



Office of
Financial Management
STATE OF WASHINGTON

Activity Inventory Performance Measure Assessment

Department of Ecology Water Quality Program

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Office of Financial Management Assessor:

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Based on a review of the following: The agency strategic plan, the budget activity inventory, internal performance measure reports, and an interview with the agency contacts

Current Strengths and Good Practices

- The department had enough data on hand to allow for some basic statistical analysis of the measurements.
- All the budget activities are linked to at least one performance measure.
- Most of the measures reported to OFM are also regularly reviewed internally by the department.
- Department staff seemed open and eager to the idea of replacing and/or improving most of their measures.

Activity Measure Comments and Potential Improvements

- Most of the measurement perspectives focus on agency desired perspectives. Additional measures that account for customer/stakeholder perspectives should be developed to balance the information received and reported.
- A number of measures have accomplished their purpose and should be replaced with other results-oriented measures:
 - Western Washington storm water permit completion rates (slide 8)
 - Eastern Washington storm water permit completion rates (slide 9)
 - Percent of grant and loan applications with quantifiable benefits (slide 13)
- If the department continues to find value in counting the number of water cleanup plans submitted to the EPA (slide 14), the data should not be cumulated to improve manageability, understandability and comparability.
- The fecal coliform loading/concentration story would benefit from dropping one of the measures and replacing it with a measure relating to the consequences of the pollution like beach closures or damaged shellfish beds.
- Most of the measures would benefit from a Plain Talk review to make them more understandable to readers outside the department. Much of the technical information in the titles could be moved to the notes sections in the Performance Measure Tracking System (PMT).

Analysis of Current Activity Measure Data

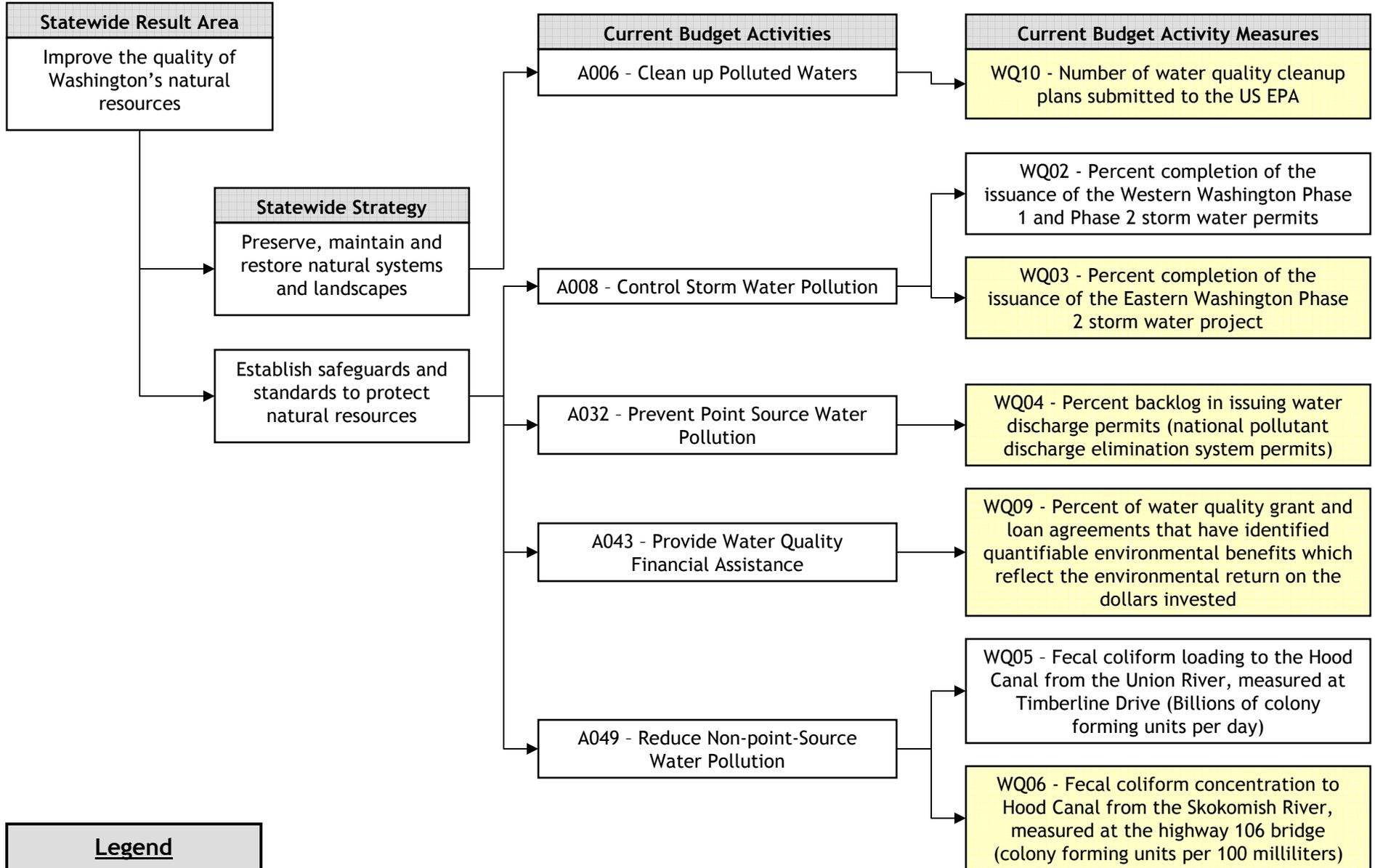
- The water discharge permit backlog measure (slide 10) displays very stable and predictable variation patterns. Future results should be very similar to current performance (+/-15%), unless some significant change is introduced into the process. The process does not appear to be currently capable of attaining the federal standard of a less than a 10% backlog.
- While not a statistically significant trend, the fecal coliform loading to Hood Canal (slide 11) seems to be creeping up over time. In the past, levels have stayed mostly below the targeted levels.

