

**ABSTRACT**

**A WATERSHED EFFORT: IMPLEMENTING THE LOWER  
YAKIMA RIVER TSS AND DDT TMDL**

*Ryan Anderson, Central Region TMDL Lead, Washington State Department of Ecology, 15 West Yakima Ave., Suite 200, Yakima, Washington 98902-3452, (509) 575-2642, [rand461@ecy.wa.gov](mailto:rand461@ecy.wa.gov)*

Since the establishment of the Clean Water Act in 1972, various sponsors of water quality projects in the Yakima River Watershed were able to report results in various areas. Some projects focused on point sources such as Waste Water Treatment Plants and food processing facilities. Other projects focused on reducing the impacts on water quality of nonpoint sources such as run-off from irrigated agriculture or livestock production facilities. Though many of these projects did yield some measurable success, monitoring by the US Geological Survey, Ecology and other organizations in the late eighties and early nineties revealed that suspended sediment and pesticides were still polluting the Yakima River Watershed at levels high enough to prompt the Washington State Department of Health to issue a human health advisory on the consumption of bottom fish in the Lower Yakima River. In 1994 and 1995, Ecology conducted specific monitoring in the Yakima River Watershed in order to determine a loading capacity for suspended sediment and the associated DDT, DDE and DDD. The study provided a load allocation for turbidity based on its correlation with suspended sediment, DDT and the breakdown products of DDT. Irrigation districts, conservation districts, the Yakama Nation, Ecology and others have been implementing the TMDL since 1998 and have conducted monitoring of irrigated agriculture return drains and the main stem of the Yakima River.

At the first five-year target, Ecology has conducted and organized main stem and tributary monitoring in the Lower Yakima River Watershed. Preliminary data shows that there has been a significant improvement in water quality in the Yakima River Basin, but has uncovered new challenges. Eutrophication may be damaging the lower portion of the watershed, other pesticides and fecal coliform bacteria are still on the 303(d) list, and other problems still exist that the TMDL may or may not address. This presentation provided an overview of the last five years worth of work in the Yakima River Watershed, a review of effectiveness monitoring in the Lower Yakima, and an evaluation of future water quality concerns related to the total suspended solids and DDT TMDL.