

# PUGET SOUND PARTNERSHIP LEADERSHIP COUNCIL

## Agenda Item Briefing Sheet

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**Meeting Date:** July 26, 2007

**Agenda Item:** TAB 3: Action Agenda Development Process Overview

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**Presenter(s):** Martha Neuman

**Action Requested:** Briefing and Guidance

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### **Background:**

The statute creating the Puget Sound Partnership also requires that the Leadership Council develop and adopt a comprehensive plan for Puget Sound, called the 2020 Action Agenda. The statute includes goals and objectives for the plan, as well as other requirements. The final 2020 Action Agenda must be adopted by the Leadership Council by September 1, 2008.

Because of the tight turn-around time for adoption of the Action Agenda, staff will need to begin working on developing the process for producing the Agenda immediately. The attached materials provide background on the statutory requirements for the Agenda, descriptions of what work has already been accomplished, and concepts on how to proceed. At a future meeting of the Leadership Council, staff will present a detailed proposal on the framework of the Action Agenda and the process to develop the plan over the course of the next year.

Staff is seeking direction from the Council on initial thoughts on the structure of the Action Agenda and the development process to assist the staff in preparing the more detailed proposal.

In proceeding with early work on developing proposals for your future consideration on an Action Agenda process, it would be helpful to have some general guidance and principles from the Council. Attached you will find a list of proposed guidance and principles. Staff will discuss these and seeks the input of the Council on them.

### **Supporting Materials:**

1. 2020 Action Agenda Background Briefing – July 22, 2007
2. Discussion Draft of Proposed Guidelines and Principles for Development of the Action Agenda – July 22, 2007

# **Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council**

## **2020 Action Agenda Background Briefing**

### **July 22, 2007**

**Purpose:** The statute creating the Puget Sound Partnership directs the Leadership Council to adopt the 2020 Action Agenda by September 1, 2008. At the July 26<sup>th</sup> meeting, the Leadership Council will review and discuss the requirements of the Action Agenda and provide direction on guidelines and principles for its development.

This briefing paper provides background on:

- why the region needs a 2020 Action Agenda,
- the 2020 Action Agenda statutory goals, objectives, and parameters,
- the National Estuary Program guidelines for a plan,
- a summary of the Action Agenda scoping process conducted in the spring-summer 2007,
- and next steps.

A separate handout describes possible Action Agenda development guidelines and principles.

#### **Why does the Puget Sound region need a 2020 Action Agenda?**

Across Puget Sound, many communities, government agencies, NGOs, businesses, and citizens are actively engaged in efforts to protect and restore Puget Sound. Implementation of existing plans and programs is critical and must continue. While implementation of these plans is likely to benefit the ecosystem, the actions may not be well aligned with the Partnership goals and objectives (listed below); or what is needed to assure a healthy Puget Sound by 2020. There may be overlapping or even conflicting goals; or ecosystem goals in addition to those not being addressed.

For example, the current overarching plan for Puget Sound is the 2000 Puget Sound Water Quality Management Plan with related biennial work plans. This plan is primarily, focused on actions being taken by state agencies in marine waters. Other major plans that span the ecosystem such as the Salmon Recovery Plan and Orca Recovery Plan are not coordinated with one another or the state plan. In addition, the numerous other plans that address specific problems (e.g., growth management, shoreline management, toxic cleanup, shoreline restoration) or needs in geographic areas (e.g., dissolved oxygen in Hood Canal) are not well integrated with other priorities.

The 2020 Action Agenda can provide a system-wide perspective for setting priorities and taking action. This action agenda needs to help us achieve a clearly defined and widely understood healthy Puget Sound by 2020. A single, over-arching plan can help make sure that we focus and coordinate our collective efforts on reaching the 2020 goals. This

means agreeing and acting on agreed upon high priority concerns and effective actions with specific tasks, responsibilities, and commitments to greatly improve accountability.

