, potentially, functions are documented.

**Establish a data management approach for coordinated data standards, storage, management, and dissemination of monitoring and assessment data:**

The state will develop a unified approach to manage and share data and cross-train between state agencies and programs (for example, WDNR-Natural Heritage Program provide training on EIA, FQA, and Wetland Ecological Classification system). Also, we will create a quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) approach for the data management system

In addition, the state will create or integrate with existing web-based data management platforms (e.g., a map viewer like the Coastal Atlas) so that data is easily accessible by the broad range of users.

**Monitor mitigation sites for ecological success and area replacement:**

Regulatory agencies will attempt to incorporate monitoring of mitigation sites using EPA’s three-tiered approach to evaluate efficacy and success of mitigation program and ecological success of mitigation sites.

**Apply additional assessment methods during EPA’s 2021 National Wetland Condition Assessment:**

Ecology and DNR-Natural Heritage Program staff will assess wetlands sampled for NWCA using the methods of the WA Wetland Rating System and Level 2 EIA. Results will be compared with results from NWCA and used to understand how WA wetland ratings, EIA, and NWCA wetland assessments perform in relation to each other.

**Outreach and Education:**

State agencies will continue to work with the Coastal Training Program (CTP) to provide wetland-specific training as identified in the CTP strategic plan. However, we must adapt training methods and strategies to respond to COVID-19 constraints on in-person learning.

The current Coastal Training Program Strategic Plan is for the period of January 2016 through December 2020. This plan emphasizes targeting wetland specialists to be trained.

Given the continuing situation of managing education and training experiences in the context of COVID-19, actions include converting in-class training materials to virtual training formats. Converting field training materials to self-directed activities in the field without instructors present but with a follow-up virtual meeting to go over field activities, or to multi-platform virtual trainings using remote learning with a variety of A/V resources (videos, break-out group activities, etc.).

Specific foreseeable trainings include: Wetland ratings trainings, Credit-Debit Method, Using the revised Joint Agency Wetland Mitigation Guidance, Selecting Mitigation Sites using a Watershed Approach, Woody plant ID, Ordinary High Water Mark (associated wetlands), Wetland classification, EIA, permitting, and field indicators for hydric soils.

Other expanded education and outreach efforts are foreseeable in the next WPP period. Ecology intends to expand its Washington Conservation Corps wetland delineation training to a four-day class. Course content will include application of the 1987 Wetland Delineation Manual and Western Mountains, Valley, and Coast Regional Supplement used by the Army Corps of Engineers, Department of Ecology and local governments to identify wetlands. The course will examine the technical guidelines for wetland delineations, field indicators of hydrophytic vegetation, hydric soils, and wetland hydrology, and an overview of wetland regulation in Washington.

In addition, Ecology will develop training and education materials in support of the updated Interagency Mitigation Guidance. The Guidance will be published in early 2021 and was reflected as a priority item in the initial WPP.

**Activities that involve multiple core elements**

**Develop guidance for methods for monitoring mitigation, including innovative methods.**

Agencies will develop guidance for use of innovative monitoring techniques (e.g. drones, Go-Pro cameras, high-resolution aerials, etc.).

**Develop guidance on use of Conservation Easements/Deed Restrictions/Protective Covenants**