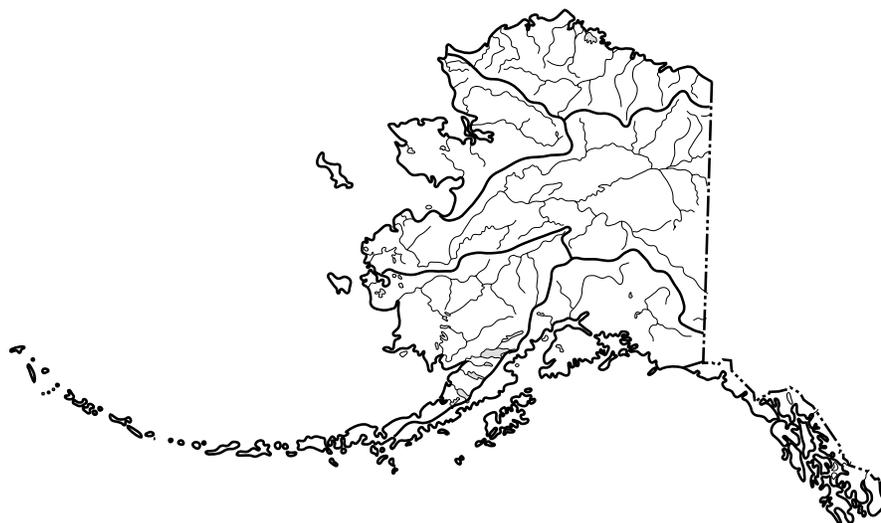


# Alaska



— Basin Boundaries  
(USGS 6-Digit Hydrologic Unit)

For a copy of the Alaska 1998 305(b) report, contact:

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## Surface Water Quality

The vast majority of Alaska's watersheds, while not being monitored, are presumed to be in relatively pristine condition due to Alaska's size, sparse population, and general remoteness. However, Alaska has localized water pollution. Surface water quality has been found to be impaired or threatened from sources such as urban runoff (Fairbanks, Anchorage, and Juneau), mining operations in the Interior and Northwest Alaska, seafood processing facilities in the Aleutian Islands, and forest products facilities in southeast Alaska.

Alaska did not report on the condition of wetlands.

## Ground Water Quality

Ground water is one of Alaska's least understood natural resources. It is the major source of fresh water for public and private drinking water supply systems, industry, and agricultural development. Although ground water is presumed to be of excellent quality in most areas of the state, specific areas of generally good ground water quality have been degraded by human activities. Ground water impairment has been documented in various areas of the state and has been linked predominantly to aboveground and subsurface petroleum storage facilities, as well as operational and abandoned military installations. Other sources, such as failed septic systems, also contribute to ground water contamination.

## Programs to Restore Water Quality

The Alaska Department of Environmental Conservation (ADEC) has developed the Watershed Management Section, within the Division of Air and Water Quality, to implement the watershed protection approach that has been used successfully in other states. The purpose of this approach is to cost-effectively improve the water quality of Alaska's polluted waterbodies and to protect its healthy watersheds in cooperation with other agencies, industry, interest groups, and the public. The process to be used to advance the watershed protection approach in Alaska is outlined in the document *Watershed Partnerships in Alaska*.

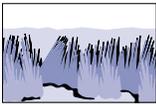
ADEC also supports numerous additional water quality projects and programs statewide, including: pollution prevention, leaking underground storage tanks, contaminated sites, industrial permitting, water-body assessments and recovery plans, water quality monitoring, water quality technical services, and public outreach and education from statewide public service offices.

## Programs to Assess Water Quality

The Alaska Watershed Monitoring and Assessment Project (AWMAP) is a statewide water quality monitoring project involving local, state, and federal agencies; industry; schools; the University of Alaska; and other entities conducting water quality monitoring. A recent AWMAP report identified areas of the state (by USGS hydrologic unit) where water quality monitoring is either absent or insufficient to address the potential pollution sources.

Other water quality monitoring activities are conducted by ADEC, other agencies, industry, and the public. Applicant self-monitoring of receiving waters is a common permit requirement associated with Alaska's major point source dischargers. ADEC, in cooperation with the Alaska Department of Natural Resources (ADNR), has periodically conducted water quality monitoring related to placer mining. Implementation of the State Ground Water Quality Protection Strategy is continuing, encouraging increased ground water monitoring.

## Summary of Use Support<sup>a</sup> in Alaska<sup>b</sup>

	Percent		
	Good (Fully Supporting)	Good (Threatened)	Impaired (For One or More Uses)
<b>Rivers and Streams (Total Miles = 365,000)</b>			
 Total Miles Assessed	513	1	99
<b>Lakes (Total Acres = 12,787,200)</b>			
 Total Acres Assessed	4,719	0	100
<b>Estuaries (Total Square Miles = 33,257)</b>			
 Total Square Miles Assessed	237	1	99
<b>Ocean Shoreline (Total Miles = 44,226)</b>			
 Total Shoreline Miles Assessed	4	0	100

– Not reported in a quantifiable format or unknown.

<sup>a</sup> A summary of use support data is presented because Alaska did not report individual use support in their 1998 Section 305(b) report.

<sup>b</sup> Alaska notes its assessments are biased toward those waters with known impairments.

Note: Figures may not add to 100% due to rounding.