

2018 ACWA Priorities

ACWA works on many initiatives throughout the year. The priorities, actions and targets below represent ACWA’s highest priority projects and ongoing activities for 2018. These priorities will drive ACWA’s budget and work plan in 2018. Some of the activities will have longer term time frames. The priorities are categorized into general focus areas for ACWA committees and the Board in general. (Please note that a key to acronyms is provided at the end of the table.) The ACWA Board adopted its priorities for 2018 on December 20, 2017.

FOCUS AREA 1: ADVOCACY AND SUPPORT FOR DEVELOPMENT OF IMPLEMENTABLE NPDES AND WPCF (WASTEWATER AND STORMWATER) PERMITS AND COMPLIANCE TOOLS THAT WILL ACHIEVE MEANINGFUL WATER QUALITY RESULTS THROUGH “ONE WATER” STRATEGIES				
<p>Many water quality standards (such as numeric temperature limits, human health criteria, and ammonia limits) and other permit requirements pose significant challenges for wastewater and stormwater service providers. These agencies have limited resources and need to focus on effective solutions to water quality problems. ACWA supports comprehensive strategies that improve watershed health while achieving appropriate water quality goals. ACWA emphasizes multi-pollutant reduction approaches, such as water quality trading, natural treatment systems, green stormwater treatment, recycled water applications, innovative discharge options, TMDL implementation plans, variances, site-specific criteria, and compliance schedules. ACWA also emphasizes toxics reduction through pollution prevention to achieve environmental objectives related to biosolids quality, water quality standards compliance, and effective stormwater quality management.</p>				
HIGHEST PRIORITIES	AREAS OF EMPHASIS	ONGOING ACTIONS	2018 TARGETS	LONG TERM TARGETS
Achieve Effective and Achievable Water Quality Standards	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Maintaining communication, collaboration and pro-active problem solving with DEQ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA convenes regular ACWA/DEQ “permit strategies” meetings. ACWA leadership: maintains constructive dialogue with DEQ managers. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Convene 3-4 ACWA/ DEQ Permit Strategies Group meetings to address key issues of concern to DEQ and ACWA members. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Develop ACWA/DEQ work groups to tackle specific issues collaboratively.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Providing input on the DEQ triennial review priorities (2018-2020). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA representatives: participate in DEQ-established workgroups. ACWA submits formal comments as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing activity. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Track DEQ progress and results.
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Monitoring implementation of the copper standard to ensure requirements are cost-effective and results oriented. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA WQC: maintains dialogue with permittees and DEQ. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Ongoing activity. 	
	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Tracking and evaluation of changes to the aluminum standard. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA WQC: tracks state and federal actions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA WQC: review the federal standard and develop comments for submittal to the EPA as appropriate. 	

<p>Participate in DEQ's Integrated Report and 303(d) List Development</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • DEQ's update to the Integrated Report is due to the EPA in 2018. This report will have statewide implications and lead to potential additions to the 303(d) list. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA representatives: provide input to the DEQ Integrated Report development, including the methodology and interim products/reports; provide outreach to public interest partners such as LOC and SDAO 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA representatives: participate in the DEQ Integrated Report technical advisory group. → ACWA leadership: submit formal comments on the DEQ Integrated Report. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Track EPA review and impacts to Oregon's 303(d) list.
<p>Participate in DEQ Development of Total Maximum Daily Loads (TMDLs)</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Monitoring and providing input on TMDL redevelopment to address court decrees, and new development of new TMDLs for new additions to the 303(d) List. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA WQC: monitors TMDL development and communicates with other ACWA committees and the Board. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA representatives: participate in the DEQ Willamette Mercury TMDL advisory committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ongoing tracking, participating in and commenting on TMDLs.
<p>Identify Permit Issuance and Compliance Issues for Wastewater, Pretreatment, Stormwater, Biosolids, Recycled Water, and Ground Water Managers; Share Information and Develop Compliance Strategies.</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of short- and long-term NPDES permitting and compliance strategies that are implementable and achieve meaningful water quality improvements. • Development of long-term toxics compliance strategies, likely in concert with wastewater treatment system managers in neighboring states. • Model MMPs sizable to small-, medium-, and large-size communities. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA Permit Strategies Group: works with DEQ to develop variance processes and compliance tools. • ACWA WRA Group: works with partners to develop temperature compliance strategies with meaningful environmental benefits, and with transferability to other river basins. • ACWA leadership: advocates for water quality trading opportunities. • ACWA MMP Work Group and PC: works with DEQ on MMP requirements and implementation. • ACWA leadership: provides support for members in implementing mandatory electronic reporting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA representatives: work with DEQ to get EPA Region 10 approval of the variance process. → ACWA MMP Work Group: develop a model MMP for ACWA members, and provide technical assistance through the WQ and PT Committee. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Ongoing collaboration with DEQ and others to identify other pollutants, e.g., phthalates for which variance tools may be appropriate. → Complete DEHP chemical profile coordinated with a DEQ variance approach. → Track MMP submittals and approvals/required revisions and comment as appropriate. → ACWA WRA Group: pursue a temperature variance and meaningful compliance tools, such as cold water refugia restoration credits.

