

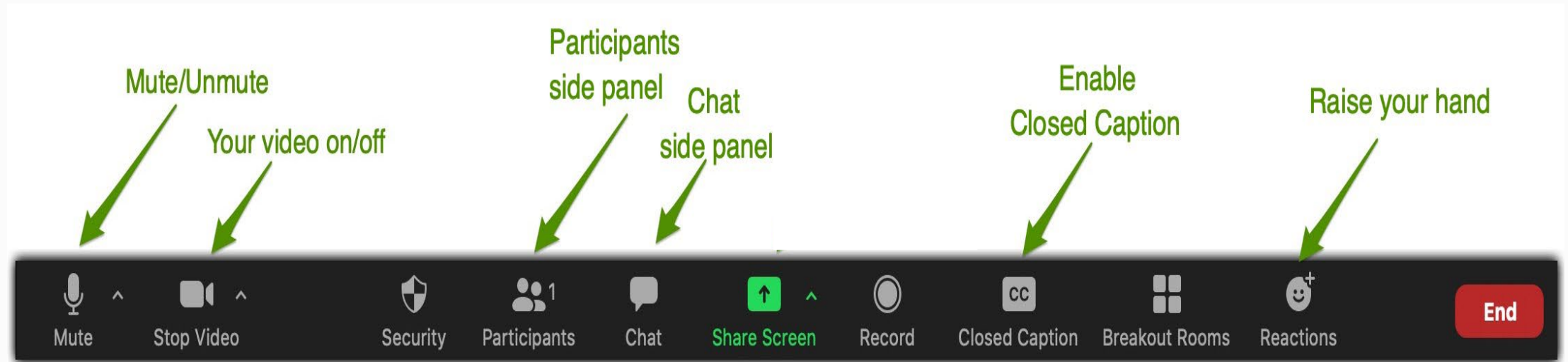


Public Hearing – Water Quality Permit Fees

Water Quality Permit Fees – WAC 173-224

May 12 & 13, 2025

Sound check

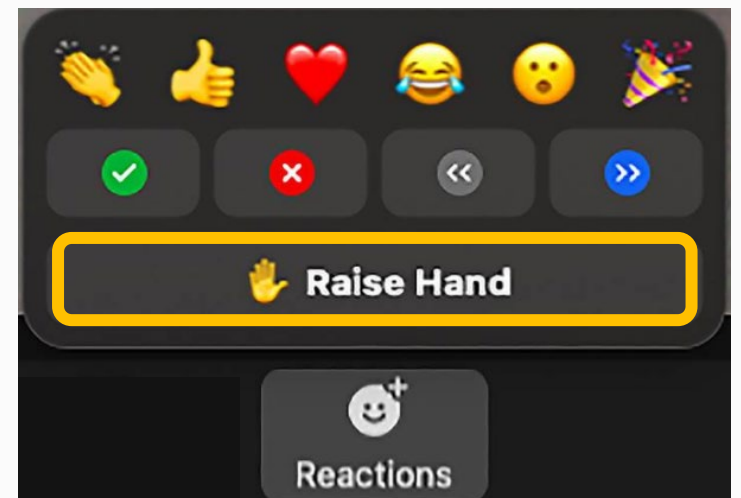


Calling by phone?

***6 - Mute/unmute**

***9 - Raise/lower hand**

Need help? Chat with us!





