

FACT SHEET

NON-FOREST LAND WATER TYPE MODIFICATIONS

1. What are non-forested lands?

In the State of Washington, non-forested lands generally include areas converted to a residential or commercial use, lands used for agricultural purposes, low-density neighborhoods, and the urban interface lacking managed forests. Non-forested lands are all lands in the State of Washington that do not meet the following definition of “forest land” ([WAC 222-16-010](#)):

Forest land means all land which is capable of supporting a merchantable stand of timber and is not being actively used for a use which is incompatible with timber growing. Forest land does not include agricultural land that is or was enrolled in the conservation reserve enhancement program by contract if such agricultural land was historically used for agricultural purposes and the landowner intends to continue to use the land for agricultural purposes in the future.

Note: The Department of Natural Resources does not regulate forest practices on non-forest lands.

2. What is the Department of Natural Resources Water Type Map?

Within its geographic information system (GIS), the Department of Natural Resources (DNR) maintains a hydrological data layer that depicts streams and other water bodies. This Hydro Layer encompasses all lands in the state, including both those meeting the above definition of forest lands and the non-forest lands that do not. When the Hydro Layer data is displayed in map format, it is referred to as the Water Type Map. The Water Type Map is used by land managers and local governments for applying the appropriate riparian protection and making land use decisions.

Water bodies depicted on the Water Type Map are classified in accordance with the definitions described in [WAC 222-16-031](#). These classifications include “Type S” (Shorelines of the State), “Type F” (fish habitat), “Type N” (non-fish), or “Type U” (unknown). Some of these waters are a “best approximation” and may not be accurately delineated in all areas. Over time, the Water Type Map is updated by DNR when field-verified data is made available.

3. How are streams in Washington classified?

The Forest Practices Rules outline the specific characteristics for determining the classification, or “water type” of a water body. Any water-typing proposal must correspond with the classifications in the Water Typing System Rule ([WAC 222-16-031](#)). Additional information to consider regarding typing waters is located in [Board Manual Section 13, Guidelines for Determining Fish Use for the Purpose of Typing Waters](#).

4. Who may request a change to the streams and water bodies on non-forest lands shown on the Water Type Map?

Local government entities (e.g., counties and cities) and property owners may propose changes to streams shown on the Water Type Map by submitting a “Non-Forest Land Water Type Modification Form.” Complete this form when you want to:

- a) Request a change to the assigned water type classification;
- b) Delete streams or water bodies that do not exist on the ground;
- c) Reclassify flowing water that does not meet the definition of typed water (un-typed streams); and/or
- d) Correct the mapped location of a stream or water body.

FACT SHEET

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5. What is the process for making changes to the Water Type Map?

Landowners seeking revisions to DNR's Water Type Map should first consult their respective local government regarding the proposed change. If further assistance is needed, they may also request a review of the proposed change by a representative of either the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) or the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology). DNR can assist with contacting the appropriate WDFW or Ecology agency representative.

DNR encourages local governments to contact their area WDFW habitat biologist or Ecology forest practices specialist to assist with water typing decisions. Local governments should also contact tribal biologists within their jurisdiction to assist with non-forest land water type reviews. Coordination with state agencies and tribes will ensure the proposed water typing changes are adequately reviewed.

DNR will not complete a requested to change streams on the Water Type Map submitted by a landowner or local government entity without receiving:

- a) A written concurrence with the requested change from either WDFW **or** Ecology, and
- b) Confirmation that the proposed change will not contradict a previously approved water type change for the same water feature (stream or water body).

DNR reserves the option to return Non-Forest Land Water Type Modification Forms without processing if the request does not provide enough information to make an informed decision.

6. What does DNR need from a local government to process a non-forested land water type change request?

Local governments submitting a non-forest land water type change request to DNR must ensure at a minimum the following information is compiled and included in its submission:

- a) A completed Non-Forest Land Water Type Modification Form¹ containing:
 1. A written description of the requested change(s).
 2. A completed Concurrence Summary page documenting review and concurrence by a representative from either WDFW **or** Ecology.
- b) A georeferenced map depicting the proposed change(s) to the existing water feature including type changes and location corrections.

The Non-Forested Land Water Type Modification Form and instructions are available at:

- Forest Practices Water Typing
- Forest Practices Forms and Instructions

The form instructions include links to Ecology and WDFW contact information.

Maps used to depict the water type change(s) may be printed using the *Forest Practices Activity Mapping Tool (FPMAT)* located on the *Forest Practices Application Review System (FPARS)* website at:

dnr.wa.gov/programs-and-services/forest-practices/forest-practices-application-review-system-fpars

¹ Note: Local governments may insert their government logo on the form.

FACT SHEET

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7. What does DNR do with the Non-Forested Land Water Type Modification Form after a landowner or local government submits it?

Upon receipt of a Non-Forested Land Water Type Modification Form and its accompanying documentation, map(s), and review concurrences, DNR will evaluate the submission and if approved, will update its GIS Hydro Layer data to reflect the requested changes.

- a) Approved updates are typically displayed on the Water Type Map approximately one month later.
- b) Disapproved requests will be returned to the submitter with information regarding what caused the disapproval.

8. How do I submit the Non-Forest Land Water Type Modification Form and documentation to DNR?

Local governments and landowners may submit completed Non-Forest Land Water Type Modification Forms and accompanying documentation to the DNR Forest Practices Data Steward via email or through the mail at the following addresses:

Email

fpars-admin@dnr.wa.gov

U.S. Mail

State of Washington
Department of Natural Resources
Forest Practices Division
ATTN: FPD Data Steward
P.O. Box 47000
Olympia, WA 98504-7000