



Applying knowledge to improve water quality

Pacific Northwest

Regional Water Program

A Partnership of USDA NIFA
& Land Grant Colleges and Universities

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The Puget Sound Partnership Update

For the first time, the entire Puget Sound region is joining together to take action in a coordinated way, acting quickly on the greatest threats and greatest opportunities for Puget Sound. Governor Gregoire established the Puget Sound Partnership in late 2005, bringing together Washington leaders to develop a strategy for protecting and restoring the health of the Sound. The Partnership's goal is to ensure a thriving natural system that exists in harmony with a vibrant economy. Working collaboratively with elected and public officials, tribal and business leaders, scientists, environmentalists, and citizens, the Partnership will develop the 2020 Action Agenda for Puget Sound by a September 1, 2008 deadline.

The Action Agenda will be a living, adaptable roadmap to health for the Puget Sound. It will prioritize cleanup, restoration, and protection efforts, coordinate federal, state, local, tribal, and private resources, and ensure that everyone is working cooperatively. Decisions will be based on science, focus on actions that have the biggest impact, and hold people, governments, and organizations accountable for results.

To prioritize work in the Sound and identify what needs to happen next, a series of key questions will be answered. What is a healthy Puget Sound? What is the current status of Puget Sound's health and what are the biggest threats to it? What actions must be taken that will move us from where we are today to a healthy Puget Sound by 2020? Where should we start? How will we get there?

Scientists are working to compile studies and reports on the Sound's health and identify the greatest threats. At the same time, the Partnership is compiling an inventory of all programs currently underway across the Sound. These summaries will help identify what actions need to be taken to move toward a healthy Puget Sound by 2020. Through a series of workshops, these actions will be refined at a regional and local level, before providing them to the Leadership Council who will approve the Action Agenda.

Action Areas

The Puget Sound Partnership has divided Puget Sound into the seven Action Areas to better serve the specific needs of the local people, environments, and businesses in each area. These boundaries are based on common issues and interests, physical characteristics, and how water flows into and within the Sound.

Educating the Public for the Health and Recovery of Puget Sound

The Washington State University (WSU) Extension Water Resource Program (<http://wawater.wsu.edu/>) is active in all 12 counties surrounding Puget Sound.

Studies show that people are most likely to take action when they are aware and understand problems and when they believe they can make a difference. WSU Extension has expertise in convening groups around specific issues and has successful education driven volunteer programs in landscape and garden management (Master Gardeners, Shore Stewards), native plants (Native Plant Salvage Project, Marine Riparian Initiative), livestock management (Livestock Advisor Program), and composting (Master Composters). These trained volunteers share their knowledge with others in their communities. In addition,



Ron Hirschi, consultant, conducting a fish seine during a Beach Watcher estuary field trip.



Pacific Northwest Regional Water Quality Coordination Project Partners

Land Grant Universities

Alaska

Cooperative Extension Service
Contact Fred Sorensen:
907-786-6311

<http://www.uaf.edu/ces/water/>

University Publications:

<http://www.alaska.edu/uaf/ces/publications/>

Idaho

University of Idaho
Cooperative Extension System
Contact Bob Mahler: 208-885-7025

<http://www.uidaho.edu/wq/wqhome.html>

University Publications:

<http://info.ag.uidaho.edu/Catalog/catalog.htm>

Oregon

Oregon State University
Extension Service
Contact Mike Gamroth: 541-737-3316

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/>

University Publications:

<http://extension.oregonstate.edu/catalog/>

Washington

Washington State University
WSU Extension

Contact Bob Simmons:
360-427-9670 ext. 690

<http://wawater.wsu.edu/>

University Publications:

<http://pubs.wsu.edu/>

Northwest Indian College
Contact Charlotte Clausing:
360-392-4319

cclausing@nwic.edu or

<http://www.nwic.edu/>

Water Resource Research Institutes

Water and Environmental Research
Center (Alaska)

<http://www.uaf.edu/water/>

Idaho Water Resources
Research Institute

<http://www.boise.uidaho.edu/>

Institute for Water and
Watersheds (Oregon)

<http://water.oregonstate.edu/>

State of Washington
Water Research Center

<http://www.swwrc.wsu.edu/>

Environmental Protection Agency

EPA, Region 10

The Pacific Northwest

<http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/>

Office of Research and Development,
Corvallis Laboratory

<http://www.epa.gov/wed/>

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The Project

Land Grant Universities, Water Research Institutes, and EPA Region 10 have formed a partnership to provide research and education to communities about protecting or restoring the quality of water resources. This partnership is being supported in part by the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture (NIFA).

Our Goal and Approach

The goal of this Project is to provide leadership for water resources research, education, and outreach to help people, industry, and governments to prevent and solve current and emerging water quality and quantity problems. The approach to achieving this goal is for the Partners to develop a coordinated water quality effort based on, and strengthening, individual state programs.

Our Strengths

The Project promotes regional collaboration by acknowledging existing programs and successful efforts; assisting program gaps; identifying potential issues for cross-agency and private sector collaboration; and developing a clearinghouse of expertise and programs. In addition, the Project establishes or enhances partnerships with federal, state, and local environmental and water resource management agencies, such as by placing a University Liaison within the offices of EPA Region 10.

WSU has specialists involved in research and outreach programs in agriculture, low impact development, turf grass management, pesticide management and training, environmental toxicology, compost and soil management, and livestock management. The programs have developed stewardship based management tools, such as onsite consultations, web sites, manuals, videos, and fact sheets.

The University Partnership

Together, the two research universities – Washington State University and the University of Washington (UW) – have developed a “University Partnership” to leverage their knowledge bases and provide comprehensive and complimentary science, education, and outreach. Their goal is to implement pragmatic solutions to high priority concerns, such as managing stormwater, reducing pollution, protecting and restoring habitat, preserving freshwater, protecting fish and wildlife, and promoting sustainable development. Both universities are tied to local governments through issue-based programming driven by community needs. WSU Extension couples practical advice with applied research and specialists in environmental science, agriculture, and water resources. WSU Extension engages citizens in each county, working through community-based educational programs. UW scientists lead the world in research on fisheries, oceanography, biology, and water resources. The Washington Sea Grant advisory service has conducted outreach and education programs to apply university science for use in the marine environment.



National Water Quality Program Areas

The four land grant universities in the Pacific Northwest have aligned our water resource Extension and research efforts with eight themes of the USDA's National Institute of Food and Agriculture.

1. Animal Waste Management
2. Drinking Water and Human Health
3. Environmental Restoration
4. Nutrient and Pesticide Management
5. Pollution Assessment and Prevention
6. Watershed Management
7. Water Conservation and Management
8. Water Policy and Economics

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