Public Hearing – Water Quality Permit Fees

Water Quality Permit Fees – WAC 173-224

May 12, 2025

Today's agenda

- 1** Hearing logistics
- 2** Presentation on rule proposal
- 3** Question & Answer session
- 4** Formal public testimony
- 5** Next steps and adjourn

Zoom Navigation and Accessibility

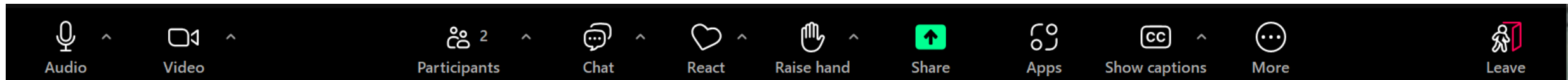
Mute/unmute

Your video on/off

Participants side panel

Chat side panel

Raise your hand

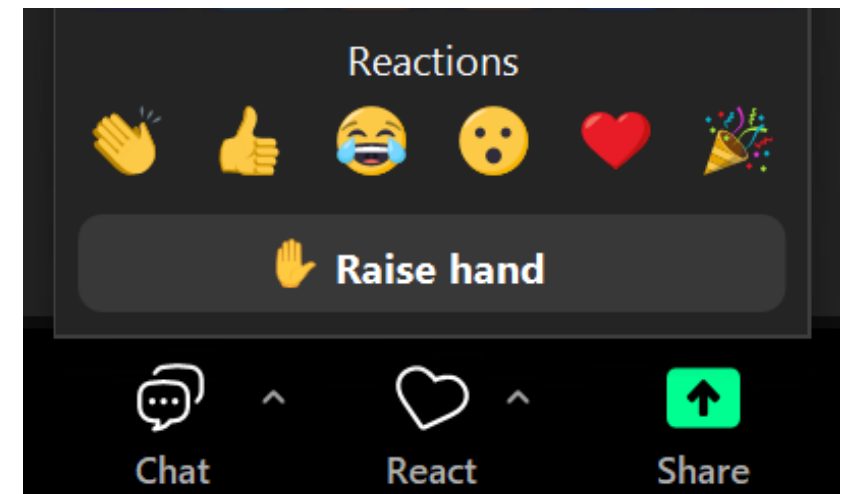


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***9 - Raise/lower hand**

Need help? Chat with us!



Helpful reminders



Keep your phone or headset muted.



Raise your hand if you have a question or want to provide oral comments



Please use chat for questions and technical assistance.
We aren't accepting formal comments through the chat.



Proposal to modify Water Quality permit fees for Washington

Rulemaking presentation

Water Quality Permits

- Regulatory tools - wastewater and stormwater can enter the environment
- Two types - Individual & General
 - Individual Permit – One permit for one facility. Specific to their situation.
 - General Permit – groups business/industries that have similar operations to be more efficient.



Water Quality's Permit Fee Philosophy

RCW 90.48.465: “fully recover and not exceed” the costs of directly and indirectly implementing and overseeing the permitting program.

Core values for fees:

- **Holistic**
- **Equitable**
- **Quality customer experience**

Water Quality's Permit Fee Philosophy – Fiscal Growth Factor

Fiscal Growth Factor (FGF):

- **FY26: 6.2%. FY27: 6.27%**
- **Ecology's authorization.**
 - Use FGFs as a guide and try to increase fees at or below the state rates.
 - When a fee category is an extreme underpayer, the proposed increase may exceed the FGF.

Key Updates



- **Catch up to costs**
 - Increase fees for most fee categories
 - Focus on underpaying categories
- **Add/expand tiers for certain fee categories**
 - Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO)
 - Construction Stormwater – Individual Permits
 - Municipal (Stormwater and Wastewater)
 - Ore Mining, Processing, Refining, Other
 - Seafood Processing
 - Sand and Gravel
- **Adjust Reduced Fees (minimum fee & reduced rate)**

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO): Dairy Fees

- RCW 90.48.465 (4) provides requirements for how to assess Dairy general and individual permit fees (Milk cows, dry cows, heifers)
- Dairies are assessed fees using an animal count per animal type converted to animal units (AUs), multiplied by a rate per animal unit

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO): Dairy Fees

- The fee per animal unit is proposed to increase from \$0.54 per/AU to \$0.64 per/AU in FY26 and \$0.68 in FY27.
- The not-to-exceed amounts would increase by the FGF (from \$2,320 to \$4,000 in FY26 and to \$5,000 in FY27).
- The CAFO Dairy individual permit fees would increase from \$0.70 per/AU to \$0.82 per/AU in FY26 and \$0.87 in FY27.