Agency Comments and Future Actions

Ecology agrees with the activity measure comments and plans to:

- Add a measure stakeholders are interested in: the number of failing septic systems repaired or replaced in Puget Sound.
- Replace measures that have accomplished their purpose.
- Provide quarterly data rather than cumulative data for water cleanup plans (now called water quality improvement reports).
- Drop the Skokomish River fecal coliform measure, and if possible reference the Dept. of Health's Cabinet Strategic Action Plan measure 4.1 on net gain in open shellfish harvesting acres.
- Plain-talk the OFM performance measures.
- Ecology also plans to add inspection and compliance measures for stormwater, and toxics-related data for point source discharges.

Budget Activity & Performance Measure Linkages

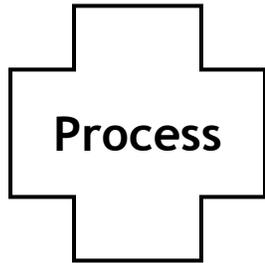


Legend

Also Current Strategic Plan Measure

Budget Activity Measure Perspectives

⑤ Process characteristics the customers/stakeholders want



⑥ Process characteristics the agency wants

WQ02 - Percent completion of the issuance of the Western Washington Phase 1 and Phase 2 storm water permits

⑥

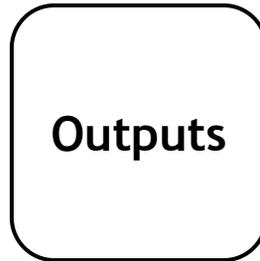
WQ03 - Percent completion of the issuance of the Eastern Washington Phase 2 storm water project

⑥

WQ09 - Percent of water quality grant and loan agreements that have identified quantifiable environmental benefits which reflect the environmental return on the dollars invested

