

PUBLIC VIEWS ON RECOVERY

ALIGNING PROGRAMS WITH PRIORITIES

LEADERSHIP COUNCIL DRAFT

RCW 90.71.370(3) requires the Partnership to report on actions taken by implementing entities that are not consistent with the Action Agenda and to describe steps taken to remedy the inconsistency. The Statute also requires that the Partnership provide a review of citizen concerns and the disposition of those concerns.

Chapter 5 includes:

- Overview of regional efforts to engage the public in ecosystem recovery
- Summary of an analysis by the Partnership in 2011 of implementing inconsistencies
- Discussion of ongoing efforts to review funding decisions for consistency with the Action Agenda
- Synthesis of comments received by the public in 2011-2012 through the 2012 Action Agenda update process

PUBLIC ENGAGEMENT IN PUGET SOUND RECOVERY

The statutory foundation for the Puget Sound Partnership, RCW 90.71, contains multiple references to the need for public involvement, engagement, education, awareness, and participation in Puget Sound protection and recovery:

- "... public involvement will be integral to the success of efforts to restore and protect Puget Sound." RCW 90.71.200.1d
- "... educate and engage the public ..." RCW 90.71.200.1d
- "Promote extensive public awareness, education, and participation in Puget Sound protection and recovery" RCW 90.71.230.1g
- "Engaging and educating the public regarding Puget Sound's health, including efforts and opportunities to restore Puget Sound ecosystems" RCW 90.71.240.5b
- "... conducting public education activities regarding threats to Puget Sound and about local implementation strategies to support the action agenda" RCW 90.71.250.5d

The Leadership Council, Ecosystem Coordination Board, Science Panel, elected officials, and numerous local and regional planning bodies frequently emphasize the importance of public engagement in the recovery effort. Many Action Agenda sub-strategies and near-term actions relate to engagement of, or with, Puget Sound's 4.5 million residents.

Though public involvement is broadly recognized as important to Puget Sound recovery, clear and effective strategies to achieve productive engagement are not generally discussed nor understood. Four major barriers compound this:

- 1) a blended and confused understanding of education, communication, and outreach, their differences, limitations and how they are applied;
- 2) limited understanding or knowledge of what effective strategies look like and the skill to apply them;
- 3) the broadly-held misperception that “if people only knew the Sound was unhealthy, they would take action.” Unfortunately, awareness alone is not an effective tool to achieve public support and/or behavior change; and
- 4) limited experience with a regional-scale, shared strategy designed to reach 4.5 million people.

PROGRAM DEVELOPMENT

As the Partnership began implementing the first Action Agenda in 2009, a regional dialog emerged - reflecting a collective desire to use the Partnership’s formation as an opportunity to frame a better, more strategic approach. These discussions included environmental education and communication specialists, agency and non-profit partners, a cross-board work group (with representatives of the Leadership Council, Ecosystem Coordination Board and Science Panel), the STORM coalition (Stormwater Outreach for Regional Municipalities) and others.

These discussions narrowed in on the following questions:

WHY: Why do we need public engagement? What outcomes do we need and expect from this engagement?

Answer: 1) to reduce cumulative impacts from citizen actions (pollution, habitat degradation) and 2) to build support for policy change and public investment in the recovery effort.

WHAT: What strategies do we focus on, and what tactics do we use to achieve them?

Answer: Focus on awareness-building and supporting actions and behavior change initiatives. Focus on behaviors which are (1) citizen-scale and relatively widespread, 2) directly contributing to Puget Sound pressures, and 3) possible to address via a stewardship approach.

HOW: How do we implement awareness-building and behavior change most effectively across the Puget Sound region? How do we build an effective regional/local implementation structure?

Answer: Work at two scales, regional and local. Ensure that the strategies used are effective and strategic for the scale they are addressing. Integrate the two scales within a cohesive strategy.

PROGRAM FRAMEWORK

A program framework emerged from the regional dialog, based on the collective expertise of the developing coalition as well as a body of social science that includes behavioral economics.

One element is shown in Figure 1 – a model of how innovations (such as best practices for water quality and habitat) spread across society.

In natural resource fields, historic investments have tended to be at both ends of the curve (information and education, and regulatory approaches), but not in the middle (directly motivating or supporting targeted actions - best described as a social marketing approach). It is only in the past ten years that social marketing has even entered the natural resource management vocabulary; by comparison, it has been employed in the health field for disease and injury prevention since the 1970's.