## **The 2020 Action Agenda, Goals and Objectives as outlined in the Statute**

### Action Agenda Goals

- A healthy and prosperous human population supported by a healthy Puget Sound that is not threatened by changes in the ecosystem
- A quality of life that is sustained by a functioning ecosystem
- Healthy and sustaining populations of native species in Puget Sound, including a robust food web
- A healthy Puget Sound where freshwater, estuary, nearshore, marine, and upland habitats are protected, restored, and maintained.
- An ecosystem that is supported by groundwater levels as well as river and stream flow levels sufficient to sustain people, fish, and wildlife, and the natural functions of the environment
- Fresh and marine waters and sediments of sufficient quality so that the waters in the region are safe for drinking, swimming, shellfish harvest and consumption, and other human uses and are not harmful to the native marine mammals, fish, birds, and shellfish of the region.

### Action Agenda Objectives

Most of the objectives are related to specific goals, although some apply to more than one goal.

- Protect existing habitat and prevent further losses
- Restore habitat functions and values
- Significantly reduce toxics entering Puget Sound fresh and marine waters
- Significantly reduce nutrients and pathogens entering Puget Sound fresh and marine waters
- Improve water quality and habitat by managing stormwater runoff
- Provide water for people, fish and wildlife, and the environment
- Protect ecosystem biodiversity and recover imperiled species
- Build and sustain the capacity for action

## **Requirements and Statutory Guidance**

There are two complementary sets of guidance, one statutory, the other programmatic: The Puget Sound Partnership statute and the National Estuary Program.

The statute states that the Action Agenda “shall consist of the goals and objectives, implementation strategies to meet measurable outcomes, benchmarks, and identification of responsible entities.” It is to be organized and maintained in a single document. The statute lays out the following general guidelines for developing the Action Agenda and lists components (note that these are organized slightly differently than in the statute).

Italics indicate reader clarification not statutory language. Roles for The Leadership Council, Ecosystem Coordination Board, and others are attached to this handout.

Statutory Directions for the Action Agenda:

- Address all geographic areas of Puget Sound including upland areas and tributary rivers and streams that affect Puget Sound (*note this is expands the previous scope of the former Puget Sound Action Team to include the land and waters from the Cascade Crest to the Strait of Juan de Fuca*).
- Describe the problems affecting Puget Sound's health
- Incorporate existing plans (there is a partial list in the statute)
- Meet the goals and objectives listed in the statute, including measurable outcomes for each goal and objective specifically describing what will be achieved, how it will be quantified, and how progress towards outcomes will be measured. Include near-term and long-term benchmarks designed to ensure continuous progress. Incorporate any additional goals adopted by the council. (**NOTE:** You are not limited to goals listed in the statute. Goals and objectives may be added as you deem necessary to accomplish the overall objective of a healthy Puget Sound by 2020.)
- Identify and prioritize the strategies and actions necessary to restore and protect Puget Sound (including Hood Canal) and to achieve the goals and objectives listed above.
- Identify the agency, entity, or person responsible for completing the necessary strategies and actions, and potential sources of funding.
- Incorporate appropriate actions to carry out the biennial science work plan (*e.g., monitoring, adaptive management, and related work*).
- Funding strategy relating to the strategies and actions.

The Action Agenda can be revised as needed and implementation strategies can be revised every two years using an adaptive management process. The biennial update will include: description of prioritized actions necessary in the biennium to achieve the goals, objectives, outcomes, and benchmarks of progress; implementation responsibilities; and biennial benchmarks for near term actions.

National Estuary Program Guidelines

Puget Sound is part of the National Estuary Program—a U.S. Environmental Protection Agency Program set up to improve the quality of estuaries of national importance. The Clean Water Action Section 320 directs EPA to develop plans for attaining or maintaining water quality in an estuary. This includes protection of public water supplies and the protection and propagation of a balanced, indigenous population of shellfish, fish, and wildlife. In addition the progress is aimed at allowing water related recreational activities and the control of point and non-point sources of pollution.

Each program, such as the one in Puget Sound, establishes a Comprehensive Conservation and Management Plan (CCMP) to meet the goals of Section 320. The 2020 Action Agenda will become the new CCMP. The 2000 Water Quality Plan will be the

CCMP until the Action Agenda is adopted. The requirements of the CCMP are largely consistent with the statutory direction. Examples include a collaborative approach to decision making and problem solving; characterizing problems based on scientific data; recommendations for addressing gaps and expanding strengths of the regulatory and institutional framework; action plans with goals and objectives including who, what, where, when, how, and cost for implementation, a finance plan and an implementation strategy. There are several and they need to be harmonized with our other work.