⑥

③ Product/service attributes customers/stakeholders want



④ Product/service attributes the agency wants

WQ10 - Number of water quality cleanup plans submitted to the US EPA

④

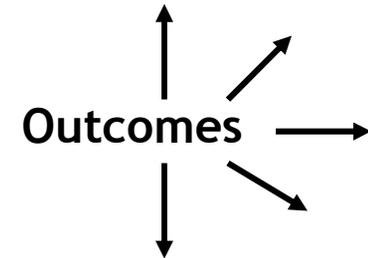
Inputs

WQ04 - Percent backlog in issuing water discharge permits (national pollutant discharge elimination system permits)

Legend

Strategic Plan and Budget Activity Measure

① Customer/stakeholder desired outcomes



② Agency desired outcomes

WQ05 - Fecal coliform loading to the Hood Canal from the Union River, measured at Timberline Drive (Billions of colony forming units per day)

②

WQ06 - Fecal coliform concentration to Hood Canal from the Skokomish River, measured at the highway 106 bridge (colony forming units per 100 milliliters)

②

Activity Measure Assessment - Western Washington Storm Water Permits

Performance Measure Description: Tracked the progress of a complex storm water permit and instruction development process

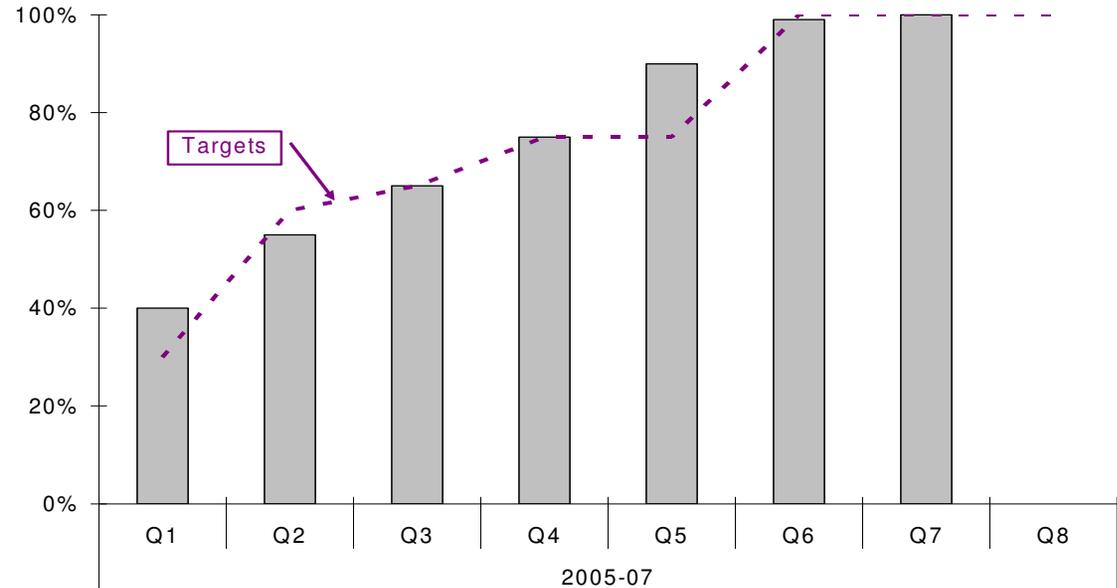
Budget Activity Links: A008 - Control storm water pollution

Category of Measure: Completion rates are process-level measures

Analysis of Variation: The cumulative nature of this measure masks the variation, and future performance predictions are not necessary since the project is finished.

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The completion targets were achieved on-time.

WQ02 - Percent Completion of the Issuance of the Western Washington Phase 1 and Phase 2 Stormwater Permits



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: A new measure related to permit compliance or the reduction in runoff contamination to ground water, streams, etc. should be developed to replace this measure.

Understandability: The reference to phases probably doesn't mean much outside the department.

Comparability: This was only comparable to the Eastern Washington permit process from the next slide.

Timeliness: Data for the most recent quarter was not available at the time of this assessment.

Reliability: Project management completion rates depend greatly on whether start and end times are fixed or flexible over time.

