

# Alaska Antidegradation Policy

## Water Quality Standards

Division of Water

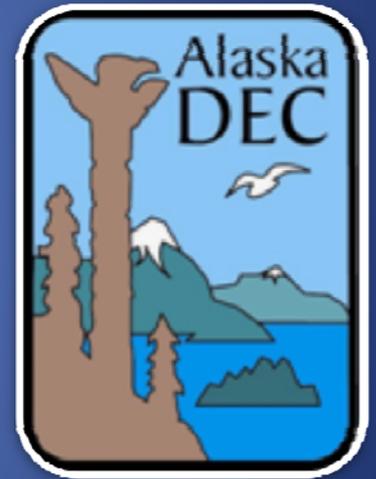
Jim Powell

ADEC

Juneau Office

[Jim.powell@alaska.gov](mailto:Jim.powell@alaska.gov)

(907) 465-5185



# Where do you find the Water Quality Standards?

Alaska water quality standard (WQS) regulations are generally found in two documents:

**1) Water Quality Standards Regulations**

(18 AAC.70.015)

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/regulations/index.htm>

**2) Alaska Water Quality Criteria Manual for Toxic and Other Deleterious Organic and Inorganic Substances (Toxics Manual).** The Toxics Manual is adopted by reference as a part of the WQS

<http://www.dec.state.ak.us/water/wqsar/wqs/index.htm>

# What are Water Quality Standards?

- (1) **Designated uses** - how water is used  
(e.g. recreational, industrial, aquatic life)
- (2) **Criteria** (numeric and narrative limits)
- (3) **Antidegradation** (protects high quality waters)

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= **Water Quality Standard**

# Water Quality Standards

## Antidegradation Policy (See handout – 18-AAC 70.015)

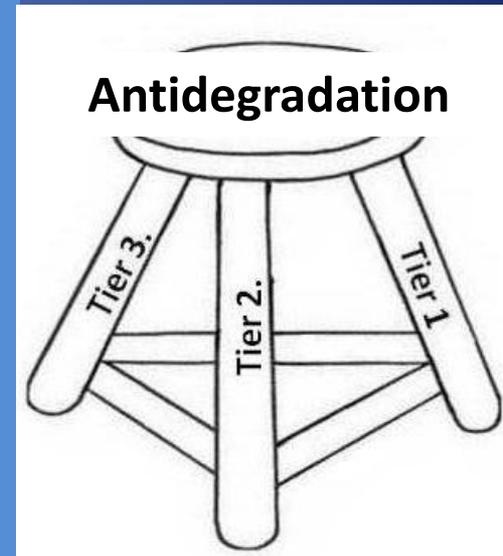
### Three Parts:

3) a) (1) Protects existing uses (Tier 1)

(2) Allows high quality waters to be lowered by regulated activities only in certain prescribed conditions with public review.

(Tier 2)

(3) Protects high quality water - Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRW) (Tier 3)



## **a) (1) Protects existing uses (Tier 1)**

**“Existing water uses and the level of water quality necessary to protect existing uses must be maintained and protected”**

**18 AAC 70.015 (a)(1)**

## a(2) Allows high quality waters to be lowered by regulated activities (Tier 2)

### Five elements to Antidegradation analysis

- (A) Economic and Social Development** : “Allowing lower water quality is necessary to accommodate important economic or social development in the area where the water is located”.
- (B) Water Quality Criteria**: “Except as allowed under this subsection , reducing water quality will not violate the applicable criteria of 18 AAC 70.020 or 18 AAC 70.235. or the whole effluent toxicity limit in 18 AAC 70.030”.
- (C) Protect Existing Uses**: “the resulting water quality will be adequate to fully protect existing uses of the water”

18 AAC 70.015 (a)(2) (A-E))

## a(2) Allows high quality waters to be lowered by regulated activities (Tier 2)

### Five elements to Antidegradation analysis

- (D) Pollution Prevention and BMPs:** “The methods of pollution prevention, control , and treatment found by the department to be the most effective and reasonable will be applied to all wastes and other substances to be discharged; and”
- (E) Treatment:** “All waste and other substances discharged will be treated and controlled to achieve
  - (i) For new and existing point sources, the highest statutory and regulatory requirements; and
  - (ii) for nonpoint sources, all cost-effective and reasonable best management practices”

18 AAC 70.015 (a)(2) (A-E))

## a(3) Outstanding National Resource Waters (ONRW)

- ONRWs are designated **high quality waters**, such as waters in national or state parks and wildlife refuges or waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance.
- DEC identifies ONRWs with public input. None have been designated as yet.

# Why are we here?

We have general policy in regulation

We are here today primarily to:

- **LEARN** and share information about the pros and cons of various state approaches, lessons learned, and legal challenges and precedents.
- provide a forum for stakeholders to discuss the implementation programs adopted by other states.