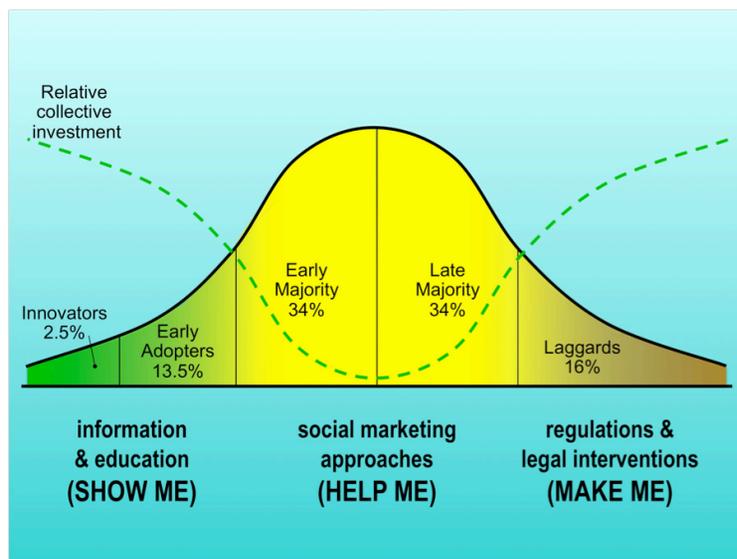


Figure 1. Conceptual model of public adoption of best practices, and associated approaches to stimulate adoption. The green dashed line shows relative historic levels of investment in each approach. Based on Everett Rogers, *Diffusion of Innovations*; Michael L. Rothschild, *Carrots, Sticks, and Promises: A Conceptual Framework for the Management of Public Health and Social Issue Behaviors*.

FUNDING AWARDED

In 2010, the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) decided to create “Lead Organizations” to manage federal funding it administered for Puget Sound - consolidating programmatic leadership and sub-awards relative to specific topical areas of the Action Agenda. The Partnership applied for and received funding to serve as the Lead Organization for a regional stewardship program, incorporating the awareness-building and behavior change elements of the Action Agenda. Six million dollars in grant funding was awarded over five years, with a 1:1 match.

PSP'S REGIONAL STEWARDSHIP PROGRAM

With the program model developed and a five-year commitment of funding secured, the Partnership began actively implementing the regional Stewardship Program in 2010. As described above, the program was strategically focused to increase regional efforts around behavior change – the gap illustrated by bell curve in Figure 1 - not only because it had been a historically under-served component of public engagement, but also because this is where the majority of Puget Sound’s residents exist relative to “Sound-friendly” actions.

To achieve this, the regional program organized around three integrated areas of investment: 1) Awareness-Building – to reach and engage the region’s 4.5 million residents; 2) Behavior Change – targeting specific citizen behaviors that impact the health of Puget Sound, and 3) Implementing Network Support – to increase capacity, effectiveness and efficiencies among partners to conduct the needed work. Elements within each of the three areas were then allocated between regional and local implementation. The Partnership and other regional providers conduct centralized/regional work (research, evaluation, regional campaign). Local Partners conduct the local and direct-delivery elements of the work (local awareness building, stewardship programs/initiatives).

PROGRESS AND EXPECTED OUTCOMES

Since 2010, the program made progress in these three areas:

Awareness-Building: regional, local and K-12

- Implemented the regional Puget Sound Starts Here campaign through a coalition of more than 850 public, nonprofit, and private organizations
- Grants to local groups to customize the regional campaign, connect to local issues and economic drivers
- Grants to local organizations for targeted awareness programs focused on Action Agenda priorities such as pollution prevention and shoreline habitat.
- Introduced a Puget Sound K-12 curriculum model into 30 percent of Puget Sound school districts, through grants to the Pacific Education Institute.

Behavior Change: strategies, program funding and measuring progress

- Grants to local groups for targeted programs to reduce pollution-causing and/or habitat degradation activities behaviors.
- Grants for expanding regional behavior change initiatives that build upon proven local models. Programs targeted for expansion emphasize the Action Agenda's strategic initiatives.
- Grants to develop new regional behavior change initiatives where no proven model currently exists. These also are consistent with the Action Agenda's strategic initiatives.
- Established the Sound Behavior Index to measure regional progress in environmental behaviors.
- Conducted market research to inform local stormwater and habitat programs. Compiled a library of market research from public and private sources for partners to draw upon for their respective programs.