Concentrated Animal Feeding Operations (CAFO): Non-Dairy Fees

- Non-dairy CAFO fees – proposing to add an extra-large tier in addition to the existing small, medium, large CAFO tiers
- An extra-large tier is also proposed for the non-dairy CAFO individual permit fee.
- Addition of the extra-large tiers for non-dairy CAFOs, comes with a shifting of animal count at the high end, and fee increases.
- Reminder: some permit holders have two annual fees because they have both dairy and non-dairy animals – this would continue to be the case

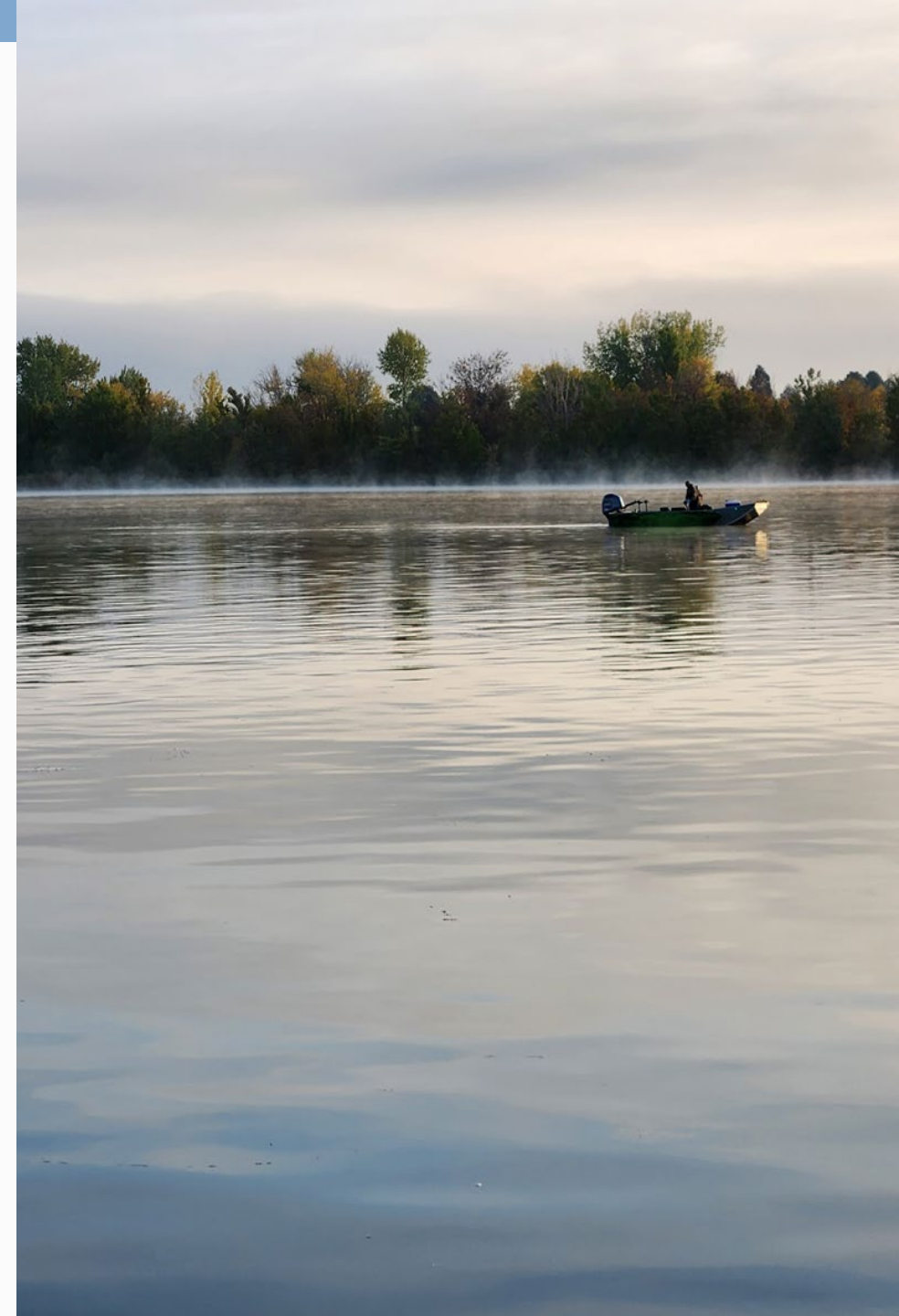
Construction Stormwater: Individual Permits