### **Scoping the 2020 Action Agenda**

Recognizing that the Leadership Council and Executive Director would quickly need to make decisions about the content, process, and staffing to create the Action Agenda, the co-chairs of the 2006 Partnership asked Ron Shultz (Partnership Interim Executive Director and former Director of Programs for the Puget Sound Action Team) and Martha Neuman (lead staff to the 2006 Partnership), in consultation with Mary Ruckelshaus (Chair of the 2006 Partnership Science Working Group), to scope the Action Agenda in terms of options of content and process. The goal was to give the new Partnership a sense of what can be accomplished in the timeframe and how much it will cost.

Using the Partnership goals and objectives of the statutory requirements, and the National Estuary Program guidelines, work is already underway. We have identified the following crucial aspects of the Action Agenda:

- Probable timeline to develop the Action Agenda
- Advancements that would be possible by September 1, 2008
- Content
- Scope of work for most major components of the Action Agenda.
- Principles and guidelines to consider for development of the Action Agenda. These are based on the 2006 Partnership process, spring 2007 input, and prior planning experience. (these principles and guidelines are listed in the separate handout labeled Action Agenda planning principles)
- Next steps for moving forward

### Possible Timeline

One year is a very short time to develop an ecosystem plan for Puget Sound. This complex process involves significantly engaging government agencies at all levels, interested parties and the public, integrating existing work, reaching agreement on priorities within action areas and sound-wide, and preparing a draft and final plan. This work will need to proceed quickly while the Partnership is still forming. The approximate work timeline is very tight with little wiggle room. It is particularly tight for the summer of 2008 to turn a draft into a final plan. We will work with the Environmental Protection Agency on what constitutes a draft plan for NEP purposes for their review.

Based on the requirements in state statute and for the NEP, Partnership staff recommends the following general timeline for the Action Agenda process:

August 2007-February 2008: Conduct analytic work; significant government and public engagement

March-April 2008: Integration of work elements; preparation of draft Action Agenda

May – June 2008: Public review period (30-60 days)

July-August 2008: Preparation and Leadership Council approval of final plan

#### Advancements possible by September 1, 2008

Building on the current plan for Puget Sound, as well as the many other existing plans and programs throughout the region, the 2020 Action Agenda adopted by September 1, 2008 can be a substantial step forward in a number of respects:

- Define precisely what a healthy Sound would look like, and define where we are going.
- Create a single set of scientifically-based ecosystem priorities and actions based on specific sub-regional priorities and actions from the Cascade crest to the Strait of Juan de Fuca. The actions would have assignments for implementation and be tied to measurable outcomes and benchmarks.
- Strategy and action advancements (approaches and projects used to achieve the goals and objectives) in key issue areas where immediate progress is needed. This could be policy advancement on challenging issues, technical advancement, and/or improving our understanding about what actions are most effective. Based on the 2006 Partnership work and other ongoing work in the region, these could include, but are not limited to toxic loading, nutrient and pathogen loading, habitat protection, stormwater, control, and nearshore habitat protection and restoration priorities.
- Significantly engage governments and constituents, interests and communities during the planning process to help build the long-term support and commitment to sustain a healthy ecosystem.
- Improving the scientific certainty of our actions necessary so that we can successfully manage Puget Sound as an ecosystem over the long-term.

#### Content

The basic content of the Action Agenda may include the following (there are several different ways it can be organized and presented):

- Background descriptions of Puget Sound
- Problem overview
- Describe what a healthy Puget Sound would look like.
- Ecosystem goals and related objectives with measurable ecosystem outcomes and benchmarks to measure progress (likely near-term and long-term benchmarks)
- Overarching ecosystem-wide strategies and actions by goal (human prosperity, human health, species, habitat, water quality, and water quantity) and related

objectives with measurable programmatic benchmarks and implementation commitments.

