

**Acting Executive Director's Report
Partnership Staff Activities for July 2007
Presented at the July 26, 2007 Leadership Council Meeting**

General Activities

July 1, the Puget Sound Partnership is open for business.

The legislation creating the Puget Sound Partnership became law on July 1. All functions, obligations, work, and staff of the former Puget Sound Action Team transferred to the new Partnership agency. Staff continues to work with the Office of Financial Management (OFM) to establish the agency books and undertake other duties necessary to establishing a new agency. Stephanie Lidren, Partnership Director of Administrative Services is also working with OFM to finalize budget allocations to the Partnership so that the new Executive Director will be ready with the necessary information for budget decisions.

Communications Director Linda Farmer to depart the Partnership.

The Partnership's Director of Communications Linda Farmer will leave the agency on August 3. She will become the new Director of Communications and Government Relations at the city of Federal Way. We are exploring the possibility of borrowed staff from other agencies to assist with communications needs until the new Executive Director is on board. The position is a critical one that the ED needs to be involved in filling.

Presentations to Stakeholders

Acting Executive Director Ron Shultz made several presentations to various groups over the past month, sharing information on the Partnership, how the agency is organized, opportunities for involvement, and listening to stakeholder concerns. The groups visited include: Skagit Watershed Council, Assn of Washington Conservation Districts, Washington Conservation Commission, Assn of Washington Cities, Assn of Washington Counties, King Co Natural Resources Staff, State Department of Natural Resources Aquatics Division Staff, Dept of Ecology Toxics Program staff, Ecology Environmental Program Managers Team, Washington Attorney General's Office Natural Resources staff retreat, State Public Works Board staff, and Washington Dept of Health Environmental Program staff.

GMAP – Government Management, Accountability and Performance

GMAP, or Government Management, Accountability and Performance, is a priority effort for Governor Gregoire. All state agencies must implement GMAP practices for program activities within the agencies. These practices include identification of measurable outcomes for agency activities, and progress on those outcomes over time. The Governor's Office has indicated an expectation that the Partnership agency will need to do GMAP. But it isn't yet what exactly this means, and the details will need to be developed. The Leadership Council will want to be briefed on this in the near future.

In addition to specific agency GMAP efforts, the Governor also conducts GMAP reviews for several topic areas of state work. One of these areas is Puget Sound. Over the past year, the Governor's Office had held four Puget Sound GMAP sessions. The next session is scheduled for September 27, 2007. Leadership Council members will be receiving an invitation to attend this session.

Partnership staff are working with the Governor's GMAP Office and other state agencies to prepare for this upcoming GMAP session. The session will focus on the results of the 05-07 Puget Sound Plan, and how we did in implementing the results in that Plan. There will be more information on this session in the near future.

Priority 1 – Contaminated Sediments Cleanups

Anne Criss, Toxics Program Manager reviewed Ecology's Budd Inlet Sediment Sampling Analysis Plan and submitted comment to Ecology.

We are working to develop a comprehensive map on the location, size, contaminant type, status, and expected date of completed remediation, for all sediment cleanup sites around the Sound.

Priority 2 – Reduce Continuing Toxic Contamination and Prevent Future Contamination

Partnership staff participates in the monthly Toxics Advisory Group meetings at the Department of Ecology. This group coordinates toxics work among Ecology programs and the agency includes Partnership staff and staff from the state Dept of Health to ensure close coordination with those agencies.

A key issue for agency coordination is the effort to study sources of toxics loadings into the Sound. Ecology staff is finalizing a toxic loadings study that will help guide further research and corrective actions. The final report is due in August.

Scott Redman, Partnership Toxics Program Manager, is participating in the Ecology Reclaimed Water Rule Advisory Committee. Increasing the use of reclaimed water is a key result in the 07-09 PS Plan for the reduction of toxics in to the Sound, as well as maximizing the use of limited water supplies.

Priority 3 – Reduce harm from Stormwater Runoff

John Cambalik, Partnership Regional Liaison, is working with the North Peninsula Home Builders Association, Built Green Project, funded by the Partnership through a PIE grant.

Regional liaisons also helped facilitate full-day workshop for Snohomish County PDS and Public Works staff to identify problem areas and solutions in implementing Low Impact Development (LID), as well as facilitated several rain garden workshops on Whidbey Island and in Edmonds.

