

Southwest Region Section Manager (WMS Band 2)



Salary

\$104,409.00 - \$130,320.00 Annually

Location

Thurston County – Lacey, WA

Job Type

Full Time - Permanent

Remote Employment

Flexible/Hybrid

Job Number

2025-WR0602-07862

Department

Dept. of Ecology

Division

Water Resources

Opening Date

12/01/2025

Closing Date

Continuous

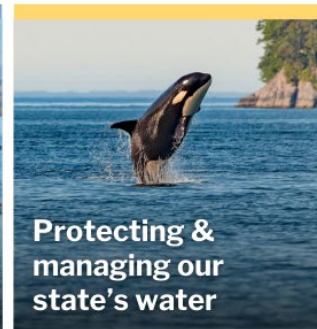
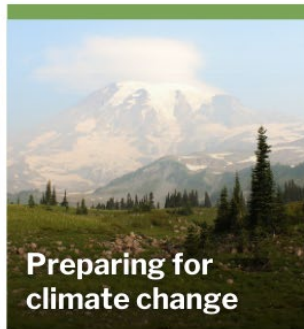
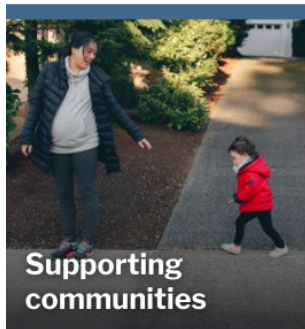
Salary Information

The high end of the salary range, Step M is typically a longevity step

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Description



DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY
State of Washington

Keeping Washington Clean and Evergreen

The Department of Ecology is hiring a **Southwest Region Section Manager (WMS Band 2)** within the [Water Resources Program](#).

Location:

- Southwest Region Office (SWRO) in [Lacey, WA](#).
- Upon hire, you must live within a commutable distance from the duty station.

Schedule:

- This position is eligible for telework and certain flexible schedule options.
- A minimum of two days per week is required in the office.
- Schedules are dependent upon position needs and are subject to change.

Application Timeline:

- **Apply by December 14, 2025**
- This position will remain open until filled. The agency reserves the right to make a hire at any time after application review begins. Applications received after the date above may not be considered.



Ecology is committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect

Duties

As the Section Manager for Water Resources, you will lead regional water management efforts across 12 counties in Southwest Washington, encompassing the Southern Puget Sound, Pacific Coast, and Olympic Peninsula. You will serve as a key decision-maker in a region where many watersheds are governed by instream flow rules and limited new water allocations. You will interpret complex laws and policies to make defensible decisions that safeguard community well-being, support economic stability, and protect vital natural resources.

You will oversee a diverse team of 12 professionals—including permit writers, hydrogeologists, compliance and enforcement staff, and administrative support—to ensure that water allocation, regulation, conservation, and protection activities align with state laws, policies, and the Water Resources Program mission. Success in this role

requires building strong relationships with municipalities, tribal governments, farmers, landowners, and other water users and partners.

You will be based at the Southwest Region Office in Lacey. This position can be fully in-office or have a hybrid telework arrangement, with regular in-office presence and occasional travel for fieldwork and coordination with Ecology staff and partners.

What you will do:

- Lead and manage a dynamic team of professional staff, overseeing regional work planning, performance management, resource allocation, and the quality and consistency of technical and regulatory decisions.
- Support Ecology's mission by working closely with communities, partners, and other interested parties to ensure effective management of water resources throughout the Southwest Region.
- Regulate, allocate, and protect regional water resources consistent with state laws, rules, policies, and procedures, ensuring decisions maximize net public benefit.
- Serve as a key regional decision-maker on water rights that affect small landowners, agricultural users, major municipal systems, and other water users.
- Represent Ecology's water resource interests with local governments, state and federal agencies, tribes, industry, and the public, including participation in administrative appeals and State and Federal Court proceedings.
- Act as one of four regional Water Resources Section Managers statewide, serving on the Water Resources Program Leadership Team and the Regional Management Team to support program-wide strategy, coordination, and policy implementation.

Qualifications

For detailed information on how we calculate experience, please visit our [Recruitment website](#).

Required Qualifications:

Nine years of experience and/or education as described below:

- **Experience** working in public administration or natural resources management, which must include at least five years of experience leading people.

Experience must include:

- **Proven Leadership Experience** – Five years of demonstrated experience planning, directing, and evaluating the work of professional staff, including mentoring and performance management, to achieve organizational goals.
 - **Knowledge of Natural Resource Regulatory Frameworks** – Understanding of natural resources management and environmental regulation, with experience making complex permitting and compliance decisions.
 - **Advanced Decision-Making and Policy Judgment** – Ability to make sound, precedent-setting decisions balancing technical, legal, and public interests in high-impact, politically sensitive situations.
 - **Communication and Collaboration** – Skilled in communicating complex information clearly to diverse audiences and fostering effective partnerships with leadership, stakeholders, and external agencies.
- **Education** involving a major study in public administration, public policy, business administration, environmental management, natural sciences, natural resources, environmental sciences, physical sciences, engineering, planning, or other related field.

