Floodplain Management

Program	Floodplain Management
Agency	Implemented by local governments; the Department of Ecology provides technical assistance
Year Established	1935
Relevant Statute	86.16 RCW; Chapter 173-158 WAC
Program Goal	To reduce losses to life and property and protect the environmental functions of floodplains.
Agency Summary	The Department of Ecology provides technical assistance to local governments for implementing the National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP) which is part of the Federal Emergency Management Agency (FEMA). Ecology's responsibilities are to: • Establish minimum state requirements for flood plain management equal to the NFIP minimum standards; • Provide technical assistance to local governments related to administration of their flood plain management ordinances and the NFIP; • Provide assistance to local governments in identifying the location of the flood plain; • Issue regulatory orders. Local jurisdictions are responsible for managing and permitting development in areas designated as special flood hazard areas on the most recent FEMA maps provided for the NFIP. Floodplain management consists of community programs that include corrective and preventive measures designed to reduce flood damage and flood hazard mitigation planning. Ecology awards grant through the Floodplains by Design program, which integrates flood risk reduction with habitat protection and restoration. This combines efforts to protect development from flood damage with efforts to restore floodplain habitat for salmon recovery.
Existing Outcome Measures	Ecology conducts Community Assistance Visits (CAVs) to local governments to review local compliance with regulations. FEMA uses a Community Rating System that results in lower flood insurance rates to encourage local governments to set higher standards than required by the state/federal standards. The Floodplains by Design Science website reports outcomes for some projects. Some local governments may collect data and conduct evaluation studies.
Other benefits identified by agencies	**Community**: recreation opportunities, community resources **Economy**: job creation **Environment**: habitat restoration, floodplain connectivity