Cost Effectiveness: How much could the department have affected the completion rate if this project had fallen behind schedule?

General Comments & Explanations:

Activity Measure Assessment - Eastern Washington Storm Water Permit

Performance Measure Description: Tracked the progress of a complex storm water permit and instruction development process

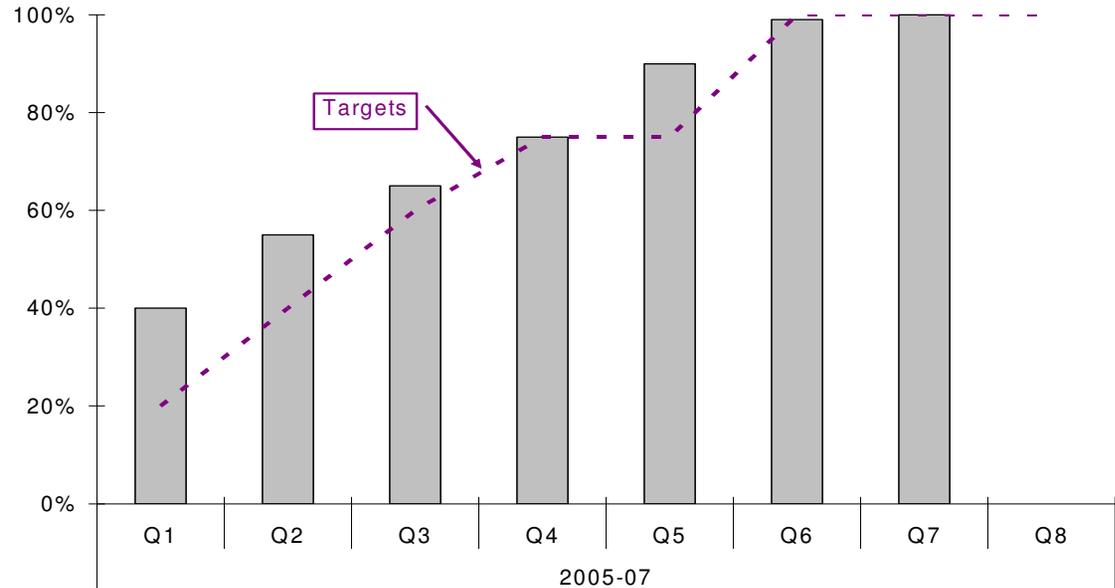
Budget Activity Links: A008 - Control storm water pollution

Category of Measure: Completion rates are process-level measures

Analysis of Variation: The cumulative nature of this measure masks the variation, and future performance predictions are not necessary since the project is finished.

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The completion targets were achieved on-time.

WQ03 - Percent Completion of the Issuance of the Eastern Washington Phase 2 Stormwater Permit



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: A new measure related to permit compliance or the reduction in runoff contamination to ground water, streams, etc. should be developed to replace this measure.

Understandability: The reference to phases probably doesn't mean much outside the department.

Comparability: This was only comparable to the Western Washington permit process from the previous slide.

Timeliness: Data for the most recent quarter was not available at the time of this assessment.