- Current Fee Category: **Construction and Industrial Individual Permits**. Basis is “acreage”
- **Industrial Stormwater Individual Permits** will “take over” existing fee category with some modifications and increased fees.
- **Construction Stormwater Individual Permits** will have a new fee category based on *disturbed* acreage and fees more closely aligned to estimated staff time for the permits (currently – no permits).

Municipal Stormwater Facilities

Municipal Stormwater Ph 1 & Ph2 –
Secondary Facilities permits.

- Proposal to move to a flat permit fee of \$1,100.



Municipal Wastewater Facilities

- SB 5585 (2022 Legislative Session)
- Ecology continues to work on fee increases for this group.
- Increase fees based on Residential Equivalents from \$3.43 per RE to:
 - Less than 250,000 REs: \$3.60 per RE in FY26 and \$3.78 per RE in FY27.
 - More than 250,000 REs: \$3.50 per RE in FY26 and \$3.57 per RE in FY27



Municipal Wastewater Facilities

- Expand tiers for flow-based fees (from 6 to 10) to accommodate the reclaimed water facilities
- Increase minimum fee from \$250 to \$275



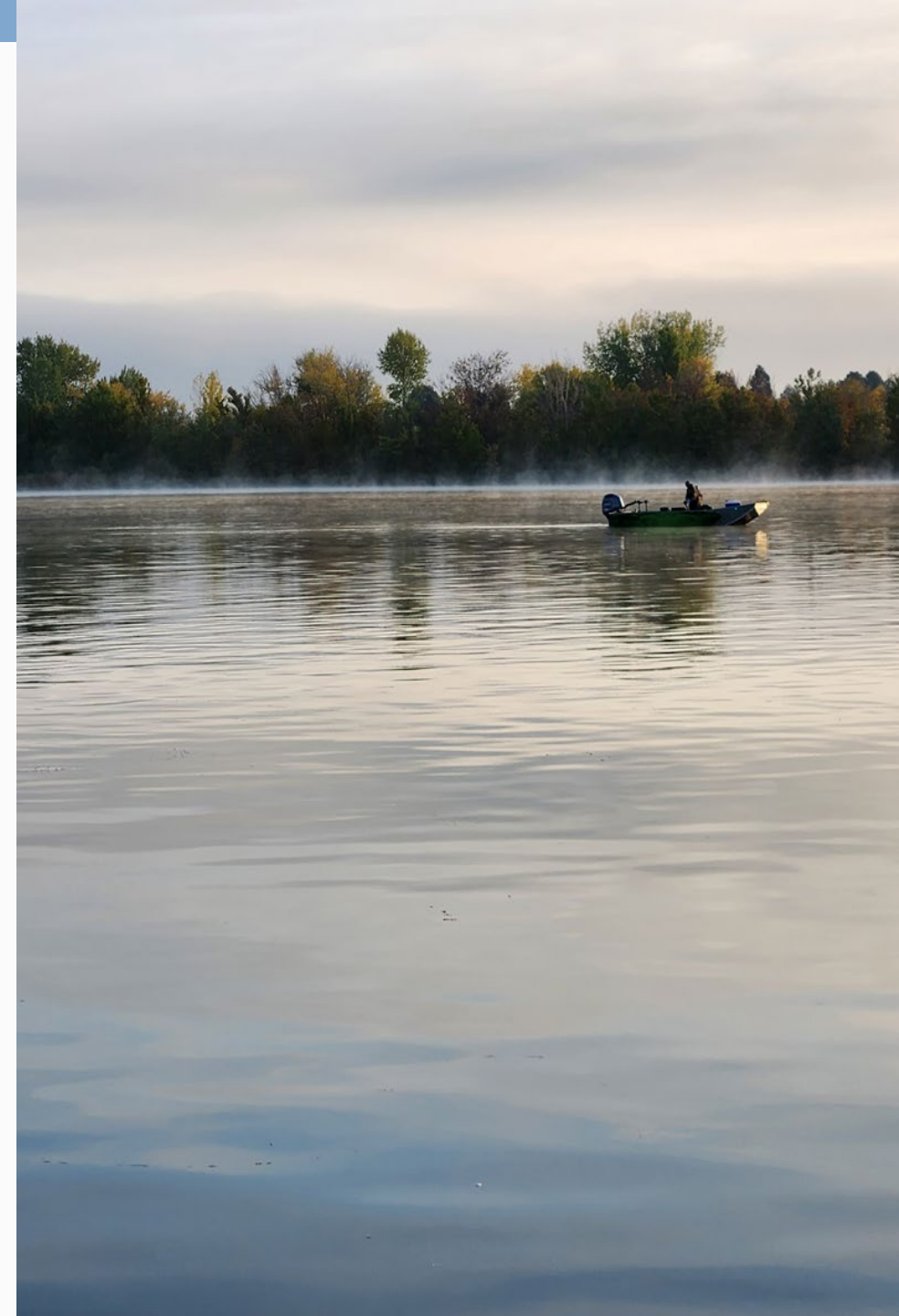
Ore Mining, Processing, Refining, Other

- Proposed fee subcategory changes reflect the complexity of these sites.
- Proposed fee increases help to recover program costs

Seafood Processing Facilities

Rebalance tiers to smooth fees across permit holders.

Seafood Processing
Less than 1,000 gpd
ADJ - 1,000 to < 7,000 gpd
NEW - 7,000 to < 15,000 gpd
ADJ - 15,000 to < 30,000 gpd
NEW - 30,000 to < 50,000 gpd
ADJ - 50,000 to < 100,000 gpd
ADJ - 100,000 to < 250,000 gpd
NEW - 250,000 to < 500,000 gpd
NEW - 500,000 to < 1,000,000 gpd
NEW - 1,000,000 gpd and greater