<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Litigation of Oregon’s temperature criteria and TMDLs and implications for future temperature limits in wastewater permits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA Permit Strategies Group, LC and WQC: track temperature litigation and work with DEQ to support issuance temperature-limited permits that are implementable. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA WQC: complete and post the updated ACWA Temperature Compliance Guidance Manual. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA will continue to work with DEQ to ensure compliance tools are accessible to temperature-limited dischargers.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining an effective voice, and supporting development of science-based, technically defensible, and feasible policies that establish guidance for wastewater permits (including Biosolids and Recycled Water management plans). 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA representatives: participate in DEQ stakeholder engagement processes in collaboration with LOC and SDAO partners. • ACWA leadership: seek opportunities to engage directly with EPA Region 10 staff on permitting issues. • ACWA B&RWC: engages with DEQ to identify and troubleshoot technical and policy issues related to biosolids and recycled water programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Establish ACWA representation and reporting for DEQ stakeholder input processes that replace the Blue Ribbon Committee. → B&RWC: engage with DEQ to review and discuss revisions to the Biosolids IMD. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Engage with DEQ to review and update the Recycled Water IMD.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Staying abreast of issues of significant concern to wastewater, stormwater, and groundwater permittees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA WQC and Permit Strategies Group: track emergent issues, particularly when DEQ is likely to establish new policy or guidance for permits. • ACWA WQC, SWC, and GWC: collaborate to stay informed about overlapping interest areas through joint meetings and co-chair coordination on key issues. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA WQC: track high priority issues, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Mixing zones ○ Reasonable potential analysis ○ Priority pollutants ○ Whole Effluent Toxicity (WET) testing ○ Copper BLM monitoring/analysis → DEQ permit template <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review latest permit template and provide comments to DEQ → DEQ permit readiness review <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Review DEQ’s criteria and results of permit readiness reviews → ACWA WQC, GWC, and SWC: convene co-chair conference calls as needed to coordinate, and at least one joint meeting of the committees. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Partner with DEQ and other partners to develop pesticide and toxics reduction strategies. → Develop more in-depth understanding of emerging pollutant presence, sources, and potential pollutant reduction/elimination measures.
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking federal and state policy, rulemaking, and 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA B&RWC: provides ongoing outreach and support to 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Support Clackamas CC Short School with presentations to operators 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Support legislation and/or state policies that seek to