- Action Area strategies and actions by goal (human prosperity, human health, species, habitat, water quality, and water quantity) and related objectives with measurable programmatic benchmarks and implementation commitments.
- Prioritized scientific needs from the Biennial Science Plan and Science Work Program.
- Identification of costs of achievement and a funding strategy

#### Scoping process and scope of work prepared

Over the past few months, several task groups were organized to provide initial thoughts and specific approaches in two areas:

1. The overall development process and framework of the Action Agenda; and,
2. Identification of areas where content gains could be made through additional work, particularly on strategies.

These task, or “scoping groups” were designed to be both efficient and inclusive with a small group leading the work and more broadly vetting ideas with a wide range of scientific and policy expertise in Puget Sound. People were willing and enthusiastic to participate even though we could not outline an overall process without the Leadership Council in place.

Five of the groups were asked to focus on five areas identified as important in the 2006 Partnership process: toxics loading, nutrient and pathogen loading, habitat protection, nearshore restoration and protection, and stormwater. Participants in these scoping groups were asked to identify possible strategy advancement in each area through additional scientific and/or policy analyses. These groups were not asked to identify specific actions for these areas. This is a process that will occur later.

Other scoping groups and the status of each include:

- A. Overall framework for content needs and process, as well as staffing options. This work was conducted primarily by staff and is described in this handout and the proposed principles handout. It includes a framework of how the process might flow. This is attached as a graphic. Preparation of the Action Agenda will require focused staff. Depending on the expertise needed, this could be a combination of in-house staff, loaned staff from agencies, and consultants. A decision on this will be made by the Leadership Council and the Executive Director at a later date.
- B. Participation and Engagement. As identified in the principles handout, significant participation and engagement in the process will likely be highly desirable. A dinner meeting with diverse perspectives was held to brainstorm public engagement and staff has prepared ideas about participation and engagement options and considerations. Further direction from the Leadership Council will help refine this work.

- C. Measurable ecosystem outcomes, benchmarks, and indicators. Although this is an assignment for the Science Panel which will need significant ownership over the work, initial scoping was conducted to gain a sense of the overall accomplishments and level of effort needed. Generating quantitative, measurable outcomes for each of the ecosystem goals will take time because data needed to make estimates (such as food web/ecosystem models) are currently not available. In the meantime, identifying benchmarks, or interim targets will help in developing strategies by providing near-term milestones for ecosystem goals. The statute states that the Science Panel identifies the ecosystem indicators and benchmarks by July 31, 2008 and the Council will confer with the Panel on incorporating these into the Action Agenda. Staff recommend that the indicators and benchmark work be conducted on the same timeline as the rest of the Action Agenda to be included in a draft.
- D. Prioritized actions for sub-regions and the ecosystem. The following four are scientific and policy analyses that are currently being conducted and could then be integrated for decision-making:
- i. *Scientific risk analysis* using existing data to 1) estimate the current status of each of the ecosystem goals, and 2) assess the vulnerability of the ecosystem components in terms of degree of threats and resiliency. NOAA Fisheries is conducting this work and has added a diverse expert steering group.
  - ii. *Integrate existing plans and programs with results of the risk analysis* to identify existing commitments and funding that can be affirmed, existing programmatic benchmarks, as well as gaps, overlaps, and conflicts in effort. The level of work conducted will depend on resources available. This work will need lots of coordination with local interests.
  - iii. *Strategy advancement*:
    - a. For each goal and associated objectives, document the scientific agreement about the problem and certainty about the strategies and actions to address the problem. This was identified as a need in several of the topic scoping groups and some initial work is in place. The Science Panel would need to guide the work.
    - b. New or ongoing scientific and/or policy analyses completed in the next several months. This work has been initially scoped and some work is in process (nearshore restoration/protection locations and toxic loading). Whether additional work can be conducted for other topics will depend on funds and time available, including donated resources from other organizations.
    - c. Policy dialogue focused on implementation impediments and needs. This is conceptual. The work needs to be carefully

discussed with the Leadership Council, Executive Director, and Ecosystem Coordination Board.