John is also working with staff from Mason County and Ecology to discuss the status and direction of the county's grant-funded work on its stormwater program.

Several Partnership staff are participating in a multi-agency effort in association with EPA on a proposed grant program that could put about \$3 million of EPA funds into watershed assessment and stormwater management projects in the Puget Sound basin. Funds may be available by fall 2007.

Bruce Wulkan, Partnership Stormwater Program Manager, is currently evaluating and developing a plan for \$500,000 in the state operating budget appropriated to the PS Partnership for LID training and technical assistance.

Priority 4 - Prevent Nutrient and Pathogen Pollution Caused by Human and Animal Wastes

Staff are tracking and, when appropriate, commenting on various local On-Site Risk Assessment Projects. In June, staff commented the Clallam and Jefferson county plans. Staff is tracking and working with Kitsap County on their plan development.

Partnership staff is participating on an advisory committee of the South Sound dissolved oxygen study.

Puget Sound Shellfish Restoration Project

Stuart Glasoe, Partnership Acting Director of Outreach and Shellfish Program Manager, is coordinating an interagency project to identify target sites and develop strategies aimed at restoring water quality and upgrading as much as 10,000 additional acres for shellfish harvesting in Puget Sound by 2020. The project is an outgrowth of GMAP forums earlier in the year and was originally assigned to the WA Department of Health. Partnership staff was asked to step in and serve in a coordinating role because of the fit with our historical work on these issues, the fit with the work already called out in Puget Sound work plan and management plan, and the forthcoming work on the 2020 Action Agenda. The interagency team -- which includes staff from DOH, DNR, Ecology, Conservation Commission, Fish and Wildlife and Agriculture (others invited and being kept informed) -- is currently assembling data to develop the preliminary list of sites and acreage estimates by September and to then develop companion plans, timelines and budgets for these sites by year's end. Significantly more input and coordination will be needed with many other interests as the project moves forward.

Ecology's Shellfish Aquaculture Regulatory Committee

Glasoe also attended the first meeting of the 14-member Shellfish Aquaculture

Regulatory Committee organized and led by Ecology. Ron Shultz and Stuart Glasoe are serving as ex officio members of the committee. The 2007 state legislature passed SSHB 2220 in response to concerns with geoduck farming practices and related regulatory and permitting requirements. The legislation:

- commissions a series of research studies to be led by WA SeaGrant;
- limits the amount of state-owned aquatic land available for leasing in the coming years;
- directs the Department of Fish and Wildlife to include additional information for aquatic farm registrations;
- and creates the Shellfish Aquaculture Regulatory Committee coordinated by Ecology.

Specifically, the committee has been asked to:

- develop recommendations for an integrated regulatory process for all current and new shellfish aquaculture projects;
- advise Ecology on developing new Shoreline Master Program guidelines for geoduck aquaculture operations; and
- provide oversight on the scientific research program.

The committee is expected to report on its work to the legislature at the end of calendar years 2007 and 2008. You'll find more information on the project at Ecology's website under its shorelands program.

(www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/sea/shellfishcommittee/index.html)

Hood Canal

Work on Hood Canal issues included:

- Developed a Year 2 agreement for UW's Hood Canal Onsite N study.
- Agreed to allow Year 1 report of UW's study to receive technical advisory group review in late June/early July and be delivered to PS Partnership in July.
- Working with staff of the Jefferson County Health Department regarding the final report for the monitoring of alternative septic design demonstration sites in Hood Canal.

Oakland Bay Shellfish Response:

Duane Fagergren, Special Projects Director:

- Arranged for and convened a meeting with USGS Tacoma staff, to investigate possible joint research efforts in Oakland Bay (head of the bay and Chapman Cove) in an effort to trace groundwater into the bay using USGS equipment and personnel. Others involved include Gary Turney, Bill Simonds, Tony Paulson (USGS), and with Stephanie Kenny (Mason County Environmental) and John Konovsky (Squaxin Tribe).
- Participated in several meetings on Oakland Bay related to the shellfish closure response strategy, funding and outreach activities related to the clean water district.

Priority 5 – Protect shorelines and other critical areas that provide important ecological functions.

Doug Myers, Nearshore Program Manager, completed a contract with EnviroVision to draft interim guidelines for GMA and SMA. A draft document is being reviewed by the interagency Aquatic Habitat Guidelines committee for discussion on a distribution plan and next steps using WDFW budget authorized by legislature for further guidelines development.