	litigation, as well as advancing the science related to land application of biosolids and recycled water.	<p>ACWA members on issues facing biosolids and recycled water management.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA: supports OSU research scientists to continue to advance best practices in biosolids and recycled water land application programs, and to promote science-based policy. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Support furthering recycled water awareness by engaging with legislators and other interested parties such as the Climate Trust and OLC(?) → Support OSU Extension research and updates to agronomic rate calculations. 	increase recycled water use and secure biosolids beneficial reuse.
Promote Effective Pretreatment Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Tracking pretreatment-related federal and state rules, and supporting members in addressing new mandates for pretreatment programs and other required pollution prevention programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA PC: engages with DEQ to provide technical expertise and input, and to improve electronic data reporting capability. • ACWA PC: supports subcommittees/work groups to address: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Dental Amalgam Rule ○ DEQ Pretreatment Coordinator funding ○ Website improvement 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA PC: update and expand the fermentation pollution prevention brochures. → ACWA MMP Work Group: develop a model MMP for ACWA members, and provide technical assistance through the WQC and PTC. → Distribute mercury minimization to communities with mercury minimization mandates. 	→ ACWA PC will address NDCIU policies and PAR streamlining
Promote Effective, Affordable Stormwater Management Programs	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Coordination and support to members regarding NPDES MS4 Phase I and II permits and UIC permits., emphasizing development of effective, sustainable, and affordable stormwater management programs “green infrastructure” stormwater treatment systems. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA SWC assists MS4 Phase II communities with new permit implementation requirements. • ACWA SWC provides ongoing educational opportunities to members on a wide variety of stormwater management topics. • ACWA WQC participates in the Mercury TMDL update, tracks TMDLs, and provides input as appropriate. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → MS4 Phase II steering group: develop comments on DEQ’s draft MW4 Phase II permit in collaboration with LOC and SDAO. → ACWA SWC, GWC, and EDC: convene 2018 Stormwater Summit and include MS4 permit-related educational and technical assistance elements. → ACWA GWC, SWC, and EDC: publish informational outreach materials targeting elimination of illicit discharges. → ACWA SWC and GWC: develop strategies to engage development community stakeholders to improve implementation of green infrastructure. → ACWA SWC MS4 Phase I working group: develop guiding principles for renewal of Phase I permits, and explore whether development of permit writers’ 	→ ACWA will stay abreast of BMP effectiveness and long-term maintenance issues, and develop educational tools that support adaptive management for communities (<i>ss suggestion</i>)

			template (similar to the wastewater permit template) is appropriate.	
Promote Positive Partnerships to Protect Oregon’s Groundwater	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Facilitation of communication and information sharing among members with UIC WPCF permits. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA GWC: hosts regular meetings with DEQ UIC staff. Topics include: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> UIC stormwater/WPCF permit interface and coordination with MS4 permits Rule authorization, and pretreatment and sampling requirements UIC database review/update NFA-cleanup program interactions Plumbing code alignment with UIC regulations and OARs 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA GWC: convene regular committee meetings, encourage collaborative efforts, and host educational presentations. ACWA GWC: collaborate with SWC and EC on 2018 Stormwater Summit to ensure appropriate groundwater content is included. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA will track regulatory issues related to managing stormwater using UICs in a manner that is protective of groundwater.

FOCUS AREA 2: Advancing Sustainable Utilities

Wastewater and stormwater utilities perform vital roles in protecting communities’ health, safety, welfare, and the environment. ACWA supports wastewater and stormwater utilities in developing programs, practices and facilities that are sustainable. Sustainable utilities pursue strategies to achieve long-term effectiveness, efficiencies, and affordability, and that enable communities to adapt and become resilient to future challenges, such as changes in climate, declines in water quality and aquatic life, and affordability of services and infrastructure. Sustainable utility strategies maximize operational efficiencies, eliminate waste, and turn wastewater treatment bi-products and outputs into useful commodities. They also focus on effective utility management strategies.

HIGHEST PRIORITIES	AREAS OF EMPHASIS	ONGOING ACTIONS	2018 TARGETS	LONG TERM TARGETS
Promote Resource Recovery— Transforming Wastes into Beneficial Resources	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Development of strategies and tools for members to recover and market resources for beneficial use including energy, recycled water, biosolids, and nutrients. Informing members on current state and federal programs and rules impacting resource recovery (energy, biosolids, recycled water, and/or other recoverable commodities). Providing current information on resource 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA B&RWC: engages with DEQ to identify technical and policy issues impacting biosolids and reuse programs. ACWA B&RWC: facilitates education of facility operators and managers related to sustainable best practices and regulatory compliance. ACWA: tracks implementation and updates to the State’s Integrated Water Resource Strategy, and seeks opportunities to elevate recycled water as a state-wide goal. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Convene an ACWA/DEQ working group to identify and tackle technical and policy issues with a goal of expanding opportunities for sustainable usage of biosolids and recycled water. ACWA: support OSU’s research program to develop cost-effective biosolids utilization options for agriculture, landscaping, and nurseries. ACWA EC: complete up-to-date outreach materials related to energy efficiency strategies for treatment plant operations. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> ACWA EC will seek opportunities and partners with funding support to conduct future energy management cohorts. ACWA B&RWC: will coordinate with OSU and others regarding faculty succession planning. ACWA EC and UMC will evaluate metrics for benchmarking power