- d. Longer-term analyses that will help improve the certainty of our actions and ecosystem-based management over time, especially in key areas where basic ecosystem understanding is low. Two key areas identified are a circulation model (to understand the fate and transport of toxics, nutrient, and pathogen loading) and ecosystem/food web model (to help identify measurable outcomes and links within the ecosystem). An initial scope for the circulation model has been prepared and scoping is underway for the ecosystem/food web model.
- E. Biennial Science Plan and elements of the Science Program. This work will include elements such as monitoring and adaptive management and a prioritized research plan. Scoping has not been initiated as this work will need significant guidance from the Science Panel. Some ongoing work related to the Puget Assessment and Monitoring Program can be incorporated.
- F. Funding. This has not been initiated as it needs significant guiding and shaping by the Leadership Council and Executive Director.

#### Principles to consider for development of the Action Agenda

The content and process by which the Action Agenda is developed will need to be structured so that the Partnership can make progress and gain commitment of all who need to implement The Action Agenda. Based on feedback from the 2006 Partnership process and input during the spring and summer of 2007, we identified possible principles that could guide development of the Action Agenda. These principles are outlined in the second handout for a separate discussion.

#### Next steps for moving forward

- Solicitation for the Science Panel should begin soon so that the Partnership has scientific advisors in place.
- Ecosystem Coordination Board. By statute, the Board is to be in place no later than October 1, 2007. The Board will have a significant role in shaping the Action Agenda.
- Leadership Council guidance on governments and public participation and engagement.
- Refinement of Action Agenda framework including content, process, staff, and cost options. The Executive Director will need to review the proposed framework and guide decisions.

- Leadership Council thank you to those who participated in the scoping process to date. Although they have been thanked by Martha and Ron, many people are ready to continue to assist.
- Leadership Council encouragement of work in progress that supports the Action Agenda. This includes, but may not be limited to, Ecology and EPA toxics loadings analyses, Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Program, Salmon Recovery Council, and NOAA Fisheries.

### **Attachment: Summary of the Action Agenda Roles as described in Legislation**

The legislation identifies four leadership components of the Partnership and their roles related to the Action Agenda:

- Leadership Council: A seven-member council of independent citizens selected from throughout the Puget Sound Basin.
  - *Action Agenda role*: Adopt, revise, and guide implementation of the Action Agenda, set strategic priorities and benchmarks
  
- Ecosystem Coordination Board: A 27-member advisory board made up of involved parties from across the region.
  - *Action Agenda role*: Upon request of the Council, review and make recommendations regarding activities, projects, and programs proposed for inclusion in the Action Agenda, including assessing existing ecosystem scale management, restoration and protection plan elements, activities, projects, and programs for inclusion in the Action Agenda. Also: Assist the Council in conducting public education activities regarding threats to Puget Sound and about local implementation strategies to support the Action Agenda and recruit the active involvement of governmental and non-governmental entities, the private sector, and citizens working to achieve the recovery of Puget Sound.
  
- Science Panel. A nine-member panel will provide independent scientific advice and expertise to the Council for their decisions.
  - *Action Agenda role*: Assist the Council in developing and revising the Action Agenda, make recommendations to the Action Agenda, and make recommendations to the Council for updates or revisions. Identify environmental indicators measuring the health of Puget Sound, and recommend environmental benchmarks that need to be achieved to meet the goals of the Action Agenda. In addition, the biennial Science Work Plan and elements of the Science Work Program will likely need to be incorporated in the Action Agenda.
  
- Executive Director. The Director will lead the Partnership and employ a professional staff. Accountable to the Council and Governor.
  - *Action Agenda role*: The director would have a key role in working with the Leadership Council on the Action Agenda. Specific duties identified in legislation are: Work with the Ecosystem Coordination Board to compile and assess ecosystem scale management, restoration, and protection plans for the Puget Sound basin;
  
- Action Areas. The legislation specifies that the Partnership shall organize the Action Agenda work in geographic sub-regions. The seven sub-regions named (but not defined) in legislation are: Strait of Juan de Fuca, San Juan Islands, Whidbey Island, North central Puget Sound, South central Puget Sound, South Puget Sound, and Hood Canal. The sub-regions need to be defined.

