

Twin Harbors Waterkeeper
Comments on Puget Sound Nutrients General Permit
October 21, 2019

The mission of Twin Harbors Waterkeeper is to protect water quality in Willapa Bay, Grays Harbor and the Chehalis River Basin.

In order to protect these waters, Waterkeeper believes that the Nutrients General Permit should cover all wastewater treatment plants in Washington State since dissolved oxygen from treatment plants is a problem throughout the state, not just Puget Sound.

In the Twin Harbors region, on the south and central coast of Washington, there are 10 wastewater treatment plants that discharge into the Chehalis River and Willapa Bay including Centralia, Chehalis, and Pe Ell in Lewis County; Aberdeen, Elma, Hoquiam, Montesano, Ocean Shores, and Westport in Grays Harbor County and Raymond in Pacific County. There are 33 dissolved oxygen listings and two TMDLS – one for the Upper Chehalis River and one for the Willapa River.

Twin Harbors Waterkeeper supports the development of a statewide general permit to regulate nutrient discharges. However, the statewide permit must be enforceable, have effluent limits and a compliance timeline that quickly reduces nutrients during the permit cycle.

In addition, Ecology must quantify the investment needed to upgrade wastewater treatment plants to use current technology and support before the legislature funding assistance for those wastewater treatment plants with limited tax bases to assist with upgrades.