

**WAC 173-500-060 General provisions.** (1) The provisions of this chapter shall apply to chapters 173-501 through 173-599 WAC unless the language of said chapters is clearly to the contrary.

(2) As sufficient data are obtained for each WRIA and/or grouping thereof in the state to enable the department to formulate a water resource planning and management program for such area, the department shall by regulation establish policies for the beneficial use of public waters pursuant to RCW 90.54.040.

(3) Water rights established prior to the effective date of rules adopted under chapters 173-500 and 173-501 through 173-599 WAC shall not be affected by such rules.

(4) **Low flow limitations to prevail** (1) Notwithstanding the establishment of base flows established hereunder, existing low flow limitations shall remain in effect.

(5) **Base flow provisions for water rights.**

(a) Surface water and/or groundwater appropriation permits, issued subsequent to the effective dates of chapters 173-501 through 173-599 WAC, that will allow either direct diversion from or have a measurable effect on streams where base flow limitations of this chapter, and any such permits or certificates shall be appropriately conditioned to assure maintenance of said base flows.

(b) The base flow provisions for any water right located in a stream management unit shall specifically describe the base flow levels for the control station in that unit and shall refer generally to other downstream base flow requirements that may also become controlling and critical to the use of water under such right.

(6) **Base flow changes.** If it becomes necessary to change a control station location or to add new control stations to improve management capability, the department shall develop streamflow relationships, by accepted engineering procedures, between previously established control station locations and the new location for use in regulating water rights that are subject to base flow limitations.

(7) **Minimum water flows and levels.** The provisions of this chapter shall in no manner be interpreted to preclude utilization of chapter 90.22 RCW.

(8) **Priorities or allocation by use categories - limitations.** Nothing in chapters 173-501 through 173-599 WAC relating to priorities or allocations by use shall be construed to apply to water rights or the historic water use patterns that predate the individual management regulations.

[Order DE 75-23, § 173-500-060, filed 1/6/76.]