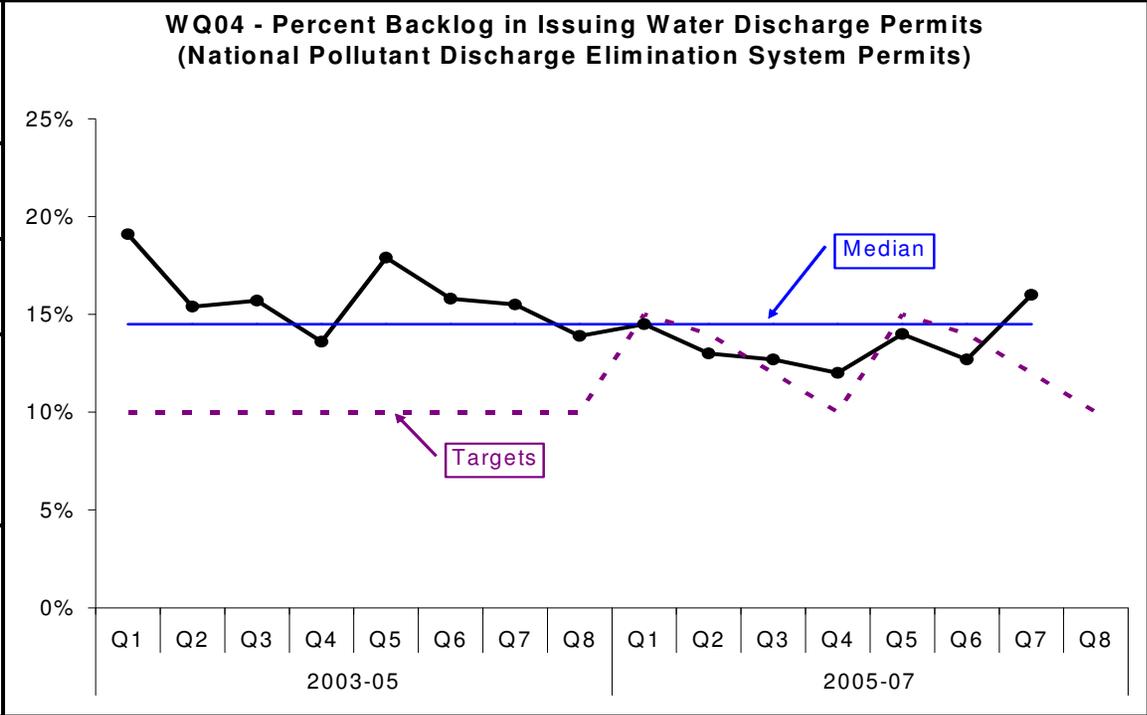
Reliability: Project management completion rates depend greatly on whether start and end times are fixed or flexible over time.

Cost Effectiveness: How much could the department have affected the completion rate if this project had fallen behind schedule?

General Comments & Explanations:

Activity Measure Assessment - Water Discharge Permit Backlog

Performance Measure Description: Permit applicants are supposed to receive a response from the agency within 60 days
Budget Activity Links: A032 - Prevent point source water pollution
Category of Measure: Backlog is an input measure of an undesirable characteristic
Analysis of Variation: The data appear to be stable and predictable over time. Barring some major systematic change, future results should be similar to those seen here.
Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: The federal target is to keep the backlog below 10%. The process is not currently capable of achieving that standard.



Comments About Desirable Characteristics	
Relevance: Very relevant from a resource/process management perspective. Not very relevant to a results-oriented audience at the budget/policy development level.*	Timeliness: Data for the most recent quarter was not available at the time of this assessment.
Understandability: Measures of percentages tend to mask the volume and magnitude of the issue (15% of 25 or 2,500? - and how late are they?).	Reliability: As long as the definition of late is clear, reliability should be high since the department manages and controls this process itself.
Comparability: Unknown	Cost Effectiveness: This measure was also reported regularly as a part of internal performance management reviews of progress on strategic planning initiatives.