Examples of how to qualify:

- 9 years of experience.
- 8 years of experience AND 30-59 semester or 45-89 quarter college credits.
- 7 years of experience AND 60-89 semester or 90-134 quarter college credits (Associate's degree).

- 6 years of experience AND 90-119 semester or 135-179 quarter college credits.
- 5 years of experience AND a Bachelor's degree or above.

Desired Qualifications:

- Knowledge and understanding of state water resources laws and issues.

If you are excited about this role but not sure if your experience aligns perfectly with every qualification in the job description, **we encourage you to apply**. Studies have shown that women and people of color are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification. At the Department of Ecology, we are dedicated to building a diverse and authentic workplace centered in belonging. You may just be the needed candidate for this or other roles.

Supplemental Information

Ecology does not use the **E-Verify** system; therefore, we are not eligible to extend STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT). For more information, please visit www.uscis.gov.

Application Process

Ecology seeks diverse applicants: We view diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect through a broad lens including race, ethnicity, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, military background, language, education, life experience, physical disability, neurodiversity, and intersectional identities. Qualified job seekers from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

How to Apply

Click "Apply" at the top of this page. Complete the entire application, including full work history and responses to all supplemental questions, and attach:

- Cover letter, describing your interest in and qualifications for this position

- Resume

Because we base our selection on the information you provide, it is in your best interest to complete the application thoroughly. A resume will not substitute for the “work experience” section of the application or vice versa. Applications with blank fields or supplemental question responses with comments such as “see resume” may be considered incomplete.

For detailed application information, please visit our [Recruitment website](#).

Application Attestation: By submitting an application, you are affirming that the information contained in your application and on all attachments is complete and truthful. The state may verify this information, and any false or misleading answers may result in rejection of your application or dismissal if employed.

Need an Accommodation?

If you need reasonable accommodation during the application and/or screening process, including this job announcement in an alternate format:

- Please contact us at 360-407-6186 or careers@ecy.wa.gov
- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call through the Washington Relay Service by dialing 711 or 1-800-833-6384.

Questions?

- For specific questions about the position location options, schedule, or duties, please contact **Ria Berns** at Ria.Berns@ecy.wa.gov
- If you need assistance applying for this job, are inquiring about the status of your application, would like to request the full position description, or have any other questions, please contact the Recruitment Team at careers@ecy.wa.gov

About the Water Resources Program

The mission of the Water Resources Program is to manage water resources to benefit all Washingtonians and to protect the natural environment for current and future generations.

Our values are: Public service, innovation, teamwork, equity, and excellence.

Read about our Strategic Plan here [WRP Strategic Plan](#)

About the Department of Ecology

As the State of Washington's environmental protection agency, we are deeply committed to protecting, preserving, and enhancing Washington's environment for current and future generations. Joining Ecology means becoming part of a team dedicated to protecting and sustaining healthy land, air, water, and climate in harmony with a strong economy. A career in public service at Ecology allows you to help solve some of the most challenging problems facing our state, while keeping your health and financial security a priority. We combine one of the most competitive benefits packages in the nation with a strong commitment to life/work balance. We invest in our employees to create and sustain a working environment that encourages creative leadership, effective resource management, teamwork, professionalism, and accountability.

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect (DEIR) are core values central to Ecology's work. We strive to be a workplace where we are esteemed for sharing our authentic identities, while advancing our individual professional goals and collaborating to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment for current and future generations.

We believe that DEIR is both a goal and an action. We are on a journey, honoring our shared humanity and taking steps to demonstrate our commitment to a vision where each of us is heard, seen, and valued.

Ecology employees may be eligible for the following: [Medical/Dental/Vision for employee & dependent\(s\)](#), [Public Employees Retirement System \(PERS\)](#), [Vacation, Sick, and other Leave](#), [11 Paid Holidays per year](#), [Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#), [Tuition Waiver](#), [Long Term Disability & Life Insurance](#), [Deferred Compensation Programs](#), [Dependent Care Assistance Program \(DCAP\)](#), [Flexible Spending Arrangement \(FSA\)](#), [Employee Assistance Program](#), [Commute Trip Reduction Incentives](#), [Combined Fund Drive](#), [SmartHealth](#) ***Click here for more information**

To learn more about Ecology, please visit our [website](#), explore [Working at Ecology](#), check out our [Strategic Plan](#), and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), or our [blog](#).

Equal Opportunity Employer: The Washington State Department of Ecology is an equal opportunity employer. We strive to create a working environment that includes and respects cultural, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender identity diversity. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, persons of disability, persons over 40 years of age, veterans, military spouses or people with military status, and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities are encouraged to apply.

Note: This recruitment may be used to fill other positions of the same job classification across the agency.