Support Implementer Network: coordination, training and resources

- Developed a regional Education, Communication and Outreach Network (ECO Net) of more than 470 organizations who now coordinate, develop collaborative programs, and share resources – in support of the Action Agenda as well as their respective individual programs.
- Provided resources and training to strengthen these groups and increase the effectiveness of their individual and collective programs. Topics have included evaluation, social marketing, social media, strategic planning, program design and more.
- Activated an advisory group of social scientists to provide guidance and increase sophistication within the field of practice.

Targets for the first five years (through June 2015) of the program include:

- Puget Sound Starts Here brand awareness increased from 26 percent to 50 percent among Puget Sound residents, with improved understanding of best practices for stormwater and habitat
- Eight regional stewardship initiatives completed
- 50 percent of Puget Sound school districts using a Puget Sound place-based curriculum model
- Over 470 organizations actively collaborating in ECO Net, and engaged in Action Agenda implementation

- Upward trend-line on Sound Behavior Index
- Measures of how the public values Puget Sound continue to exceed 60%
- Majority of partner organizations have changed to evidence-based methods for program delivery
- Majority of partner organizations are addressing specific behaviors that impact the health of Puget Sound
- Public messages related to best practices are consistent across the region and are based on appropriate research
- Up to 24 new local program models addressing stormwater, shorelines, salmon, shellfish, and habitat have been developed and can be replicated in other localities

INCONSISTENCY ANALYSIS

In October 2011, as part of the 2012 Action Agenda update, the Partnership and a consultant developed a survey questionnaire on inconsistent actions in the Puget Sound, versus the expectations set forth in the 2008/09 Action Agenda per RCW 90.71.350(2). “Inconsistency” was defined as an action that is contrary to the letter or spirit of an element of the 2008/2009 Action Agenda or will hinder or is incompatible with the achievement of a goal, objective, or strategic priority (RCW 90.71.300). The questionnaire was focused on programmatic or policy issues.

A total of 301 people responded to the survey respondents included the community in general, activists, business, government staff, and tribal representatives. They broadly represented the regions of Puget Sound.

Respondents were offered two ways to identify inconsistencies: through a multiple-choice list of questions and from a written response. Of the 301 people surveyed, 210 responded that they had an inconsistency to report; of those, 90 chose to provide both multiple choice and written responses, while an additional 109 responded only through multiple-choice questions.

Survey Respondents by Type

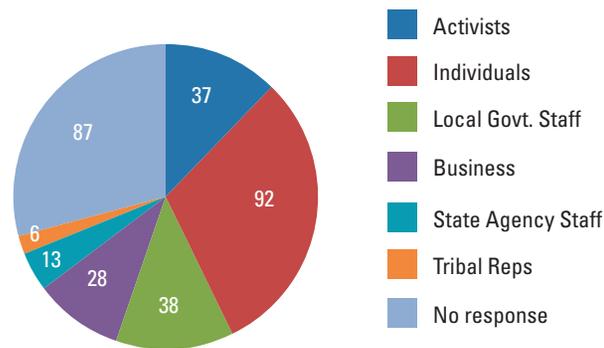


Figure 1. Survey respondents by type (n=301)

Survey Respondents by Action Area

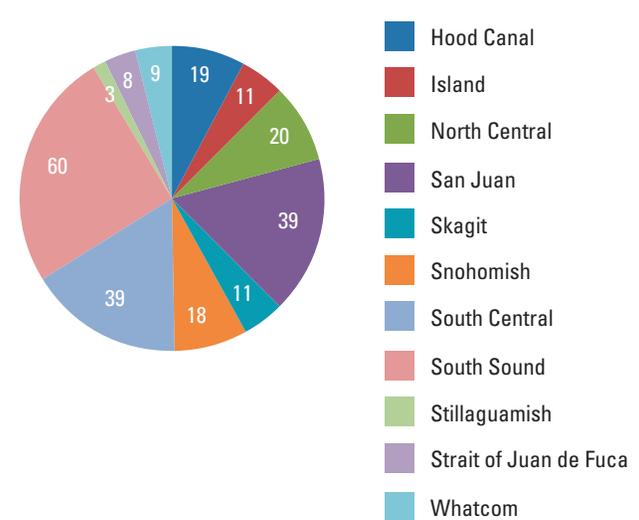


Figure 2. Survey respondents by Action Area (n=237)

