PugetSoundPartnership
our sound, our community, our chance

South Central Action Area Workshop (Seattle)

February 25, 2008

Workshop Summary

Meeting Purpose

The Puget Sound Partnership held a workshop in Seattle on February 25, 2008 to gather perspectives from stakeholders and add local knowledge and expertise to Partnership work. The meeting focused on addressing the question: *What is the status of the health of Puget Sound and the greatest threats to it?*

Meeting Overview

Approximately 50 people attended the workshop at the Mountaineers Auditorium. Among those represented were local and tribal governments, local organizations, businesses, federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, and citizens, all working for the protection and restoration of Puget Sound.

Meeting Summary

Martha Neuman, Action Agenda Director, welcomed participants to the meeting. Martha introduced Ron Sims, King County Executive, and member of the Ecosystem Coordination Board. Ron introduced the Partnership and elaborated on the goals to recover the sound. He encouraged participants to get involved and work together to make the impossible, possible.

Martha gave a presentation that provided an overview of the Action Agenda and the next steps involved in the development process.

Mary Ruckelshaus, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) Northwest Fisheries Science Center, gave a presentation about NOAA's analysis of the Sound-wide status and threats to Puget Sound health. She described the need to base the Action Agenda priorities in science. NOAA's analysis is working in parallel with the Partnership's local outreach efforts to establish the current status and threats to Puget Sound.

Randy Shuman, King County Department of Natural Resources, highlighted local work that is already underway on Puget Sound restoration. He gave a list of projects and datasets already being used, noted that it is not a complete list, and that the break-out sessions today are intended to fill in the gaps in these lists.

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

- In the threats summary diagram, is the harvest of salmon an example in the draft? *It is just an example.*

- What criteria were used to collect data on hatcheries? *Only one data set was used for the purposes of this example; we will be adding more data as we move forward.*

- Where do salmon fall into the data range? Are salmon weighted higher than other data sets? *Salmon are a great indicator because they can be used for many different habitats. We think of them as an umbrella species that will help us prioritize our actions.*

- The dams on the Snake River directly impact the Sound. Does this analysis take those into account? *That is a good example of what can go into the threat analysis.*

- In what context are fisheries accounted for? *Under the six Action Agenda goals they would fit in two places – Quality of Life and Habitat/Land Use. The Action Agenda goals are interconnected, because the indicators, criteria, and threats for any one goal affect the others. In this case, the human values of what makes a livable and healthy place can have profound effects on another species.*

- So fisheries will be dealt with explicitly? *It will be, but it is up to the community to determine how it's prioritized.*

Five topic specific workgroups, based on the ecosystem goals, were asked to consider and provide input on indicators currently being used, threats to Puget Sound and criteria for establishing priorities. The topic specific discussion notes will be available upon request. Key responses are highlighted below:

What are the biggest threats to the Puget Sound?

Water Quality	• Mixing zones/refineries • Storm water and transportation • Persistent toxics and metals
Water Quantity	• Population growth • Lack of information about how water is used • Unresolved policy issues
Species/Biodiversity	• Population growth • Climate change • Invasive species
Habitat/Land Use	• Conversion of forestry and agriculture lands • Changing human behaviors • Runoff

Human Health/Quality of Life	• Ignorance/ambivalence • High cost of solutions • Lack of access to shorelines

What criteria are most important in evaluating potential projects?

Water Quality	• Does it meet the 20/20 goal? • Does it close key data gaps? • Is it cost effective? • Can it be replicated in other parts of the Sound?
Water Quantity	• Better connection between GMA planning and water supply planning • Managing in-stream flows for full range of parameters rather than minimum flows • Overall ecosystem function
Species/Biodiversity	• Unique/rare ecosystem components • Keystone species and habitats • Fundamental processes that generate and control biodiversity
Habitat/Land Use	• What makes the biggest difference • Can be incentivized • Connectivity • Addressing public values • Prevention • Balance of local and regional land use changes
Human Health/Quality of Life	• Social feasibility • Political feasibility • Cost

Following the breakout sessions, participants were asked if the session was useful. The following are the responses. Answers are highlighted in italics:

- The Partnership needs to do a better job getting advance notice out to increase the attendance at these meetings.

- It would be beneficial to make a distinction between existing threats and future threats.

- The threats summary graphic is a useful tool, but the color scheme is confusing. Could a similar diagram be developed for other goals? *A draft was developed and presented at the science workshop.*

- It would be helpful to have more background on where the data on the posters and in the existing studies comes from.

- Human health is an important factor to consider, but it will require a more qualitative way of thinking. This would make it easier for people to see the connection to their own lives.

- Harbor seal blood analysis would be a good indicator for human health.

- What happens at the community conversation this evening? *We will present basic information about the Partnership for those with less background and give people an opportunity to share their thoughts and concerns.*

Participants were asked to share their comments on the break-out group discussions. The following are the responses:

- Breakout sessions seemed rushed.

- More opportunity to prepare for them would have been helpful.

- Would be helpful to have more in-depth discussion of the data that was presented to the larger group.

- Be sure to mention on the agenda that people should take some time to visit the displays.

- Place flip charts next to the displays for people to make comments.

- Although I am very supportive of the Partnership, I am very concerned that it has left itself vulnerable to attacks. The Government role may not be well received in some communities. It is important that the message be well-defended.

Wrap-Up
Martha Neuman thanked people for coming and invited participants to fill out comment cards and/or submit comments on the Web site.