

Approach to Establish Strategic Direction and First Steps Leadership Council Presentation and Discussion April 29-30, 2008

Purpose

- To seek input and guidance from the Leadership Council on an approach to establishing strategic direction for the selection of actions and an approach to identifying first actions for implementation.
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Overview

The steps necessary to develop the Action Agenda have been organized into four questions. The purpose of this proposed process is to address Question 3 and Question 4:

3. What do we need to do to move from where we are today to a healthy Puget Sound?
4. Where should we start?

Proposal

Action Agenda Question 3

Question 3 will be answered through the topic forum process. The initial topic papers, including all information that is received at the topic forums and through other forms of input, will be synthesized in a cross-topic process that will begin in May and conclude with a symposium on May 28.

The cross-topic process is expected to reveal two to five system-wide strategic directions that together will encompass each goal of the Partnership and encompass issues relevant to each Action Area.

Actions identified through the Question 4 process described below should be consistent with the identified strategic directions. The strategic directions will also provide guidance to regional entities regarding actions that the Partnership will consider to be consistent with the Action Agenda.

Strategic directions will be discussed with the Ecosystem Coordination Board on May 29 and presented to the Leadership Council in June for consideration.

Action Agenda Question 4

The answers to this question will be a short-term work plan of specific actions and projects that stem from the strategic direction. The work plan will focus on funds that are directly controlled or influenced by the Partnership: the state budget, federal funding

directed towards the Partnership, and Partnership not-for-profit funds. The answer to this question will include a list of criteria for identifying and prioritizing potential capital; education and outreach; policy and regulation; and research, science and monitoring actions. The answer will also include a prioritized and comprehensive list of actions, including for the Partnership as an agency.

The steps proposed to answer Question 4 are:

1. Develop criteria for the selection and prioritization of actions under each strategic area. Information from action area meetings, the topic forum papers, and other sources will be used to compile this list. These criteria will be consistent with the strategic directions identified in the Question 3 process. The list will be provided to the Leadership Council for review at the June meeting.
2. Process for identifying capital actions (this process will be presented in greater detail as a separate item at the April 29-30 meeting):
 - a. Develop a set of criteria for assembling a list of potential capital actions. The proposed criteria for assembling the list will be presented for review as a separate proposal at this Leadership Council meeting (April 29-30).
 - b. Solicit input from tribes, local governments, watershed groups, and other entities for capital actions that meet the assembly criteria. Ensure capital actions identified in topic forum process that are consistent with the assembly criteria, are considered for inclusion on the list.
 - c. Develop criteria for prioritizing the assembled list of potential capital actions. In order to rank high, each action must be consistent with the identified strategic directions developed in response to Question 3. Present these criteria to the Leadership Council for approval in June.
 - d. Prioritize the list of potential capital actions. Present to Leadership Council at the September 4-5 meeting.
 - e. Determine the number of capital actions that can be implemented once a finance strategy has been approved (which will be done under a separate process).
3. Process for identifying policy and regulatory actions:
 - a. Develop a strategy to examine regulatory compliance issues. Identified compliance issues that are consistent with the selected strategic directions should be candidates for actions in this category. The proposed strategy will be developed in May.
 - b. Participate in the on-going Mitigation the Works forum convened by Ecology. Consider recommendations for a watershed-based approach to mitigation and other actions as potential actions in this category.

- c. Compile the recommendations that surface in the topic papers and the topic paper synthesis process for possible inclusion as actions in this category.
 - d. Develop an integrated recommendation for policy and regulatory actions to present to the Leadership Council at the September 4-5 meeting.
4. Process for identifying education, outreach and communication actions:
- a. The Partnership will hire a full time staff person by the end of May to coordinate and lead development of recommendations on how to link current environmental education programming to fulfillment of the Action Agenda.
 - b. The work plan calls for conducting a series of workshops with environmental education leaders to develop initial recommendations for the May Symposium, followed by final recommendations for inclusion in the Action Agenda.
 - c. Additional steps include inventorying existing programs, conducting a targeted Internet survey, and integrating work with other Puget Sound Partnership efforts.
5. Process for identifying research, science and monitoring actions:
- a. Near-term research, science and monitoring actions will be identified in the strategic science program and biennial science plan that will be presented to the Leadership Council. The schedule is still in development but priority needs would be discussed at the Sept 4-5 Leadership Council meeting.
6. Process for identifying Partnership agency actions:
- a. Internal work of Partnership staff as guided by the Leadership Council.

Background

Selected Statutory Language

ESsB 5372 Section 8: Integrating Watershed Programs and Ecosystem Scale Plans Into the Action Agenda

- (4) The executive director, working with 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 to 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, timeline, and proposed

funding sources, that are suitable for adoption in the action agenda. This may include a prioritization among plan elements, projects, and programs.

(6) The executive director, working with the [ecosystem coordination] board shall also compile and assess ecosystem scale management, restoration, and protection plans for the Puget Sound basin.

(a) At a minimum, the compilation shall include the Puget Sound nearshore estuary project, clean-up plans for contaminated aquatic lands and shorelands, aquatic land management plans, habitat conservation plans, and recovery plans for salmon, orca, and other species in Puget Sound that are list under the federal endangered species act.

(b) The board should work to identify and assess applicable ecosystem scale plan elements, projects, and programs, together with estimated budget, timelines, and proposed funding sources, that are suitable for adoption into the action agenda.

(7) The executive director shall integrate and present the proposed elements from watershed programs and ecosystem-level plans to the council for consideration for inclusion in the action agenda not later than July 1, 2008.

Next steps

1. Puget Sound Partnership staff will coordinate with entities to inform them about the approved process for answering Questions 3 and 4.
2. Develop a finance strategy to support an optimal combination of actions prioritized under the Question 4 process.