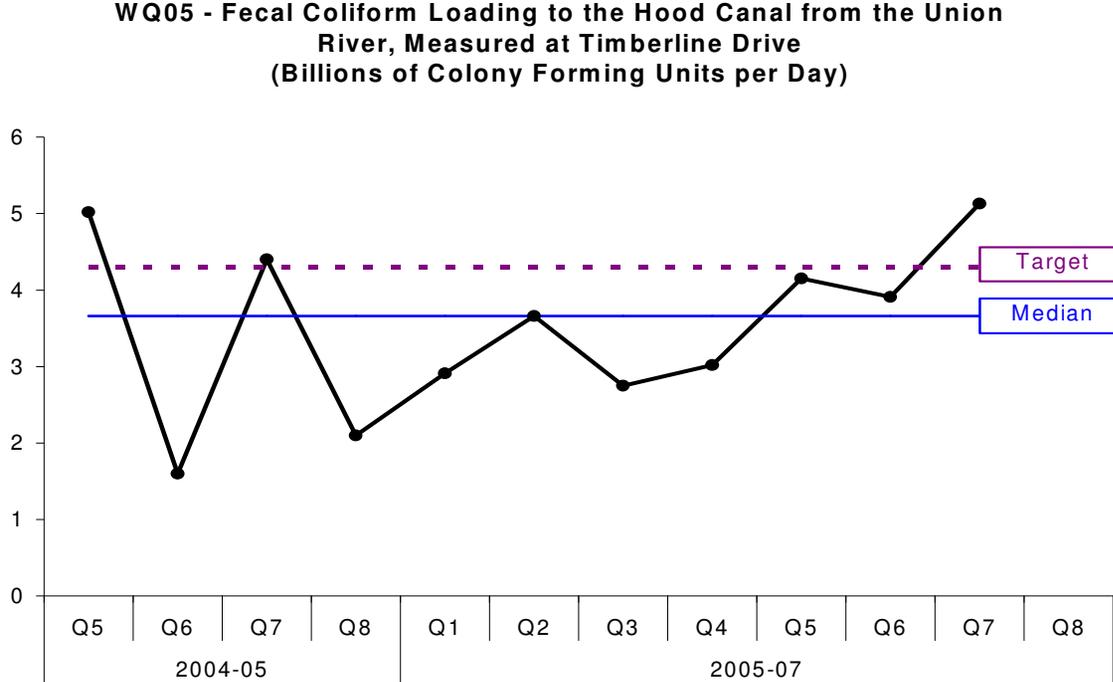
General Comments & Explanations:

* Other more meaningful measurement perspectives related to the permit process might include:

- How long does it take to get a response?
- How many repeat violators are there?

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Activity Measure Assessment - Hood Canal/Union River Fecal Coliform Loads

<p>Performance Measure Description: A measure of run-off pollution to the Hood Canal and Puget Sound.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WQ05 - Fecal Coliform Loading to the Hood Canal from the Union River, Measured at Timberline Drive (Billions of Colony Forming Units per Day)</p> 
<p>Budget Activity Links: A049 - Reduce non-point-source water pollution</p>	
<p>Category of Measure: Outcome</p>	
<p>Analysis of Variation: The data appear to be stable and predictable over time. Barring some major systematic change, future results should be similar to those seen here.</p>	
<p>Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: Most of the time the loading is below the undesirable target threshold, but actual data in 2005-07 appear to be drifting upwards.</p>	

Comments About Desirable Characteristics		General Comments & Explanations:
<p>Relevance: Good, for this specific location, but it is a stretch to assume that it is representative of statewide performance.</p>	<p>Timeliness: Data for the most recent quarter was not available at the time of this assessment.</p>	
<p>Understandability: The title would be more understandable if the specific testing location information was moved to the published notes section in PMT.</p>	<p>Reliability: Comes from test equipment owned and monitored by the department.</p>	
<p>Comparability: Unknown</p>	<p>Cost Effectiveness: This measure does not appear in the agency strategic plan, and seems duplicative when coupled with the measure on the next slide.</p>	

Activity Measure Assessment - Hood Canal Fecal Coliform Concentration

Performance Measure Description: A measure of run-off pollution to the Hood Canal and Puget Sound.

