

Water Quality Standards



2011-2013 Triennial Review

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

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2011-2013 Triennial Review

High Priority Issues

September 2012

As required by the federal Clean Water Act, every three years the Department of Environmental Conservation (DEC) conducts a comprehensive review of the Water Quality Standards (WQS) in 18 AAC 70 (the “Triennial Review”). This review helps to keep the pollution limits set for Alaska's waters current by integrating the latest science, technology, policy, and federal requirements into how the State regulates and protects water quality. The adoption of revised WQS is a potential outcome of this process. The WQS are subject to approval by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) under the Clean Water Act.

In early 2012, DEC issued a public notice of proposed high priority issues that would be considered by DEC during the 2011-2013 Triennial Review. Based on comments received during the public process and DEC priority setting efforts, the following actions are DEC’s WQS priorities in 2013:

- Adopt antidegradation implementation methods
- Resolve issues delaying EPA approval of mixing zone regulations
- Monitor and assist the EPA review of residue criteria
- Evaluate Alaskan fish consumption rates for use in deriving human health criteria

The amount of time required to research and review each of these issues varies depending upon its complexity. The outcome of each effort may result in one or more of the following activities:

- Proposal and adoption of regulation revisions
- Development of policies and procedures describing how regulations will be implemented by DEC
- Requests for information to use for technical or policy making purposes
- Analysis of technical information used to develop protective water quality criteria

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- Establishment of technical or stakeholder workgroups to look at an issue in depth
- Requests for public comment, outreach activities and other public participation opportunities

For more information on the high priority issues and the 2011-2013 Triennial Review process, please visit our website at

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