Invasive Tunicates Response Activities:

For almost a year and a half, Partnership staff have led and coordinated the state's response to an invasive species, the tunicate. These creatures come in several varieties and cover the hulls of boats, the bottom of docks and in-water structures, and spread across the floor of the Sound. Partnership staff leads an interagency state caucus, who help craft the state response plan. The staff also coordinates with a stakeholder advisory group. Point on staff for this effort is Kevin Anderson, Invasive Species Program Manager. Over the past month, Kevin has:

- a. Facilitated the state tunicate response caucus to develop the 2007-2009 work plan to continue eradicating invasive tunicates, carry out surveys for them and conduct education and outreach to build awareness and minimize the spread of these animals in Puget Sound. The Partnership received \$500,000 for these purposes.
- b. Chaired and facilitated a Tunicate Response Advisory Committee meeting to discuss next steps in the state's response to this invasion and to solicit feedback on areas where we can make improvements.
- c. Wrapped up a project to provide workshops and training to 5 dive clubs in the Puget Sound basin. The contractor – Pacific NW Scuba – trained 198 and distributed color identification handouts with contact information to each diver. The Action Team/Partnership paid for the workshops listed in bold type: **Bellingham, Anacortes**, Bremerton, Kirkland, **Seattle Aquarium, Federal Way**, Kent, **Olympia**, Vancouver, WA and Portland, OR, Tigard, OR and Salem, OR.
- d. Drafted a performance agreement and sought feedback from WDFW on expectations and outcomes for continued response to invasive tunicates. Continue to negotiate the scope of the agreement and the cost for the work with WDFW staff.
- e. Finalized a Request for Proposal to find a qualified applicant to design an outreach and education program that will build awareness of marine invasive species, and move boat-related industries and the boat-owning public in Puget Sound to adopt practices to stop their spread (i.e. get their hulls checked/cleaned). The campaign should link to and build on existing federal, state and local programs. I will release the RFP after the TRAC provides feedback on it as well as the performance agreement and scope of work with WDFW.

Priority 6 – Restore Degraded Nearshore and Freshwater Habitats

Partnership staff works closely with other agencies on the Puget Sound Nearshore Project. Over the past month, staff participated in and completed scoring and review of

Estuarine and Salmon Recovery Program proposals for July Executive committee approval. Implementation Team made recommendations to fund approximately \$7 million in nearshore protection and restoration projects over the next year.

Priority 7 – Conserve and Recover Orca, Salmon, Forage Fish and Groundfish

Salmon

Partnership staffer Doug Myers participated in seining study collection in North Kitsap and participated in discussions on “mining” seining data throughout the Sound to answer broader food web and ecological questions and scoping several remote potential protection and restoration sites.

Myers also contributed material to, and editorial review of, WDFW’s project to compare the regional nearshore chapter of the Salmon Recovery Plan and the 14 watershed based chapters for consistency on nearshore recovery strategies. This documentation is meant to identify gaps as a result of the different geographic and institutional scales of analysis toward resolving issues of strategic implementation between ESRP, SRF Board and other nearshore restoration programs.

Science and PSAMP

Sarah Brace, Partnership Science Coordinator, participates in an indicators scoping group that is working to develop a scoping paper on indicators, measures and benchmarks.

They are currently working on next steps to develop indicators and interim benchmarks to be drafted over the next few weeks/months.

Sarah also helped out for a day on Ecology’s Sediment Monitoring sampling cruise in Port Susan - collecting samples, sorting for invertebrates, etc. Participating in research cruises such as this helps Partnership staff build strong working relationships with agency field staff.

Sarah served as a “beach naturalist” for a few hours with Stevens Elementary School on June 14 during a low tide. Students enjoyed learning about the different survival strategies various critters in the Intertidal zone utilize, as determined by their shell/shape/habitat.

Miscellaneous

Ocean Policy

Linda Lyshall, Partnership Regional Liaison, participated in a tidal energy proposal meeting with Snohomish PUD, state, tribal, and academic representatives. Ron Shultz and Linda Lyshall are working with other state and local agencies, public utilities, and project proponents of tidal energy projects to help coordinate state agency response to these proposals. Key issues for the state include development of an overall policy on tidal energy, identifying research needs to study the impacts of these projects, and improved permitting processes.