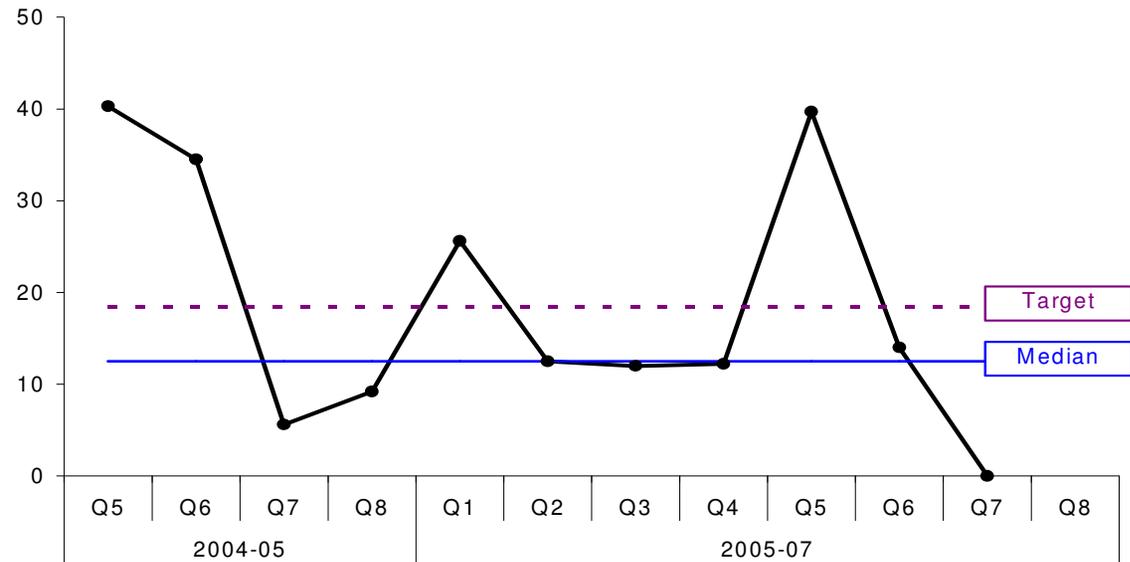
Budget Activity Links: A049 - Reduce non-point-source water pollution

Category of Measure: Outcome

Analysis of Variation: There is a seasonal cycle corresponding to the warmest months of the year.*

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: In general, the process is capable of staying below the target in the colder months, but exceeds the ideal levels during warmer months.**

WQ06 - Fecal Coliform Concentration to Hood Canal from the Skokomish River, Measured at Highway 106 Bridge (Colony Forming Units per 100 Milliliters)



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: Good, for this specific location, but it is a stretch to assume that it is representative of statewide performance.

Understandability: The title would be more understandable if the specific testing location information was moved to the published notes section in PMT.

Comparability: Unknown

Timeliness: The most recent data were not available at the time of this assessment.**

Reliability: Comes from test equipment owned and monitored by the department.

Cost Effectiveness: This measure was also reported regularly as a part of internal performance management reviews of progress on strategic planning initiatives.

General Comments & Explanations:

* Reduced water flow and increased bacterial activity in warm weather naturally increase the concentration levels.

**The 7th quarter data point = 0 because the agency is no longer monitoring data at this location.

Activity Measure Assessment - Quantifiable Grant & Loan Agreements

<p>Performance Measure Description: This measurement is in response to a JLARC audit.</p>	<p style="text-align: center;">WQ09 - Percent of Water Quality Grant and Loan Agreements that Have Identified Quantifiable Environmental Benefits Which Reflect the Environmental Return on the Dollars Invested</p> <p>The chart displays performance data for quarters Q1 through Q7, with a target line at 100% for Q8. All bars for Q1-Q7 reach the 100% mark.</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th>Quarter</th> <th>Performance (%)</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr><td>Q1</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q2</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q3</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q4</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q5</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q6</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q7</td><td>100</td></tr> <tr><td>Q8</td><td>Target (100)</td></tr> </tbody> </table>	Quarter	Performance (%)	Q1	100	Q2	100	Q3	100	Q4	100	Q5	100	Q6	100	Q7	100	Q8	Target (100)
Quarter		Performance (%)																	
Q1		100																	
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Q3		100																	
Q4	100																		
Q5	100																		
Q6	100																		
Q7	100																		
Q8	Target (100)																		
<p>Budget Activity Links: A043 - Provide water quality financial assistance</p>																			
<p>Category of Measure: Counting attributes is a process-level measure.</p>																			
<p>Analysis of Variation: There is no variation to analyze.</p>																			
<p>Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: Actual and targeted performance are the same; 100%.</p>																			