Sample Written Response Comments from Survey

Please describe the inconsistency	Please provide details about what you think is the cause of this inconsistency	Please identify ideas you have to remedy or otherwise address this inconsistency
5. Bulkhead exemption for homes in Shoreline Management Act. HPA permits are generally ignored	5. SMA exemption for Single Family Home bulkheads and shoreline armoring. HPA is required but mostly ignored and WDFW does not enforce. Poor local development regulations in Shoreline Master Plans. Corps of Engineers permit is structure is below high watermark and most homeowners are unaware of permit and largely ignored.	5. Amend the SMA, WDFW enforce HPA, Corps enforce permits
33. You Identify retaining working farms as a goal, yet also identify assisting counties with revisions to CAO's that will stop development in floodplains and assisting communities with relocating out of flood plains. IF WE CANNOT CONTINUE TO BUILD AND GROW AND UPDATE OUR FARMS, INCLUDING ADDING BUILDINGS AND INFRASTRUCTURE THEN HOW DO YOU EXPECT FARMERS TO STAY HERE?	33. Failure to understand that farms need to build, rebuild and adapt as different crops, processing needs become available... Failure to recognize that commercial farms are complex... and they stay in farming for numerous reasons... but the conflict I see is that if you "protect" the farm land but then pile regulations on the family they will just sell out and move anyway. Yes this is a balance... but farms are in flood plains, its [sic] where the dirt is...it's also a preferred [sic] land use versus stripmalls. we plead for the ability to build and maintain healthy farms, farm infrastructure and an understanding that saving farms is not as simple as a few PDR's and expanding a local farmers market.	33. FEMA, County CAO's and building and Development Reg's must allow farmers to farm build and maintain the infrastructure we need for healthy businesses -from small farms to large farms.

Examples of Ways that Inconsistencies are addressed in the 2012 Action Agenda

Near Term Action B.2.3. 1 Homeowner Incentives for Landward Setbacks, promotes the use of incentives to remove hard shoreline armoring and encourage setting homes further back from the shoreline.

Near Term Action A.1.2.1. Land Use Planning Barriers, BMPs [Best Management Practices], and Example Policies, will identify barriers to implementing the Action Agenda in local land use decisions and determine how to overcome those barriers.

Near Term Action C.1.4.3 Conduct Local Source Control Business Assistance Visits, provides on-site visits to help small businesses reduce stormwater pollution and hazardous waste pollution from their work.

This survey was administered during the development of the 2012 Action Agenda. Partnership staff used the information to clarify sub-strategies and actions related to many of the concerns raised including enforcement of environmental regulations, development in the shoreline, growth management, and flood plain issues. (See sidebar)

Now that the Action Agenda update is complete, the Partnership will continue to involve the public and implementing entities in developing and refining standards and processes to identify and address actions that are inconsistent with the Action Agenda and Puget Sound recovery.

In addition, in 2011, the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) formed a Regulatory Subcommittee to consider potential actions to improve compliance with, and enforcement of, existing laws. The Subcommittee is also evaluating strategies to improve environmental regulations where needed. The committee is evaluating several different tools or approaches including education, technical assistance, incentives, monitoring, enforcement, and funding. Their work is focused on regulations and tools directly related to the strategic initiatives. The committee will consider information collected through the inconsistencies process to inform their work.

Top 20 Inconsistent Actions vs. 2008 Action Agenda Intentions

Written Responses (90)	Multiple Choice Responses (199)
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Enforcement (or lack thereof) on the part of PSP and other state agencies <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * Shoreline alteration - negative effects of armoring, bulkheading • Several comments were critical of the US Army Corps of Engineer’s levee maintenance requirements that prohibit tree planting on levees • PSP’s role in the protection and restoration of Puget Sound (included a variety of criticisms) • Lack of action / too much process • Conflicting policies; need for federal consistency <ul style="list-style-type: none"> * FEMA flood insurance; * ‘no net rise’ policy; * farmland preservation vs. riparian habitat protection; * levee maintenance vs. riparian habitat protection • Science — best available science not necessarily being used • Need for better stormwater management • Need to restore instream flows • Outreach—needs improvement; too much • NMFS Biological Opinion about FEMA flood insurance program 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The majority of respondents identified “land development/ land use” and “organization/infrastructure” as the topics most related to the inconsistency, and the geographic scope of the inconsistencies identified was predominantly statewide or Sound-wide. • Other responses for the topic most related to the inconsistency included “lack of enforcement of existing programs/regulations”, “inconsistent approving and/or permitting projects”, and “not a high enough priority/other competing priorities”. • Local inconsistencies were distributed fairly evenly across Puget Sound Action Areas/Counties. • When asked about the cause of the inconsistency, “conflicting directions between goals, plans, and programs”, and “political will/lack of other options to resolve problems and conflicts” were the most numerous responses. • The majority of respondents indicated that their responses would not be different based on the emerging content of the 2011 Action Agenda update.

