

# Skagit River Basin - Water Management Rule Timeline

The following is provided as an archive of past information sources about WAC 173-503 Instream Resources Protection Program - Lower and Upper Skagit Water Resources Inventory Area (WRIA 3 and 4)

More information: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wr/instream-flows/173503-ov.html>

Date	Type of activity
August 19, 1996	Cultus IFIM study, entitled " <a href="#">Draft Report: Skagit County Water Supply IFIM and Fisheries Study: Gilligan, Salmon, Turner, Mundt Creeks</a> ". Marks the beginning of extensive research on Skagit River Basin flows and fish, and future out-of-stream needs.
December 1996	<a href="#">Memorandum of Agreement</a> : "Utilization of Skagit River Water Resources for Instream and Out-of-stream Purposes". Signed by Tribes, local governments and state government agencies.
September and October 1999	Workshops on the rule, open to the general public.
November 1 - December 8, 2000	Public hearing (November 29, 2000) and public comment period on proposed rule.
April 14, 2001	Adoption of Skagit River Basin Instream Resources Protection Program Rule ( <a href="#">WAC 173-503</a> ).
April 2003	<a href="#">Skagit County initiates lawsuit against Ecology</a> because rule did not address exempt well use in rural areas.
May 15, 2006	Adoption of amended Skagit River Basin Instream Resources Protection Program Rule (copy of invalidated <a href="#">WAC 173-503</a> ), establishing reservations of water not subject to instream flows. Skagit County lawsuit dropped.
June 2008	<a href="#">Swinomish Tribe challenges validity of 2006 rule amendments</a> .
June 24, 2011	<a href="#">Carpenter-Fisher subbasin closed to new, unmitigated water uses</a> ; the reservation was used up. Nookachamps subbasin reservation nearly depleted.
October 3, 2013	<a href="#">State Supreme Court decision</a> in Swinomish Indian Tribal Community v Washington State Department of Ecology.
November 20, 2014	<a href="#">Petition to repeal</a> Skagit River Basin Instream Resources Protection Program Rule (WAC 173-503).
January 15, 2015	<a href="#">Ecology letter in response</a> to petition to repeal (WAC 173-503).
March 2016	<a href="#">Engrossed Senate Bill 6589</a> adopted by Washington State Legislature and signed into law by Governor Inslee. This bill requires a feasibility study for Skagit water storage to provide mitigation of new uses.
April 2016	<a href="#">Fox court decision</a> : Skagit County cannot be compelled to issue a building permit because the groundwater supply would have to stop when instream flows are not met