

**Chapter 43.92 RCW
GEOLOGICAL SURVEY**

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Reviser's note: The powers, duties and functions of the department of conservation with respect to geology as set forth in chapter 43.92 RCW were transferred to the department of natural resources by 1967 c 242 s 15 [RCW 43.27A.130].

RCW 43.92.010 State geologist. There shall be a geological survey of the state that shall be under the direction of the commissioner of public lands who shall have general charge of the survey, and shall appoint as supervisor of the survey a geologist of established reputation, to be known as the state geologist. [2006 c 340 s 2; 1988 c 127 s 28; 1965 c 8 s 43.92.010. Prior: 1901 c 165 s 1; 1890 p 647 s 1; 1890 p 249 s 1; RRS s 5993.]

RCW 43.92.020 Objects of survey. The geological survey shall have for its objects:

- (1) An examination of the economic products of the state, including: Gold, silver, copper, lead, and iron ores, as well as building stones, clays, coal, and all mineral substances of value;
- (2) An examination and classification of soils, and the study of their adaptability to particular crops;
- (3) An investigation and report upon the water supplies, artesian wells, the water power of the state, gauging the streams, etc., with reference to their application for irrigation and other purposes;
- (4) An examination and report upon the occurrence of different road building material;
- (5) An examination of the physical features of the state with reference to their practical bearing upon the occupations of the people;
- (6) The preparation of special geological and economic maps to illustrate the resources of the state;
- (7) The preparation of special reports with necessary illustrations and maps, which shall embrace both the general and detailed description of the geology and natural resources of the state; and
- (8) The consideration of similar scientific and economic questions that, in the judgment of the state geologist, is deemed of value to the people of the state. [2006 c 340 s 3; 1965 c 8 s 43.92.020. Prior: 1901 c 165 s 2; 1890 p 249 s 3; 1890 p 648 ss 3, 4, 5, 6, 7; RRS s 5994.]

RCW 43.92.025 Seismic, landslide, and tsunami hazards—

Assessment—Technical assistance. (1) In addition to the objectives stated in RCW 43.92.020, the geological survey must conduct and maintain an assessment of seismic, landslide, and tsunami hazards in Washington. This assessment must apply the best practicable technology, including light detection and ranging (lidar) mapping, to identify and map volcanic, seismic, landslide, and tsunami hazards, and estimate potential hazard consequences and the likelihood of a hazard occurring.

(2) The geological survey must:

(a) Coordinate with state and local government agencies to compile existing data, including geological hazard maps and geotechnical reports, tending to inform geological hazard planning decisions;

(b) Acquire and process new data or update deficient data using the best practicable technology, including lidar;

(c) Create and maintain an efficient, publicly available database of lidar and geological hazard maps and geotechnical reports collected under (a) and (b) of this subsection; and

(d) Provide technical assistance to state and local government agencies on the proper interpretation and application of the results of the geological hazards assessment. [2015 c 12 s 1; 2006 c 340 s 4.]

RCW 43.92.040 Printing and distribution of reports. Regular and special reports of the geological survey, with proper illustrations and maps, shall be printed as directed by the state geologist. All reports shall be distributed or sold by the department of natural resources as the interests of the state and of science demand. All money obtained by the sale of reports under this section shall be paid into the state treasury. [2006 c 340 s 5; 1965 c 8 s 43.92.040. Prior: 1901 c 165 s 4; RRS s 5996.]

RCW 43.92.060 Cooperation with federal geological survey. The state geologist may make provisions for topographic, geologic, and hydrographic surveys of the state in cooperation with the United States geological survey in such manner as in the opinion of the state geologist will be of the greatest benefit to the agricultural, industrial, and geological requirements of the state. However, the director of the United States geological survey must first agree to expend on the part of the United States upon such surveys a sum equal to that expended by the state. [2006 c 340 s 6; 1965 c 8 s 43.92.060. Prior: 1903 c 157 s 1; 1901 c 165 s 6; RRS s 5998.]

RCW 43.92.070 Topographic map—Stream measurements. In order to complete the topographic map of the state and for the purpose of making more extensive stream measurements, and otherwise investigating and determining the water supply of the state, the state geologist may enter into such agreements with the director of the United States geological survey as will ensure that the surveys and investigations be carried on in the most economical manner, and that the maps and data be available for the use of the public as quickly as possible.

[2006 c 340 s 7; 1965 c 8 s 43.92.070. Prior: 1909 c 245 s 1; RRS s 5999.]

RCW 43.92.080 Entry on lands authorized. In order to carry out the purposes of this chapter, all persons employed by the department of natural resources to carry out the duties of this chapter are authorized to enter and cross all land within the state as long as no damage is done to private property. [2006 c 340 s 8; 1965 c 8 s 43.92.080. Prior: 1909 c 245 s 3; RRS s 6000.]

RCW 43.92.090 Subsurface geologic information. (1) The geological survey shall compile and maintain a comprehensive database of publicly available subsurface geologic information relating to Washington state. The geological survey must make the database available to the public in a searchable format via the geological survey's website.

(2) The subsurface geologic information contained on the website should include, but is not limited to, the following:

- (a) Temperature gradient logs;
- (b) Geothermal well records;
- (c) High resolution magnetotelluric surveys;
- (d) High resolution gravity surveys;
- (e) Geothermal play fairway studies;
- (f) Three-dimensional reflection seismic surveys; and
- (g) Rock properties databases.

(3) The geological survey must:

(a) Coordinate with federal, state, and local agencies, and tribal governments, to compile existing subsurface geologic information;

(b) Acquire, process, and analyze new subsurface geologic data and update deficient data using the best practicable technology;

(c) Using available data, characterize the hazard of induced seismicity for high-potential geothermal play areas. Results of induced seismicity hazard studies must be made publicly available and updated as new information is available; and

(d) Provide technical assistance on the proper interpretation and application of subsurface geologic data and hazard assessments. [2024 c 350 s 1.]

RCW 43.92.900 Intent—2006 c 340. It is the intent of the legislature that there be an effective state geological survey that can produce essential information that provides for the health, safety, and economic well-being of the citizens. [2006 c 340 s 1.]