

## **North Central Action Area Meeting (Silverdale)**

July 22, 2008

Silverdale Community Center

### **Meeting Purpose**

The Puget Sound Partnership held a workshop in Silverdale on July 22, 2008 to gather perspectives from stakeholders and add local knowledge and expertise to Partnership work. The meeting focused on reviewing the Partnership's regional priorities for the recovery of Puget Sound, discussing the newly-drafted action area profile and identifying local priorities.

### **Meeting Overview**

Approximately 51 people attended the workshop at the Silverdale Community Center. Among those represented were local and tribal governments, local organizations, businesses, federal and state agencies, non-profit organizations, and citizens.

### **Meeting Summary**

Angie Thomson, meeting facilitator, welcomed everyone to the meeting and thanked them for coming. Angie recognized those affiliated with the Partnership in attendance: Commissioner Steve Bauer, Representative Christine Rolfes, Martha Neuman, Sara Lingafelter, and Bob Johnston.

Steve Bauer, North Central Action Area representative on the Ecosystem Coordination Board, formally welcomed the group and thanked them for coming. He said that he has heard some apprehensions about the Puget Sound Partnership, but that this is truly a partnership and we are working together toward a common goal to clean up the Sound. He said the action area profile is really important and that we need to take some time to look closely at it and provide some important information this afternoon.

Martha Neuman, Action Agenda Director, introduced herself and gave a brief presentation about the Partnership. She underscored the importance of the Action Agenda as a living, adaptable roadmap for the protection and restoration of Puget Sound. She outlined the Partnership's role and gave a timeline of the Action Agenda development process, including: inventory work, February and March action area meetings, and topic forums.

### **Session 1: Strategic priorities and action area profile**

---

Martha Neuman briefly described the initial strategic priorities. She mentioned that the priorities are based on the work of the Topic Forums and have been reviewed by the Leadership Council and Ecosystem Coordination Board. She underscored the importance of efficiency and effectiveness in the process. She explained that every action area will

have a chance to weigh in and give feedback as to whether or not these priorities capture the essence of local environmental efforts.

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

- Are the four priorities equal? *You can help us decide that. We have not had that discussion. At this point, they are not ranked.*

Sara Lingafelter, Regional Liaison, presented the North Central Action Area Profile. She explained that in developing the profile, key information was culled from existing studies, locally reviewed and then written by one author. Sara asked participants to go through the profile section by section and provide high level comments.

Sara also welcomed people to make comments using the Partnership Web site via e-mail, comment forms, the online discussion forum, mail, or by contacting Sara directly.

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

- I heard that the Partnership wants to move away from a salmon-centric model, but it would be nice to have some information on pocket estuaries. Salmon move from one estuary to the next as they leave the Sound and I think it would be a good indication of the health of the region. We need some more site specific information on water quality in this area. I'd like to see the comparison between urban, rural and industrial. I'd also like to see the numbers on fish harvests.
- Does shoreline hardening have an effect on the Sound? What is the impact? I don't see it on the stressor list.
- I think there should be a finer breakdown of the action area since the communities are so different, the water bodies are different, and the stressors are very different.
- You're missing what's below the water's surface in the physical description. We have some very unique characteristics including the rocky reef habitat.
- The shellfish beds need to be added. Over the past 10-15 years, the number of beaches approved for shellfish harvest has at least doubled. Water quality has to be very good to be approved.
- Are you looking at using tidal flows for energy? It would be a great revenue source.
- It worries me that there is nothing written about invasive species. Invasive species have the second largest impact on biodiversity. We need to call out those issues.
- The document is not uniform in how it references our area. In some places it's Kitsap County, in other places the entire action area is referenced.
- You list 13 local watersheds and 39 pocket estuaries. Do you have an accurate map that shows where those are? *We may not have put the references on here, but*

*the information does have a source so we can work with you to get them on the map.*