Comments About Desirable Characteristics		General Comments & Explanations:
<p>Relevance: A more relevant measure would pertain to those quantifiable environmental benefits that 100% of the grants/loans now contain.</p>	<p>Timeliness: Data for the most recently completed quarter of the biennium was not available at the time of this assessment.</p>	
<p>Understandability: Good</p>	<p>Reliability: Good</p>	
<p>Comparability: This measure is not comparable.</p>	<p>Cost Effectiveness: This measure is also regularly reviewed during internal strategic planning performance reviews.</p>	

Activity Measure Assessment - Water Cleanup Plans Submitted

Performance Measure Description: Plans developed with local governments to bring bodies of water that do not meet standards back into compliance.

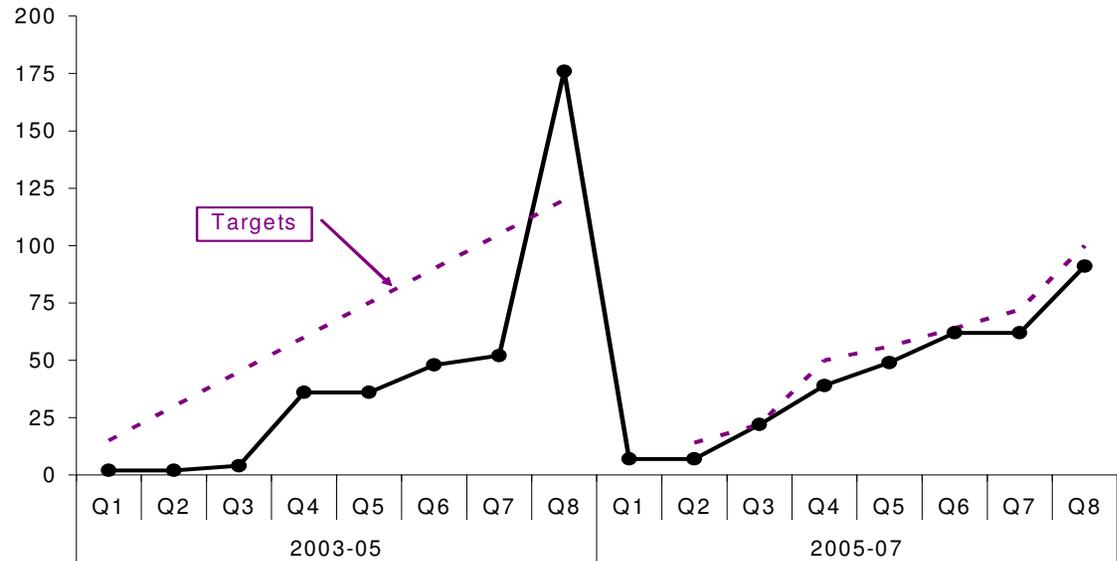
Budget Activity Links: A006 - Clean up polluted waters

Category of Measure: Output

Analysis of Variation: The cumulative nature of these data make analysis difficult because it masks the actual point-to-point variation.

Analysis of Targeted vs. Actual Performance: 8th quarter performance in 2003-05 exceeded the target. In 2005-07, the actual performance has mirrored the targets without exceeding them.

WQ10 - Number of Water Quality Cleanup Plans Submitted to the US Environmental Protection Agency (Cumulative)



Comments About Desirable Characteristics

Relevance: The number of plans that turned into completed projects, how long it takes to submit a plan, or the benefits from those completed projects would be more relevant measurement subjects.

Understandability: Would be greatly improved if the data were displayed without being added accumulated over time and then reset to 0 every biennium.

Comparability: Unknown

Timeliness: Data from the last completed quarter were available at the time of this assessment.

Reliability: Good

Cost Effectiveness: Collecting the data should be relatively simple, but this

General Comments & Explanations: