

September 27, 2023

Marla Koberstein
Rulemaking Lead
Washington State Department of Ecology
PO Box 47600
Olympia, WA 98504-7600

Re: Proposed Rule Designation of the Cascade River, Green River, and Napeequa River as Tier III(A) Outstanding Resource Waters under the Clean Water Act

Dear Ms. Koberstein:

My name is Justin Allegro, Policy Director for the Nature Conservancy in Washington, and I am writing on behalf of my organization today in support of the proposed rulemaking to adopt parts of three river systems as Tier III(A) Outstanding Resource Waters (ORWs) pursuant to WAC 173-201A-330. We urge Ecology to adopt the new rule and designate the upper reaches of the Cascade River (Skagit County), Green River (Skamania County), and Napeequa River (Chelan County) as Outstanding Resource Waters.

Consistent with our organizational goals for climate resilience and community-focused conservation, the Nature Conservancy in Washington supports thoughtful efforts to conserve and protect these ecologically and culturally important waterbodies in Washington.

We support Ecology's preliminary and strategic application of ORW designations in these locations, where the protection of healthy river systems can help assure those systems and the communities relying on the services of those river systems can be resilient to changing conditions. Each of the three rivers under consideration fulfills several of the ORW criteria, any one of which would qualify them for this meaningful designation.

Thank you for the opportunity to comment.

Sincerely,

Justin Allegro
Policy Director
The Nature Conservancy in Washington