- We have maps of estuaries and pocket estuaries and can offer them.
- We have over 250 creeks so 250 different watersheds. As Poulsbo expands, we're trying to address issues relative to the Growth Management Act, but it's tough to grow and protect our watersheds. How do we approach these issues?
- How do we balance overhanging vegetation needs without blocking people's view?
- There are twelve port districts within Kitsap County, that's very unique to this action area.
- The profile discusses lumber and shipping industries, but the biggest stressors are the shipyard and the naval facilities. This should also be reflected in the drawing.
- Population increase is well highlighted in the profile but what is lacking is the transportation to move those people. What is the impact of that transportation on the Sound?
- You need to look at toxic waste and toxic mixing zones Sound-wide.
- Is it correct that the profile states that 80% of our water comes from ground water? The City of Bremerton gets water from the upper portion of the Union River. I know it's not in this action area but it is important to clarify.
- I think it is valuable to discuss past work in addressing the issues that face the Sound. Many shellfish areas have been reopened, there has been a lot of work and energy so far but we need better coordination.
- In the ecosystem stressor section, take the first paragraph about toxic legacy and move it to the end. We do see areas where toxics are an issue, but habitat modification and bacterial contamination are more prevalent.
- It would be helpful to see the percent of forest cover for each action area.
- It would be helpful to see the percent of salmon habitat that is not accessible.
- Are there shorelines that are more important to the Chinook salmon that would allow them to thrive here?
- The profile should list the range of shoreline armoring.
- Note the closed shellfish beds and their location more specifically.
- List the size of streams and number. This is unique to this action area.
- The shoreline armoring paragraph has a specific reference to residents. Can you be gentler with the wording?
- The information on Port Blakely is too specific for this overview.
- It says under stressors that we can expect 100,000 people coming to Kitsap County. I think a frame of reference for that number would be helpful.
- I think there should be a second section that breaks down our action area into smaller sections. It would be more useful for those people who are making policy decisions.
- I'd like to know how this profile will be used. It needs to be available, accessible and meaningful so that people can relate to it. *This feedback has come across the board. We need to get a little more specific. Originally, the profiles were just a*

*communication piece, but people want to see something more specific. We can make them more robust.*

- This area is a beautiful destination to people and boaters. How does boat traffic, and how they dispose of waste, impact our area?
- I'd like to see the dollar amount for the economic services that the Puget Sound provides to this community.
- We are overlooking the current regulations to protect and restore Puget Sound. The agencies are lacking the money to enforce these existing regulations.
- Profile can be used as community outreach tool – directing people where to go for more information.
- I'd like to see more on habitat and wildlife in the profile. It is important to the landscape. There are GIS-type maps available.
- Are you going to do a more generic view of the Sound? Many features are Sound-wide. *Yes.*
- I noticed the profile only describes stressors, not benefits. There are a lot of benefits here, like the Poulsbo Marine Science Center.

Martha asked if a local roles and responsibilities section would be helpful.

- It sounds dangerous. You'd inevitably miss someone. How about a high level bibliography?
- There would be some redundancy but you have to get through that list to get to who is the lead and what are the roles and responsibility. It would be a helpful tool.

Angie drew attention to the map and the cartoon in the back. She asked people to comment on them now or to put sticky notes on the map during the break.

## **Session 2: Aligning local and regional priorities**

---

Angie led the group in discussing each of the Partnership's four initial priorities. The following questions were used as a basis for discussion of each priority:

1. What are you currently doing in support of this priority?
2. What are the top priorities?
3. What are the local barriers to achieving the priority?
4. What else can you do to help the Partnership achieve this priority? How can the Partnership help you achieve this priority in your action area?

### **Priority D: *Prevent the sources of water pollution***

- This area is doing a great job of using Low Impact Development (LID). All four cities in Kitsap County and Kitsap County itself are working on LID. We also need to encourage more aquifer recharge.