- *Action Agenda role:* The Executive Director, working the Ecosystem Coordination Board representatives from each action area, shall invite appropriate tribes, local governments, and watershed groups to convene for the purpose of compiling the existing watershed programs relating or contributing to the health of Puget Sound. The participating groups should work to identify the applicable local plan elements, projects, and programs, together with estimated budget, timelines, and proposed funding sources, that are suitable for adoption into the Action Agenda. This may include a prioritization among plan elements, projects, and programs.
- Existing watershed groups, tribes, cities, counties, special purpose districts, private sector.
  - *Action Agenda role:* The legislation states the Partnership will develop the Action Agenda, in part, upon the foundation of existing watershed programs that address or contribute to the health of Puget Sound. To ensure full consideration of these watershed programs in a timely manner to meet the required date for adoption of the Action Agenda, the Partnership shall rely largely upon local watershed groups, tribes, cities, counties, special purpose districts, and the private sector, who are engaged in developing and implementing these programs.

**Puget Sound Partnership**  
**Discussion Draft of Proposed Guidelines and Principles for**  
**Development of the Action Agenda**  
**July 22, 2007**

**Purpose:** To assist staff in the development of the Action Agenda process, the Leadership Council is asked to provide input and direction on proposed guidelines and principles. This input and direction will set the tone for the development of the Action Agenda. This handout will be used to help guide a Leadership Council discussion of these principles. The list below is proposed for discussion purposes. Council members may also have some ideas for other guidelines and principles that will assist staff in this effort.

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Over the next year, the Puget Sound Partnership will create the 2020 Action Agenda. This will be a new guiding plan for the Puget Sound ecosystem that addresses the needs from the crest of the Cascade Mountains to the Strait of Juan de Fuca and encompasses the Partnership's six goals of human well-being and prosperity, human health, species, habitat, water quality, and water quantity.

The content of the Action Agenda and process by which it is created will help establish the credibility of the Partnership, demonstrate a commitment to working in collaboration, build enthusiasm for implementation commitments, and create a shared understanding about ecosystem and sub-regional priorities. Based on the statute, prior planning efforts, feedback from the 2006 Partnership process and input during the spring and summer of 2007, the following guidelines and principles could be considered. This list is not in any order of importance.

- **The Partnership encourages action and planning to improve effectiveness of actions.** While the Action Agenda is being developed, the Partnership will also encourage continued implementation and action of existing plans and programs. The Action Agenda will be an overarching plan to help make sure that actions are effective for the ecosystem now and over the long-term.
- **The Action Agenda will be a living and evolutionary plan.** One year is a very short time to develop an ecosystem plan for Puget Sound. This Action Agenda produced by September 1, 2008 will be the first of what should be considered a living document and iterative process. While the Action Agenda can be a significant step forward and the next evolution in managing Puget Sound as an ecosystem, should not be considered a finished plan. For work that cannot be accomplished in one year, actions necessary to complete the work can be identified. The Action Agenda can be improved over time as we learn more about the success of our actions and what is needed to continue to make progress so that we reach the 2020 goals.

The main gains that we can make by September 1, 2008:

