

Carolyn Riddle

Washington's rivers, streams, and wetlands supply drinking water to residents across the state, sustain wildlife habitat, and provide an economic boost to local communities. As a Washingtonian, I want to see the state's precious freshwater resources safeguarded. Washington's waters are under increasing threat as the climate warms and the population grows, placing greater stress and demand on freshwater resources. Now is the time to protect some of the state's most outstanding waters and prevent degradation of stretches of rivers, streams, wetlands and other freshwater bodies with high water quality or other unique characteristics.

I urge Ecology to designate the Cascade, Green, and Napeequa river systems as the state's first Outstanding Resource Waters so that Washingtonians can enjoy these waters now and for generations to come. It is an eligible Wild and Scenic River, a designated gene bank for winter steelhead populations, and provides excellent spawning habitat for endangered salmon. The forests along the Green River contain some of the last remaining stands of old-growth trees in the area to survive the Mount St. Helens blast. These old-growth stands supply critical habitat for old-growth dependent species, like the northern spotted owl. Recreation opportunities along the Green River are abundant. The Green River Trail, Goat Mountain Trail, and Green River Horse Camp along this spectacular river are enjoyed by mountain bikers, hikers, horseback riders, hunters, and anglers.