



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources

Peter Goldmark - Commissioner of Public Lands

Forest Practices Protocol Survey (Electrofishing)



Forest Practices Protocol Survey (Electrofishing) Regulatory Process

Overview

- Water Typing Rule
- Board Manual Section 13
 - Electrofishing Protocol
- Water Type Modification Form Review
- Summary



Current Rule

- **WAC 222-16-031**

(3)(b) If fish use has not been determined, physical characteristics are used. The requirements for determining fish use are described in board manual section 13. If fish use has not been determined, waters having [certain physical] characteristics are presumed to have fish use: ...



Rule, continued

(ii) The department shall waive or modify the [physical] characteristics in (i) of this subsection where:...

(C) Sufficient information about a geomorphic region is available to support a departure ... as determined in consultation with WDFW, ECY, affected tribes and interested parties.

- Waters with confirmed, long term, naturally occurring water quality parameters incapable of supporting fish (mineral content inhibiting fish use).
- Snow melt/ice melt streams that have short flow cycles and are characteristic of east side sites. These streams typically have no flow in winter months and discontinue flow by June 1st.



Board Manual Section 13

- Contains Board-approved electrofishing procedures for determining fish use.
- Electrofishing procedures are intended to be used only for:
 - Verification that DNR mapped water type breaks between Type F and N Waters are accurate;
 - Determination whether an unmapped water should be treated as a Type F or N Water; and
 - Determination that a mapped Type N Water can be changed to a Type F Water.



Board Manual Section 13

Stream features

- The electrofishing protocol is primarily for small streams, generally less than 5 feet;
- The manual states landowners who wish to survey in larger streams must consult with WDFW and affected tribes to preview survey plans;
- Surveyors should sample off-channel habitat for fish presence.

Drought conditions

- DNR, in consultation with WDFW, distributes water abundance forecasts (most recent forecast was distributed on March 10, 2014).
- Surveyors must report how drought factors, if present, affected fish distribution in the stream system.



Board Manual Section 13, continued

Blockages to fish passage

- The process used to determine absence or presence of blockages to fish passage must be documented.
- The mere presence of a natural barrier is not proof of absence (resident fish may exist upstream).
- Human-made barriers are not used for establishing end of fish habitat calls or Type F/N breaks.

Timing window for electrofishing

- March 1 – July 15.
- To address the complexities in anticipating when fish will be seasonally active, protocol surveys outside the timing window should be determined in consultation with DNR, WDFW and affected tribes.



Board Manual Section 13, continued

Scientific Collection Permits

- *Prior to conducting any surveys that may incidentally harm fish, e.g., electrofishing, WDFW regulations require that a landowner or surveyor obtain a current Scientific Collection Permit for stream surveys from WDFW.*
- *In addition, an appropriate federal permit is necessary for electrofishing in waters containing bull trout [and other ESA-listed species].*



Electrofishing Regulation

State

- The Department of Fish and Wildlife
 - Administers Scientific Collection Permits under WAC 220-20-045; and
 - Regulates harm to fish.

Federal

- The Services administer permits for take of listed species under the Endangered Species Act, Section 10(a).
- State Scientific Collection Permit applicants must obtain and attach any necessary federal take permits.
- Electrofishing methods and equipment must comply with federal electrofishing guidelines.



Water Type Modification Form (WTMF)

- Proponents describe the survey methods used as the basis for requesting a water type change.

5. *County	6. Water Type Shown on Map	7. Proposed Water Type	8. *Date of Field Assessment
9. *Forest Practices Application Number(s) (if applicable)			
10. Change is based on the following (check <u>all</u> that apply).			
Survey method:			
<input type="checkbox"/> Electronicsing Protocol Survey (attach survey report; if report addresses information in block 11-16 no need to fill in these blocks)			
<input type="checkbox"/> ID Team: (If you check this box attach ID team report)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Visual observation (If you check this box fill out block 11-16)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Random Measurements (If you check this box fill out block 11-16)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Incremental Measurements If you check this box fill out block 11-16			
<input type="checkbox"/> Fish found	List species found (if known) _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> No fish found			
<input type="checkbox"/> Physical characteristics (If you check this box fill out block 11-16)			
<input type="checkbox"/> Channel is a public water diversion	Distance from diversion _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Channel is a fish hatchery diversion	Hatchery name _____		
	Distance downstream from hatchery _____		
<input type="checkbox"/> Water feature does not meet WAC 222-16-031 definition.			
Describe: _____			
11. Water levels in the survey area were: <input type="checkbox"/> Above Normal <input type="checkbox"/> Normal <input type="checkbox"/> Below Normal			



WTMF, continued

Information fields on the form include:

- Proposed water type
- Date of field assessment
- Survey method
- Survey report if electrofishing occurred
 - * must be consistent with Board Manual Section 13
- Wetted width in survey area
- Channel characteristics
- How the water type break was determined
- Fish passage barriers downstream, natural and man-made
- Evidence of recent mass wasting or scouring events



WTMF Review

- DNR-convened water type review teams assist with DNR's decision by offering expertise and local knowledge.
- Site reviews are opportunities to field-verify information provided on the WTMF, including:
 - Stream characteristics;
 - Natural and man-made barriers; and
 - Recent mass wasting, if present.



Summary

- A variety of methods are identified for use in the board manual to determine fish use; electrofishing is one.
- Survey operators must be qualified and have a Scientific Collection Permit.
- The Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Services administer permits and regulate harm to fish.
- DNR reviews WTMFs in consultation with WDFW, Ecology, and tribes.





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