Sand and Gravel Updates

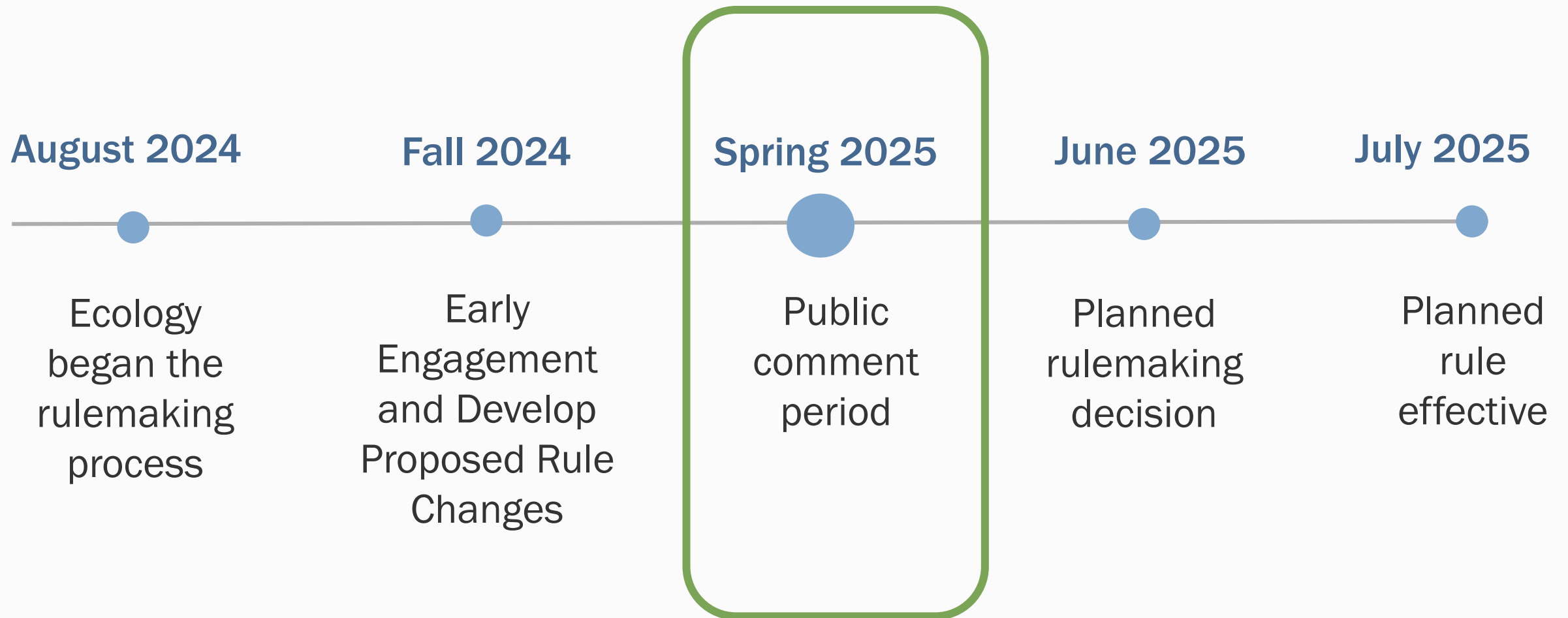
- **NEW** Reclamation Fee with no mining
- New small-scale production/recycling subcategory for Asphalt and Concrete operators
- Expanded subcategories for Asphalt and Concrete production/recycling for Portable Facility Operators
- Increase in non-operating fee

Reduced Fee Adjustments

- Minimum fee: \$150 to \$165
- Current “Inactive Rate” (75% discount on annual fee)
- Proposed “Reduced rate” (maximum of 65% discount on annual fee)



Timeline



Submitting Written Comments

Online:

Comment Form

<https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=CZeA78jQ6>

Comments due by **11:59 p.m.**
May 20, 2025

Mail To:

WA State Department of Ecology
Water Quality Fee Unit
P.O. Box 47696
Olympia, WA 98504-7696

Follow Our Rulemaking

On our webpage

<https://ecology.wa.gov/WQ-fee-rule>

On our email list

<https://ecology.wa.gov/EmailList/WQfee>

Questions?

Ligeia Heagy

ligeia.heagy@ecy.wa.gov



A few reminders



Questions and answers are not part of the formal record



We will formally respond to questions asked during the hearing



We will check in after about 30 minutes to see if we need more time for questions

Contact Matthew if you have more questions:
matthew.tietjen@ecy.wa.gov

Break

We are taking a short break.

The public hearing will resume shortly.

Please check the chat to see what time the hearing will resume.

Public Hearing

Hearings officer: Chris Fredley

If you would like to provide comment at this hearing, please use the “Raise Hand” feature to identify yourself, or press *9 from your phone

Other ways to provide your comments, due May 20, 2025:

Online: <https://wq.ecology.commentinput.com/?id=CZeA78jQ6>

By mail: Washington State Department of Ecology
Water Quality Fee Unit
PO BOX 47696
Olympia, WA 98504-7696



Thank you

Matthew Tietjen

matthew.tietjen@ecy.wa.gov

360-280-3697