- We've gone through an exercise to look at the impairment to the ecosystem. Fecal coliform is one of the biggest issues here. This is measurable and can have measurable clean-up that you can communicate back to the public. In both on-site septic and stormwater management you address other issues as you take care of the nutrients. Resources are a barrier. I think a lot of local programs could readjust what they are doing to help with the Partnership's priorities.
- The Growth Management Act does not allow us to run sewers outside of the Urban Growth Area. In this area, we have so much development along shoreline areas it would be valuable to be able to run sewers there. Can we make an exception? This would be worthwhile for the Partnership to look at.
- We've helped homeowners fix their on-site sewer systems. What we're not doing is integrating management, maintenance skills and education. We could do cluster systems in a lot of these areas. The Partnership could start some of the conversations with the utility districts to make this happen.
- One of the important things to do is to continue to fund low-interest loans to homeowners to repair septic systems.
- Stormwater management for businesses is helping to make the systems cleaner. Education is helping. We're also documenting a big problem with businesses that generate grease and food waste.
- I monitor septic systems. I know that there are technologies to monitor septic and drainfields. Bioremediation technology is available but the local authorities are dragging their feet in accepting it as an approved technology.
- The key to getting an individual to change their behavior is to convince them that it's important and that it affects them.
- The septic loan program is great and there should be a focus on that. Focus on the low-hanging fruit like stormwater runoff. The Telework Pilot Project is the first in the State.
- Public education is incredibly important.
- Automobiles contribute to stormwater runoff. You should encourage bike-friendly communities.
- State and local government has no control of discharge from commercial boating or shipping. The Coast Guard can enforce, but their priority is homeland security. What happens to the waste from these boats? The Partnership could work with the federal government to change the regulation (currently, the Clean Water Act exempts them). *The Partnership has gone back and testified before Congress to be designated as separate body of water (like Chesapeake Bay) which will help with regulations.*
- Septics Model Pollution Identification Protection (PICS) works.
- Technologies exist for on-site systems. Work with the government to allow these.
- The Department of Ecology Stormwater Manual calls for no discharge. West Sound Utility is looking at the same thing. The standards need to be more flexible for water reclamation.

- Homeowners are currently allowed to buy any pesticide or fertilizer and put it on their lawn. Can we provide incentives for people to buy vegetation instead of lawn fertilizer? WSU Extension - Kitsap County education has been good but we still need more education and help from higher ups.
- There are new protocols with county Department of Health for approving new on-site septic technologies that work but are not currently allowed or available to homeowners. If we could establish protocols at the State level, we could lower costs significantly for homeowners and the State, making it more efficient for homeowners and the environment.
- Fertilizer and pesticides should not be available at all. We need an education program focused on this issue.
- Often new regulations are appropriately stringent but it's too hard to monitor all of the existing homes. How much difference can we make by regulating the small things?
- We have so much shoreline and shoreline development in Kitsap County that is served by septic systems. We cannot fund fixes for the septic and we can't get these people on sewer systems due to the Growth Management act, even though many areas might have the required density levels.
- Some of the ports are starting to have wastewater receptacles for recreational boaters. They are good but there is no money for maintenance.
- There seems to be a lot of sewer overflow in Dyes Inlet. How do we stop that?
- I like the source control emphasis; it's more cost effective. I think we can dust off the non-point access plans from the late 80s and early 90s, use them and fund them.
- Stormwater retrofitting needs to be emphasized and we need to reemphasize the maintenance.
- Education and outreach for non-point pollution needs to happen.
- We need more oil spill prevention and better funding for the Department of Natural Resources prevention program. We need to fund a permanent rescue tug at Neah Bay and more tugs through the Sound.
- We have a problem with bacteria for two key reasons. One is animals and livestock and the other is pet waste, which tends to be ignored, but is definitely an issue.
- The City of Bremerton has had tremendous success in reducing sewage overflows in Dyes Inlet and separating stormwater from sanitary sewers.

**Priority C: *Reestablish the ecosystem processes that sustain Puget Sound***

- Put a system in place to get rid of invasive species. We need to educate. A lot of people don't know what an invasive species is and don't know what to look for. We need funding for maintenance and restoration.

