



# Leasing State-owned Aquatic Lands

## WHAT YOU NEED TO KNOW

Proposals for the use of state-owned aquatic lands, with a few exceptions, require prior authorization from the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR). If you are planning a shoreline, over-water, or in-water project, we encourage you to contact us early in the process.

### Contact DNR early

Working with DNR early can help you prevent wasting time, money, and effort. We can help you determine:

- If your project will be located on state-owned aquatic lands.
- If the land is available.
- If the proposed use is appropriate.
- How to construct the project to avoid or lessen impacts to aquatic resources.

After we consult with you, we will work closely with permitting agencies to communicate our expectations for leasing requirements.

Contact DNR's Aquatics Program at 360-902-1100, and our staff will refer you to the **land manager** in your area to begin the process described below.

### What is involved in the application process, and how long does it take?

Some steps may occur at different times or at the same time. The timeline can vary widely and depend on the complexity of the project, the workload of DNR staff, and the amount of time needed to receive regulatory permits from other agencies and respond to additional information needs. Plan for the review process to take anywhere from six months to one year. This can take less time if your use is simple and fairly straightforward, such as a mooring buoy license, or more time if your project is complex, such as a lease for a new development.

**Step 1:** Call DNR's Aquatics Program at 360-902-1100 to find out if your project will be on state-owned aquatic lands.

**Step 2:** Complete the online Joint Aquatic Resources Permit Application (JARPA) and Attachment E: Aquatic Use Authorization on DNR-managed Aquatic Lands. The link to the JARPA web page is at: [http://bit.ly/dnr\\_aquatic\\_leasing](http://bit.ly/dnr_aquatic_leasing). If you need further assistance completing the application, contact the Office of Regulatory Assistance (ORA) at 1-800-917-0043 or [help@ora.wa.gov](mailto:help@ora.wa.gov).



Fiddlehead Marina, Olympia.  
Photo: Carol Piening/DNR



Veranda Beach Resort, Lake Osoyoos,  
Okanogan County. Photo: Carol Cloen/DNR

#### CONTACT: Aquatic Resources Program

**Step 3:** DNR will conduct a preliminary review of your application to determine if the land is available and whether the proposed use may be appropriate for public lands. During this step, DNR may contact you to discuss the proposal in greater detail, request additional information, and suggest options to avoid or minimize environmental harm. DNR may reach out to other agencies that will issue permits for the project—this will depend on the site and the proposed use. DNR will assign an application number which will be used for project identification throughout the review. (Note: If the land is unavailable and/or the use is inappropriate for further consideration, the application will be denied.)

**Step 4:** Once your application number is assigned, DNR will continue to work with you. This may include reviewing your project for potential impacts to the aquatic environment, and you may be asked to provide additional information. If the DNR land manager has not spoken with other agencies that will be issuing permits, he or she may do so at this point. Note that DNR could deny your application at this stage. If your proposal meets DNR's expectations, you may begin applying for permits at this time.

For additional permit assistance, contact the Office of Regulatory Assistance (ORA) at [www.ora.wa.gov/](http://www.ora.wa.gov/), 1-800-917-0043, or [help@ora.wa.gov](mailto:help@ora.wa.gov). ORA staff can coordinate a pre-application meeting, which lets you speak with the agencies reviewing your permits.

**Step 5:** Your DNR land manager will work with you on the terms and conditions of your authorization during the permitting process. DNR can't authorize your project until after you obtain all necessary permits.

- During this step, your land manager will work with you on the details of the authorization document, which could include determining the type of authorization for your use. Some examples include: licenses, leases, rights-of-entry, or easements.
- Identifying the term and conditions of the authorization examples include amount of rent, survey requirements, insurance, performance security and other conditions that apply to your proposal depending on the site-specific conditions.

**Step 6:** Once DNR has completed its evaluation of your application, the agency will review it and, if appropriate, offer an authorization to use state-owned aquatic lands. Please note that DNR cannot commit to issuing an authorization until the completion of Step 5.

### **What are state-owned aquatic lands?**

State-owned aquatic lands are managed by DNR for the benefit of the citizens Washington State. These public lands lie beneath our state's navigable waters and include the coast, bedlands, lakes, rivers and Puget Sound marine areas. They were set aside for us at statehood and, to this day, DNR manages them to preserve their environmental integrity that is linked to our quality of life.

### **The distinct role of the DNR Aquatic Resources Program**

DNR's Aquatic Resources Program is unique because we act as a landlord on behalf of the state. The program manages state-owned aquatic lands to provide a balance of public benefits for all citizens of the state, and must consider the natural values and best use of aquatic lands before authorizing uses on them. When the Aquatics Program authorizes uses on state-owned aquatic land, we are committing to a long-term business relationship with the applicant. We consider environmental risks, the risks to public health and safety, and the financial risks for the entire lifetime of the use.

### **Does the Aquatic Resources Program issue permits?**

No. DNR's Aquatic Resources Program is non-regulatory and does not issue permits. We're more like a landlord. When DNR's Aquatic Resources authorizes a project, the parties involved sign a legal contract that documents the terms and conditions of the use, such as insurance requirements and rent—if applicable.

### **Who's leasing state-owned aquatic lands?**

Find out who has applied to lease state-owned lands and what projects are being authorized at [http://bit.ly/dnr\\_aquatic\\_leasing](http://bit.ly/dnr_aquatic_leasing)