	<p>recovery technology, operations, and maintenance.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Supporting environmentally-sound biosolids practices, including land application, and will assist members in using effective pollution prevention programs to continually improve biosolids quality. 	<p>→ ACWA EC: partners with the Oregon Department of Energy, Energy Trust of Oregon, the Bonneville Environmental Foundation, and Northwest Natural to pursue partnerships and incentives for energy recovery options, efficiency improvements and renewables development.</p> <p>→ ACWA: seeks partnership opportunities with industries to implement resource recovery projects, such as brewery waste digesters and industrial process uses of recycled water.</p> <p>→ ACWA EC: continues to recruit new active members to expand involvement in EC activities.</p>	<p>→ ACWA EC, B&RWC, and UMC: collaborate to develop a program for a Resource Recovery workshop to be held in 2019.</p> <p>→ ACWA LVC: seek opportunities for including incentives and/or funding for resource recovery and renewables development projects in legislation.</p> <p>→ ACWA EC: update website resources and write a feature article for the ACWA newsletter.</p>	<p>usage as a function of utility size (e.g. dollars spent on energy per million gallons discharged).</p> <p>→ ACWASWC and GWC: evaluate opportunities for aquifer storage and recharge in collaboration with the Oregon section of the American Water Works Association and the Oregon Water Resources Department.</p>
<p>Promote Best Practices in Sustainable Utility Management</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Development of tools and information on best practices for Sustainable Utility Management, including: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> ○ Finance and Sustainable Cost Recovery (e.g.s, asset management, user rates, finance, resource recovery revenues) ○ Resource Management (e.g.s, energy, human, technology, materials, and facilities) ○ Communication of Service (e.g.s, infrastructure costs, public health, and environmental benefits) ○ Building positive relationships with rate payers and decision makers 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA seeks opportunities to develop expertise and identify trainers/experts to assist with educating members on the multi-agency update of “Effective Utility Management: A Primer for Water and Wastewater Utilities.” • ACWA UMC: partners with other water-related organizations to provide information on building positive relationships with ratepayers and decision makers. • ACWA: seeks opportunities to support utilities with effective tools to aid in development and implementation of wet weather control and <i>Sewer Collection System Asset Management</i> (AKA CMOM) programs. 	<p>→ ACWA UMC: convene a work group to develop a plan for trainings and outreach based on the Effective Utility Management Primer.</p>	<p>→ ACWA EC and UMC will host a Sustainable Utility Management Workshop, potential topics include:</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Criticality-based planning for asset maintenance and replacement • Connecting with the “Ratepayers of the Future” • Valuing green infrastructure • WEF Lift— Moving innovation into practice

<p>Promote Resiliency and Adaptation Planning and Preparedness</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Keeping informed about current climate science findings and projections related to Oregon in order to help members understand future impacts on utility facilities and program planning. • Developing understanding of stormwater and wastewater management strategies that promote adaptation and resiliency to changing environmental conditions. • Emergency and disaster planning and preparation. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA SWC: participates in evaluation of and education regarding changes in floodplain and stormwater management needed to address ESA requirements. • ACWA SWC: develops a working knowledge of interconnections between stormwater infrastructure and climate change adaptation strategies, including evolution of designs and management of both “green” and “gray” infrastructure. 	<p>→ ACWA SWC: will include presentations at committee meetings and the 2018 Stormwater Summit to educate ACWA members about new science, regulations and BMPs.</p> <p>→ Evaluate opportunities for including a presentation on emergency management and preparedness at the 2018 Summer Conference.</p>	<p>→ ACWA will seek opportunities to develop pro-active strategies to address water quality, quantity, flood plain and emergency management needs as tools for community resiliency and adaptability.</p>
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FOCUS AREA 3: OUTREACH AND ENGAGEMENT

ACWA is an important source of information and resources for members and partner associations. ACWA promotes best practices in utility management and operations, along with sound policies based on good science and feasible solutions to Oregon’s water quality problems, through targeted outreach and educational opportunities. ACWA contributes expertise and knowledge, and partners with others to leverage their strengths and resources, to generate widely applicable solutions and resources. ACWA also seeks to identify and help address unmet needs among members.