- Creating a single set of scientifically-based ecosystem priorities and actions with sub-regional priorities and actions. The actions would have assignments for implementation and be tied to measurable outcomes and benchmarks.
  - Advancing key strategies and actions so that on-the-ground efforts are more effective. This could be accomplished by improved technical capacity, better ecological understanding about what is effective, and/or political advancement on challenging issues.
  - Significantly engaging governments, affected groups and individuals and communities during the planning process to help build the long-term support and commitment that is needed to sustain a healthy ecosystem.
  - Initiating key research needed to improve the certainty of our actions so that we can successfully manage Puget Sound as an ecosystem over the long-term.
- **The Action Agenda will address multiple goals and objectives of the Partnership: human health and prosperity, species, habitat, water quality, and water quantity.** The Partnership will strive to encourage constructive, inclusive conversations, as well as foster creative ways to make decisions that benefit multiple needs.
  - **The Action Agenda will primarily be developed from existing plans and work in progress.** The Partnership will work closely with governments and tribes, watershed groups, and others who helped develop plans and are implementing them. These are not be rewritten, although some priorities may need to be realigned as a result of overall ecosystem needs.
  - **The Action Agenda process should be clear and transparent from the beginning.** Interested parties and the public should understand the process including how decisions will be made and when and how to participate. This will be hard but very important.
  - **The Action Agenda itself should be easy to understand and practical.** The Action Agenda should be designed to be used by implementers every day. Plans that stay on the shelf are of no value.
  - **Collaboration and cooperation across sectors and interests is essential.** Many public agencies and other organizations are ready to offer expert staff assistance. Harnessing this enthusiasm in a constructive way could increase ownership, significantly help accomplish the work, and diversify the expertise available to the Partnership.
  - **Significant participation of interested parties and public engagement is vital.** Participation and broad engagement is essential for developing a high quality, well-supported Action Agenda. The diversity of interests, governments and the

public should be significantly engaged in the development of the Action Agenda to help increase ownership of and support for implementation, as well as establish credibility for the Partnership as a collaborative, inclusive entity that gets things done.

*\*\* Participation and engagement in development of the Action Agenda will be important for long-term implementation and success. More thoughts on participation and engagement are attached.*

- **Ecological, sub-regional, and local priorities are all important.** Puget Sound is large and diverse. What makes sense ecologically and socially varies around the sound. The Action Agenda will have sub-regional priorities that nest under ecosystem priorities.
- **Ongoing regional work that will inform the Action Agenda is supported and encouraged.** The Partnership will work with these organizations to figure how to work together and integrate work efforts. Examples include, but are not limited to:
  - NOAA Fisheries has started a risk analysis to identify status and priority threats. They added a steering committee of diverse agency experts to help guide and participate in the work. The results of this effort are anticipated to inform the Action Agenda.
  - Partnership staff and the department of Ecology and other agencies have embarked on several studies to help define the source and magnitude of toxic loadings into Puget Sound.
  - The Puget Sound Nearshore Restoration Project is in the process of identifying priority locations for nearshore restoration. They are ready to assist the Partnership and have adjusted timelines for work products.
  - The Salmon Recovery Council is discussing how to integrate and transfer their work, approach, and lessons learned to the Partnership.
- **Science should inform policy decision-making.** The Action Agenda should be developed in a highly integrated way where science informs policy decision-making. The role of science is to help improve the certainty of actions and reduce risk. The Action Agenda planning process should strive to include a scientific review of proposed actions to help improve certainty of strategies and actions.
- **Building capacity and providing support within the sub-regions and at the local level is necessary.** Making decisions about priorities within sub-regions and across the region is new in Puget Sound. In order to be willing and able to set priorities within sub-regions and across the ecosystem, we need to build understanding and capacity within the sub-regions and the Partnership leadership.
- **Funding is essential for success.** The funding plan will be developed in an integrated way with the Action Agenda.
- **Other ideas?**

## Attachment

The Statute Creating the Partnership addresses public involvement in several ways. The statute states that the Partnership shall organize the Action Agenda work in geographic sub-regions. In addition the statute states:

“The Executive Director, working the Ecosystem Coordination Board representatives from each action area, shall invite appropriate tribes, local governments, and watershed groups to convene for the purpose of compiling the existing watershed programs relating or contributing to the health of Puget Sound. The participating groups should work to identify the applicable local plan elements, projects, and programs, together with **estimated budget**, timelines, and proposed funding sources, that are suitable for **adoption** into the Action Agenda. This may include a prioritization **among plan elements**, projects, and programs.”

In addition, the statute directs the Partnership to:

“...develop the Action Agenda, in part, upon **the foundation of existing** watershed programs that address or contribute to **the health of Puget Sound**. To ensure full consideration of these **watershed programs** in a timely manner to meet the required date for adoption of **the Action Agenda**, the Partnership shall rely largely upon local **watershed** groups, tribes, cities, counties, special purpose districts, and the **private sector**, who **are engaged** in developing and implementing these programs.”

