



Photo credit: CinemaLions and Soap Lake Conservancy



Protecting Soap Lake as an Outstanding Resource Water

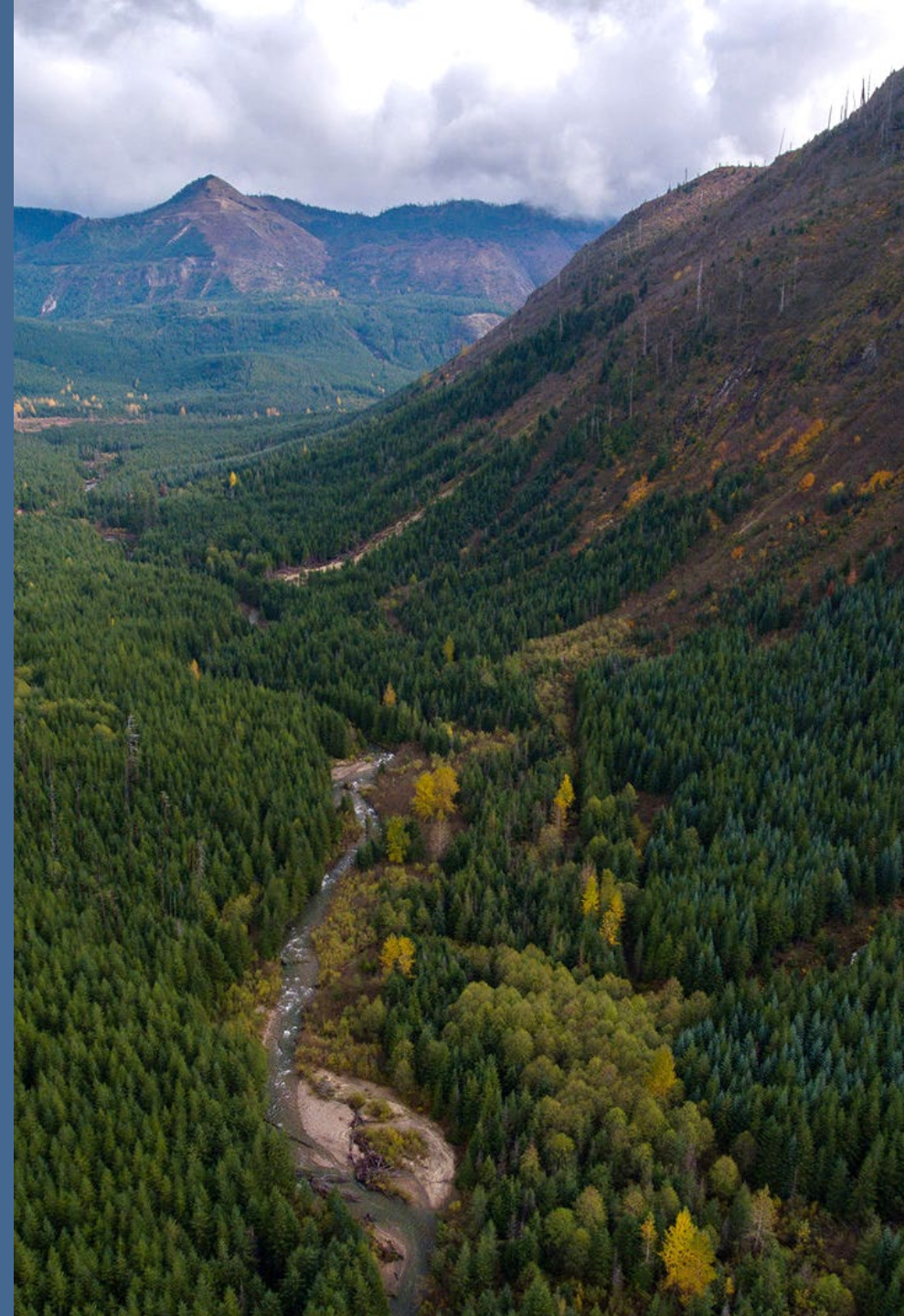
June 6, 2023

Agenda

- 1** What is an outstanding resource water?
- 2** Outstanding Resource Waters policy
- 3** The Soap Lake nomination
- 4** Rulemaking schedule
- 5** Questions

Outstanding resource waters

High quality or unique waterbodies that warrant special protection





Outstanding resource waters are protected from degradation

Applies to new or expanded point source discharges or nonpoint sources of pollution after we adopt an ORW designation.