- There is a pilot program for nurseries to educate people on invasive species but consumerism makes it tough. I think that nurseries should pay into an account for insurance for potential invasive plants.
- There is a role for the Partnership in the shoreline master plans to let communities know how they fit into the local scene. We need to educate each other about other programs and how they operate. The Partnership can get people together and start the conversations.
- The key to restoration is understanding ecosystem patterns. Our understanding is incomplete. We need funding for science first.
- A more complete understanding of the ecosystem processes is important. We don't look at the ecosystem until you come in for a permit. We need education and incentives.
- Hard armoring has huge impacts ecologically. Master plans and permitting need to be addressed in this regard.
- We need science as well as the political piece. The partnership can weigh in on these issues. I'd like to see the Partnership stepping up on these issues.
- Mitigation is important. There should be incentives for people to put in quality buffers.
- There needs to be incentives for every day people; not just new development.
- Property taxes should be used for incentives.
- One of the things the Partnership will have to deal with is the septic versus stormwater issues. There is a lot of water making it into the Sound at pre-development standards. We need to look at existing buildings.
- The Pierce County basin plans look at stream sections. They look at existing streams, approaches, what needs to be protected and who has access.
- We know a lot about the physical characteristics but not biological or chemical. The levy set back is helping to maintain streams but we need more maintenance.
- Removal of fill in estuaries is important.
- Invasive aquatic nuisance species can destroy an ecosystem.
- Instead of burning wood, it can be coated with a chemical and then used again.
- When we do restoration projects, we need to be cognizant of the original form of the ecosystem.
- People don't know what watershed they're in and they need to identify with their watershed. The planning departments need to look at watersheds holistically. Everyone has a stake in this.
- Salmon are in decline and this has a connection to ecosystem health. Education and outreach is needed. We need to look at the entire run of salmon to understand where the water goes.
- Look at the salmon recovery plan for Chinook. If we follow an ecosystem based plan for salmon, we'll do some good for all species. If we do one thing, it will have a domino effect. Same approach for watersheds but we need the resources.

**Priority B: *Protect the intact ecosystem processes that sustain Puget Sound***

- If we can make the Sound a no discharge area for commercial boats we will prevent invasive species from coming in.
- We need to understand the local jurisdictions' resources. We are all working on our shoreline master plans for 2011. How can we do the work together?
- Right now the economy is the priority. If we don't put the environment first, we're going to lose the environment. We saw consequences from clear cutting with the mud slides last winter. We need to take a deeper fundamental look at the way we log; environment first, profit second.
- We need to recognize that rich consumer societies take care of their environment. The economy drives protection.
- We need to be somewhere in the middle of focusing on the environment and focusing on the economy. Our society drives what products our industries supply.
- We need to acquire high quality habitat. There is money to buy it, but there isn't money to maintain it. The Partnership could fund maintenance.
- We need to look at important feeder bluff areas. People build houses above feeder bluffs, then in a couple years there is erosion and they have to put a bulkhead below.
- Let's acquire and protect flood plains so that they are not developed.
- There are contradicting and overlapping policies. We're trying to acquire flood plain property and the County is trying to protect it.
- We need to prioritize the watershed clean ups and purchase the necessary land.
- We should try moving our reclaimed wastewater and make sure there is money to manage it.
- The 2514 watershed plan is not approved here. Work has been done but it needs to continue.
- Are we expecting urban and rural environments to respond equally to the growth we are expecting?
- This is a community responsibility and the financial burden should be spread throughout the community. Right now the burden falls on the property owners.
- We are trying to protect the ecosystem, but large ship wakes can damage shorelines.
- Fish shouldn't need to be 'listed' before they becomes important enough to protect.
- We can't buy all the land needed to support ecosystems. We need to utilize open space tax reductions. Modify for smaller lots where people can have meaningful participation. We need an incentive for undeveloped land. This is a cooperative effort.
- There was a citizen study done under the Puget Sound Action Team on the Chico Watershed. Let's look at this process and get more people involved.
- We need to utilize the tax incentives for property owners to conserve their land. We have tools in place but we need to look at them creatively to use them for other people.

- People for Puget Sound identified institutional barriers in a document submitted to the Partnership. The document touches on budget, enforcement, accountability, Sound-wide consistency and communities, cumulative efforts, monitoring and adaptive management.
- Public education is important.
- Most media has to be built on advertisers so we rely on the Partnership and like organizations to fund our educational television programs.