**What does significant participation and public engagement in developing the Action Agenda mean?** Significant and meaningful engagement could require considerable resources and time. The possible benefits and examples of how a public involvement strategy might be accomplished are highlighted below.

The benefits of successful participation and engagement in the development of the Action Agenda could include:

- Inclusion of **local knowledge** and experience in developing the Action Agenda.
- Increasing **ownership** and enthusiasm for implementation and progress, as well as long-term accountability.
- Increasing sub-regional ability to make decisions about priorities and resolve problems and conflicts.
- Establishing credibility for the Partnership as a collaborative, inclusive entity that gets things done.
- Expanding and diversifying the base of public support needed over the long-term.

A strategy to achieve these benefits would include:

- Two-way engagement where the Partnership brings information and listens to the sub-regions, interested parties, and the public, and those groups listen and bring information back to the Partnership.

- Making sure that the Partnership and local agencies and organizations benefit from participating in a regional process.
- Engaging influencers, “impactors” (e.g., those whose activities significantly help improve or degrade the Puget Sound such as local governments, development community, homeowners with septic systems, etc.), and implementers.
- Focused strategies for the diversity of participants and interests. This might include prioritizing outreach and engagement efforts.
- Increasing the number and diversity of interested parties and citizens who participate meaningfully in creating the Action Agenda.
- Creating numerous ways to engage in developing the Action Agenda. This would include highly interactive and effective methods, as well as systems for timely and meaningful responses to comments submitted to the Partnership.
- Using existing networks to engage “Action Areas” to avoid the number of new decision-making and coordinating groups.
- Use of the internet to rapidly and effectively inform and engage citizens as the agenda develops.
- Closely linking Action Agenda engagement and participation and messages with general Partnership communication/public relations and efforts to raise public awareness.

Examples of how this type of strategy could be implemented for development of the Action Agenda:

- Hold a summit or workshop with recruited leaders to discuss content and secure their assistance with engaging citizens and sectors.
- “Town Hall” style meetings in each of the sub-regions to improve strategies and identify content for the Action Agenda.
- Regular meetings in sub-regions with leaders, local governments, interests, and others to work directly with organizations on identifying priority actions and commitments, keeping them informed and listening to concerns.
- Creative use of visuals to help convey complex ideas and visions for the future.
- Expanded network of who delivers messages, listens, and invites people to meetings.
- Provide support to existing organizations and networks to help them participate. Examples: Ecosystem Coordination Board members could be asked to provide significant leadership in the sub-regions; Science Panel members could be science liaison to action areas; and Partnership staff local liaison to Action Areas.

There may be other examples of effective and meaningful public engagement. Members of the Leadership Council are encouraged share examples that you are familiar with.

# Discussion Draft: Potential Action Agenda Development Framework

	Phase 1: Preparation April–July 2007	Phase 2: Analysis & Engagement August 2007–Feb 2008	Phase 3: Integration of Work March–April 2008	Phase 4: Review Draft Agenda May–June 2008	Phase 5: Adoption July–August 2008
Overall Action Agenda framework of content, process, staffing options		Outline Draft Plan Public Engagement	Preparation of Draft Action Agenda	Formal public review and engagement	Preparation of Final Action Agenda and adoption by September 1, 2008
Identify ecosystem and sub-regional plans, data to integrate		Measure ecosystem outcomes, indicators, benchmarks Public Engagement	<i>All work organized into ecosystem framework of goals, objectives, measures, benchmarks, and actions</i>	All final analytic work completed	
Identify subregional boundary options		Prioritize strategies and actions for ecosystem and subregion Public Engagement			
Identify Science Panel		<i>Scientific risk analysis</i> Public Engagement			
Identify Ecosystem Coordination Board		<i>Integration of existing plans and programs</i> Public Engagement			
		<i>Strategy advancement</i> Public Engagement			
		Biennial science plan and elements of science work program (e.g., monitoring and adaptive management, research agenda) Public Engagement			
		Funding strategy Public Engagement			
		Longer-term analyses for future updates and strategy refinement (e.g., circulation model, food web/ecosystem model via case study) Public Engagement			

