



**Policy 1-11 Public Dialogue
TMDL Prioritization Issues Paper
December 2016
Ecology Lead: Helen Bresler**

Excerpts From Section 303 of the *Clean Water Act*:

(1)(A) Each State shall identify those waters... [that violate standards]. The State shall establish a priority ranking for such waters, taking into account the severity of the pollution and the uses to be made of such waters....

(C) Each State shall establish for the waters identified in paragraph (1)(A) of this subsection, and in accordance with the priority ranking, the total maximum daily load, for those pollutants which the Administrator identifies under [section 1314\(a\)\(2\) of this title](#) as suitable for such calculation. Such load shall be established at a level necessary to implement the applicable water quality standards with seasonal variations and a margin of safety which takes into account any lack of knowledge concerning the relationship between effluent limitations and water quality.

Key Issues	Ecology Thinking
Policy 1-11 doesn't describe how the public will have an opportunity to comment on TMDL prioritization.	Ecology will clarify how the public can comment on TMDL prioritization in the revised draft of Policy 1-11. Stakeholder feedback on how they want to be involved is encouraged.
Ecology should involve stakeholders in developing the TMDL prioritization.	Ecology agrees and will work to develop a process that is more inclusive of stakeholders.
Ecology should review the criteria it uses to prioritize TMDLs.	Ecology currently conducts a prioritization by each region based on: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Severity of pollution problem ○ Local support and interest in a watershed ○ Staff available to produce a TMDL ○ Whether a TMDL is the right tool <p>If stakeholders have other criteria that they think are important to consider for TMDL prioritization, Ecology would like to hear those ideas so that we better understand stakeholder perspectives.</p>
Require Ecology regions to follow the established TMDL prioritization policy.	Ecology agrees that consistency is important and would like to understand better where stakeholders believe that inconsistencies have occurred in the past so that we can focus on being more consistent in the future.

Key Issues	Ecology Thinking
Ecology does not place enough emphasis on developing TMDLs for lakes.	Ecology's emphasis has been on addressing water quality problems by producing watershed-based TMDLs that address multiple pollutants. TMDLs that focus solely on a single lake generally address only a single listing, have proven to be difficult and time consuming to complete, and have not been implemented, so have not been found to be a good use of public money.