**Priority A: *Ensure that activities and funding are focused on the most urgent and important problems facing the Sound(That is: Work more effectively and efficiently on priorities)***

- We want to see the highest and best use in all of these projects and prioritizing them with the best available science. We'd like to see the Partnership work with agencies and tribes. There are diminishing resources in the government so we're not going to see a lot of extra dollars. Priority A is very smart for the Partnership to include.
- We recognize the value of NPDES statewide but there is a concern about how we afford it.
- Stakeholders sitting down and talking is very effective and I'm glad it is more common now.
- There is a finite amount of money available and large amounts of pollutants in the Sound. We cannot control everything. We need to get back to the biology and decide what's healthy and what isn't. We need to use the EPA Risk Assessment Analysis.
- I know the City of Bremerton is working on the problem of sewer breakage at low tide but now it seems like we have a problem with the tribes.
- I know the Partnership is going to look at regulatory gaps. Are there legislative issues?
- Use a GIS database to look at mitigation banking. There is the potential for having a computerized program for the public to see what the most important projects are and how to direct the money to get the most 'bang for the buck.'
- I think that redundancy is important for robustness. We don't want to be too efficient or focused; we'll lose some of the pieces of the ecosystems. The most efficient way is not always the best thing.
- We need to get stakeholders together. We've dealt with things topic by topic instead of by area. It will be more effective to get the pieces together in a certain area.
- What is the more urgent and important area? What about the 'low hanging fruit?' *I think this needs some rewording. There are other things that we want to use when considering projects.*

- The ecological priorities for the region should be based on the problems. Commission the universities to do studies and protect the process from politics. Then, prioritize and let politics decide where the funding will come from.
- We need clearly articulated outcomes, both Sound-wide and within action areas. What defines success? People will modify their programs if they know.
- Focus on the most urgent and important problems and act on the solutions. Don't wait for science. We already know a lot, let's get it done.
- Let's look at the difference between urban and rural areas and the difference between long-term and short-term effects.
- We've over compartmentalized how we fund things. Let's look at why.
- The accountability piece of this process will require sophistication from the Partnership.
- How do we monitor the local prioritization? How does the Partnership deal with local versus state accountability?
- All shoreline master plans have to be updated by 2011. This was originally funded by Department of Ecology (ECY) but it's not enough money now. I know that a lot of cities would like to work with the County. ECY should coordinate with the Partnership on this opportunity to work across state and local levels.
- We need to ensure that we continuously choose the most urgent projects and monitor them. This effort can't stop after the Action Agenda is complete.
- There are local bureaucratic barriers. For example, Pierce County received a \$75,000 shellfish grant but had to spend a lot of time and money to put together a local agreement. We could run these programs a little more smoothly.
- Education needs to be thought of globally as well as part and parcel of each individual project.
- We need more science. Right now the State only gives a small percentage to science.
- The Partnership might look into capacity building.
- You need to target the most urgent projects and make sure people feel some equity. I think there are creative ways to get buy in. We have to remember that it doesn't matter who 'wins' and who 'loses.'
- Providing people with information does not necessarily get people to change their behavior. We need to figure out what motivates them and what inhibits them.

### **Wrap Up and Next Steps**

Martha thanked everyone for coming and supporting this process. Martha told the group that comments could be submitted until August 15, 2008. She explained the Partnership would be back in September for another round of action area meetings to update people on the status of the Action Agenda and give some more specific information about its content. Lastly, Martha talked about the SEPA process that the Partnership is currently engaged in. The Partnership is developing a SEPA checklist for the Action Agenda and a determination is pending, after which there will be a public comment period.

Commissioner Bauer thanked the staff and the members of the public for being at the meeting and for the stimulating conversation. He said that the profile discussion was very valuable. He felt that the profile would be important information for the Partnership, but also for people in this action area. He thanked people for stepping back and talking holistically about the Sound rather than focusing on individual organizations.