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Until clear transparency has been met, we urge that Ecology pause the rulemaking process. Given that this is the first time Ecology is designating these waters, a very high standard and clear and specific information should be available to have both meaningful public participation and transparent analysis.

Currently, there is a lack of sufficient water quality data to support the designations. The benefits of this proposal are unclear since many of the waters already have protection. There will be significant economic impacts, the environmental impact on land and shoreline use is undisclosed, and the potential restriction of human activities without adequate public and legislative approval is troubling.

We urge the Department of Ecology to:

Pause the rulemaking process.

Conduct a thorough and transparent analysis of site-specific data.

Consider public input to ensure benefits outweigh costs and regain public confidence in the rule-making process.

Ecology should not rush through this process without clear transparency and public input.