

North Central Action Area (Bremerton)

February 28, 2008

Community Conversation Summary

Meeting Purpose

The Puget Sound Partnership held a community conversation in Bremerton on February 28, 2008 and invited the public to share their comments and concerns about protecting and restoring Puget Sound. This public event provided citizens an overview of the Puget Sound Partnership and the Action Agenda process, reviewed highlights from the afternoon workshop discussion, and concluded with an open community discussion.

Meeting Overview

Approximately 25 people attended the conversation from 5:30 – 7:30 p.m. at the Kitsap Conference Center at Bremerton Harborside.

Meeting Summary

Chris Townsend, Special Assistant to the Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership, opened the meeting by thanking everyone for coming and encouraging an open and collaborative effort in order to make the most effective use of the time.

Chris provided an overview of the Puget Sound Partnership and an introduction to the Action Agenda, including the goals and timeline.

The following is a list of questions and comments heard following the presentations. Answers are indicated with italics.

- Are you a State organization? *Yes, the Partnership is a new State agency created through a legislative action, which is in the office of the Governor.*
- Are you only dealing with the ecology of the water and water quality, or are you talking about the shoreline as well? *The Partnership is concerned with the Puget Sound as a whole. That includes everything from its highest peaks to the lowest underwater points and everything in between.*
- Do you see yourself working as a coordinating entity like the Earthshare model? *Something similar to that model, but not exactly the same type of organization.*
- What kind of oversight will the Partnership have over agencies like Ecology? *The Partnership will act as an umbrella organization, holding others accountable for their actions where the Sound is concerned.*

Chris Townsend gave a presentation outlining the progress of the Puget Sound status and threats analysis. He reviewed data collection and analysis, and stressed that the graphics are a work in progress.

Linda Mullen, the meeting facilitator, opened up the floor for general comments, questions and concerns. She offered the following questions to begin the discussion:

- What do you love about Puget Sound?
- What threats or problems most concern you?
- What criteria should be considered?

The following is a list of questions and comments heard following the presentations. Answers are indicated with italics.

- I like the Sound because of the clean, unlimited beach, the fishing, lakes and the Peninsula.
- Port Orchard is not bicycle friendly because it's too dangerous – please consider the bicyclists, as they help keep extra cars off of the road.
- Educate our youth on these subjects – get them into the spirit.
- There is no more beautiful place in the world than the Puget Sound. This program needs to be funded appropriately. Property owners spend a lot of money every year funding environmental needs.
- I am concerned with the continued deforestation of Kitsap County. Tree removal drives a series of events that are detrimental to the Sound. We should be using existing technologies to avoid these circumstances.
- The Kitsap Homebuilders Association received a grant to produce a low impact development (LID) presentation to multiple jurisdictions together and create LID regulations. LID can use science to naturally treat pollutants and get clean water back into the aquifer. I recommend making this a market-based movement.
- You should encourage projects that incorporate volunteer organizations and private citizens, not just government, to fix the problem.
- My organization has been through this list-making exercise a number of times. This needs to be the last list. Let's do some work.
- I am concerned about clams.
- Don't forget about property rights.

- Regular folks need to make changes, and we need leadership to make us understand the problem. Make sure the message is clear to help us find the path to recovery.
- The system is out of balance. We protected the seals and the sea lions, but now they are over populated, adding to the pollution, eating the salmon and other species.
- The feeling of life is prevalent in the Puget Sound. Those of us who live on the water are puzzled about the right thing to do. How do we deal with the little, everyday things that turn out to be substantial?
- There is hope for the Sound. A long term project like this has trouble with continuity. The Partnership will be losing its champion soon and I don't want to see this effort drift away because of new leadership.
- Healthy people need someplace to stay active.
- I moved here because I loved the trees and the water. We have a real treasure here in the Sound. I am worried about the lack of worrying – people here don't see the problem clearly. Seattle has some stormwater and septic issues because things weren't planned properly. I am worried about blind population growth, but we keep plowing ahead. All of this work is great, but if we don't stop unfettered development, it will all be for not. We need to get local jurisdictions on board.
- I used to see more devastation in the forests, but practices have changed because we now understand that clear cutting can exacerbate flooding and create mud flows. I like the idea of getting more bang for the buck and working on problems that can be solved. I am proposing a bicycle trail that should be the poster child for environmentalism around the Sound.
- I would like to support the idea of controlling the sea lion and seal population.
- Have the various tribes signed on to participate with the Partnership? *Yes, the tribes are represented at the highest levels of the Puget Sound Partnership.*
- I produce a television program showing what's under the water in the Sound. It is hard for most people to understand what's really underwater. The Partnership could help spread the word by helping people like me get the message out.
- Town Hall meetings would bring people together to talk about these issues.

- I am disappointed with the number of trees being taken down in Bremerton. That action results in flooding during high precipitation events or storms, as well as overflowing stormwater events.
- Edmonds has an underwater park with fish not often found in other parts of the Sound. The area is unique because Edmonds created a marine protection area there. I would like to see other parks like this. Protect Sinclair Inlet by creating a bicycle trail that buffers the water from car pollution (copper dust) and reduces nonpoint pollution. This project could be a 'poster child' for the Puget Sound Partnership.
- I am concerned that funding will go to projects that hinder environmental efforts by attracting more people to the area. We should take care of what we have now and figure out how to manage that first.
- I am concerned with how we plan and manage growth under the Growth Management Act. GMA plans are not reviewed unless they are challenged by citizens.
- I would like to challenge the Department of Community Development to lead by example. We must stop sending untreated stormwater into Puget Sound.
- We must protect the tree canopy in Kitsap County. There is no benefit to planting trees if they are washed away by the first hard rain.

Wrap Up

Chris Townsend closed the meeting by thanking everyone for participating. He encouraged people to stay and ask questions, or look at displays around the room. He explained that the Partnership will be conducting another round of workshops and community outreach in June and asked that people contact the Partnership with comments via the Web site.