Some activities are still allowed

- Temporary activities
- To protect public health or property in an emergency

This rule does not apply to sources of pollution from the air

**Protecting
outstanding
resource waters
is a federal
requirement**

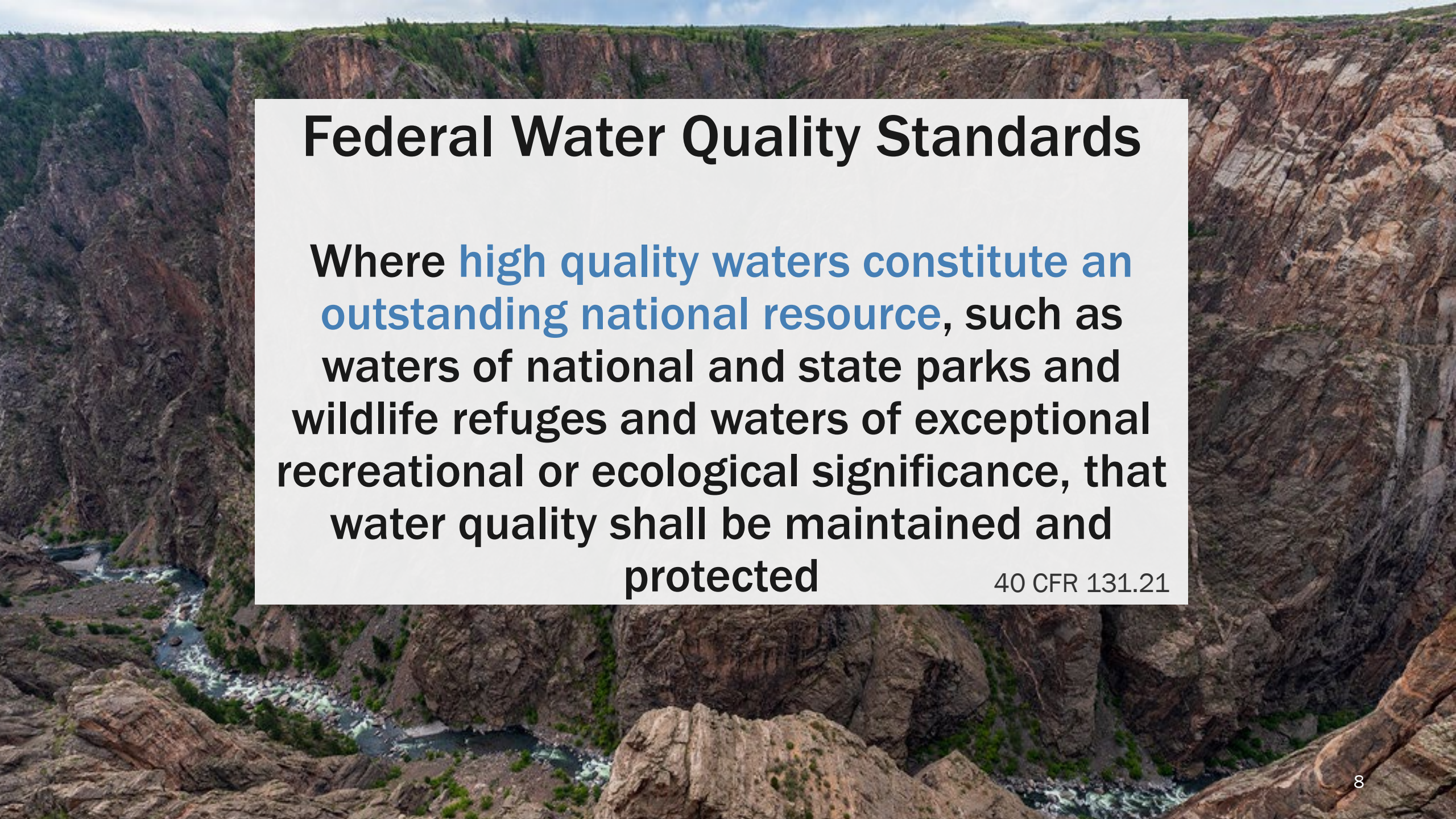




Clean Water Act

The objective of this chapter is to restore and **maintain** the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the Nation's waters

33 § 1251(a)



Federal Water Quality Standards

Where **high quality waters constitute an outstanding national resource**, such as waters of national and state parks and wildlife refuges and waters of exceptional recreational or ecological significance, that water quality shall be maintained and protected

40 CFR 131.21

Soap Lake

Nominated in 2021 by:

- Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation
- Soap Lake Conservancy



What makes Soap Lake eligible as an ORW?

- Unique habitat that is regionally rare example of its kind
- Exceptional statewide ecological significance
- Regionally unique recreational value



Photo credit: Saya Moriyasu and Soap Lake Conservancy

Outstanding resource waters nominations



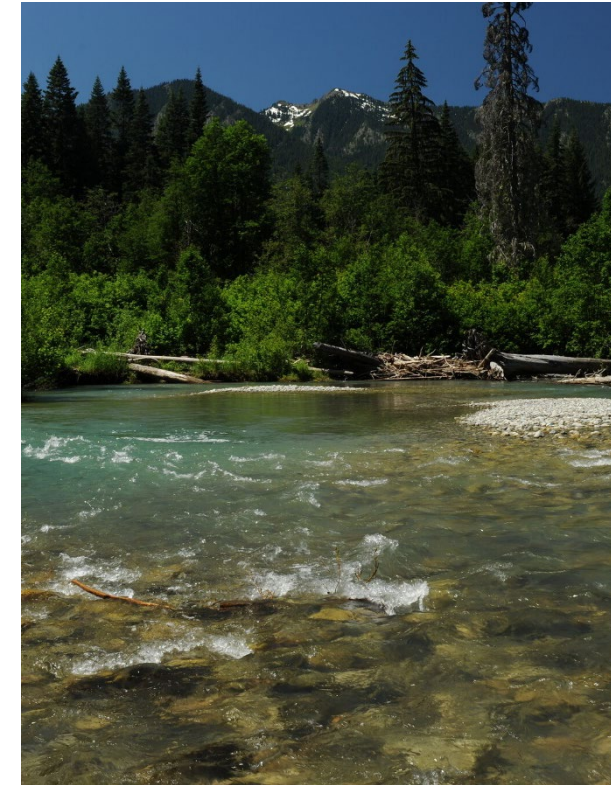
Soap Lake



Green River



Cascade River



Napeequa River

Rulemaking Timeline

Public comment period begins this summer



Where are in the process

- Gather more information about each waterbody
- Talk to tribes and stakeholders
- Gather informal feedback





Thank You

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