HIGHEST PRIORITIES	ACWA AREAS OF EMPHASIS	ONGOING ACTIONS	2018 TARGETS	LONG-TERM TARGET
<p>Provide Assistance, Information, and Outreach to all Members, especially Smaller Member Agencies</p>	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Outreach to members to identify interests, issues of concern, and potential solutions. • Improvement of educational resources and learning opportunities to support member needs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA leadership: surveys the primary contacts at all member agencies annually. • ACWA leadership: seeks opportunities, in collaboration with LOC, SDAO, and DEQ to convene discussion forums and working groups that support smaller agencies and to develop models/templates for use by members. • ACWA EC: supports other ACWA committees’ initiatives to develop effective brochures and other educational tools. 	<p>→ ACWA leadership: conduct 2018 membership survey.</p> <p>→ ACWA representatives: host a meeting of the public works directors and utility managers in Southern Oregon.</p>	<p>→ Convene 1-3 regional outreach meetings annually in different parts of the state.</p> <p>→ ACWA will build enhanced outreach and support for agencies in eastern southern and coastal regions of the state.</p>

Engage Watershed Partners to Tackle Pollution Problems	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Collaboration with other partners to reduce water pollution from all sources – point and nonpoint. • Building and sustaining partnerships across all sectors to focus on pollution prevention efforts, including drug take back programs. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA EC: seeks ways for ACWA to support the Clean Rivers and Streams Collaborative. • ACWA representatives: participate in the Willamette River Initiative and maintain the WRA efforts to address temperature limits through collective restoration of cold water refuges. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA representatives: participate in the development of a future organizational structure to replace the WRI in 2020. → ACWA WRA: identify gaps and develop science/data and policy framework to enable investments in cold water refugia restoration as permit compliance strategies. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA will seek opportunities to engage ODA, ODF, DOGAMI, and others to tackle large-scale problems.
Provide Effective and Easily Accessed Web-Based Information, Resources and Tools	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining and improving ACWA’s website resources. • Providing web-based participation in committee meetings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA leadership and Outreach Task Force: evaluates the information interests and needs of members, and seeks effective and affordable tools to improve the website. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA leadership: complete an evaluation acquisition of website technologies and begin site redevelopment. → ACWA leadership: review and update publications and resources available on the ACWA website. 	
FOCUS AREA 4: ORGANIZATIONAL EFFECTIVENESS AND EFFICIENCY				
<p>ACWA maintains effective Board governance and representation through clear communication and decision making, ongoing succession planning for committees and Board members, and participating in state, regional and national issues in which ACWA can have an impact. The Board ensures the fiscal health of the organization through long-range fiscal forecasting, annual budgeting and regular membership dues adjustments. ACWA seeks to provide services and information to members in ways that are timely, accessible, useful, and cost conscious.</p>				
Maintain Effectiveness and Efficiency of Organization/ Administration	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Maintaining cost-effective technologies for basic office administration and member support. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA office: maintains electronic systems and data to support core administrative functions. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → ACWA office: identify and implement new technology options to replace aging/inefficient systems that manage member data, events, finances, and member communications. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Explore opportunities for in-kind services that could be provided by members.
Provide Accessible Meeting Services to ACWA Members and Committees	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Making committee meetings and trainings accessible to members in outer regions of the state through quality remote access. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • ACWA leadership: seeks opportunities to improve remote access and participation in meetings and trainings. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Purchase new ACWA phone equipment. → Evaluate whether new computer equipment is needed to better support Go-To Meeting. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> → Evaluate whether expanded training/workshops can be offered through webinar technology.

Key to Abbreviations:

B&RWC = Biosolids and Recycled Water Committee
 BMPs = Best Management Practices
 DEQ = Oregon Department of Environmental Quality

DOGAMI = Department of Geological and Mineral Industries
 EC = Energy Committee
 EDC = Education Committee

EPA = Environmental Protection Agency
ESA = Endangered Species Act
GWC = Groundwater Committee
IMD = Internal Management Directive
LC = Legal Committee
LOC = League of Oregon Cities
LVC = Legislative Committee
MMP = Mercury Minimization Plan
MS4 = Municipal Separate Storm Sewer System
NFA = ???
NPDES = National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System
ODA = Oregon Department of Agriculture

ODF = Oregon Department of Forestry
OSU = Oregon State University
PC = Pretreatment Committee
SDAO = Special Districts Association of Oregon
SWC = Stormwater Committee
TMDL = Total Maximum Daily Load
UIC = Underground Injection Control
UMC = Utility Management Committee
WPCF = Water Pollution Control Facility
WQC = Water Quality Committee
WRA = Willamette River Alliance