Cause of Inconsistency



Figure 3. Cause of inconsistency (n=199)

Lastly, the Partnership is working with members of the ECB to develop sets of interim targets for each of the Vital Signs that were reviewed in Chapter 1. These interim targets include desired outcomes for each of the two-year increments between 2012 and 2020. The interim targets are intended to both guide the performance review that will be conducted for each of the subsequent State of the Sound reports, as well as inform regional implementers regarding what inconsistencies in programs and actions remain that must be addressed for the region to reach its 2020 targets. The interim targets are slated for adoption by the Leadership Council in 2012.

Review of Programs for Consistency with the Action Agenda

Several mechanisms are in place to ensure that major programs funded within the region are consistent with the Action Agenda. As described in Chapter 4, EPA provides grants to Lead Organizations in the region that are directed to implementation of key programs and projects to address threats to Puget Sound health. EPA requires that proposals funded by the Lead Organizations be reviewed for consistency with specific sections of the Action Agenda—either how the proposal links to sub-strategies in the Action Agenda or to a specific near term action.

The Partnership also provides review of grant applications in the region for consistency. For example, RCO routinely submits potential grant decision packages pertaining to Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program (WWRP) and Aquatic Land Enhancement Account (ALEA) funds to the Partnership for review. Similarly, EPA asks the Partnership to review projects for consistency that are funded by the tribal lead organization, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission.

Last, as part of the 2013-15 Biennial Budget Instructions, the Office of Financial Management required state agencies to specify whether a proposed request implements any portion of the Action Agenda. The instructions also required agencies to provide estimates of their costs to implement Near Term Actions for the 2013-2015 biennium. This information was summarized in Chapter 4, with details provided in the Appendix XX.

Comments on the Action Agenda

The draft 2012 Action Agenda was available for public comment from December 10, 2011 to February 3, 2012. A total of 90 comment letters were received. In addition, over 1,000 postcards and emails were submitted. The letters ranged in length from one to 27 pages.

In addition to general comments on the scope and direction of the Action Agenda, the Partnership received numerous, detailed comments on the specific language of various strategies, sub-strategies and near term actions. As part of responding to these comments, the Partnership conducted conversations with many of the commenters individually and in groups. All entities that would potentially be responsible for implementation of an action were included in discussion about revisions to near term actions. The Leadership Council was provided a spreadsheet that summarized each of the specific comments as part of its consideration in the adoption of the 2012 Action Agenda.

The comment themes and responses included:

1. The Action Agenda is too long and lacks a strategic focus.

In response to these comments, staff created a highlights of the Action Agenda component that could stand alone from the longer version of the Action Agenda and still include all of the key information. In addition, the final Action Agenda included more specific details on the content of the three strategic initiatives that had been proposed in the draft, including how the region would approach obtaining funding for these measures.

2. The Action Agenda does not create clear links between strategies.

The Partnership addressed these concerns through target views in the Action Agenda that identify the key strategies and actions that will contribute towards recovery, through the development of strategic initiatives and through the prioritization process.

3. The Action Agenda does not establish a clear path towards 2020 recovery targets.

As discussed above, the Action Agenda includes target views that outline action strategies, sub-strategies, and expected intermediate results on the path to achieving the 2020 targets. The specific Near Term Actions are all associated with the strategies and sub-strategies and are to be implemented in a two-year timeframe. In addition, the Partnership is working with regional partners to develop sets of interim targets that will chart the path to 2020 with more precision.

4. The prioritization process is critical and the proposed approach is flawed.

There were a range of views on the prioritization process. In response, the Partnership Science Director worked with the ECB to revise the approach and then engaged the Science Panel to develop a scoring system that reflected the input received. The rank order of sub-strategies is expressed on ecological impact. Future efforts will include other information such as human well being and economics.

5. Ongoing programs are not effectively captured or integrated or prioritized with near-term actions.

The Action Agenda represents important progress in distinguishing ongoing programs from near term actions with a focus on state agencies. Ongoing programs are described under sub-strategies, which have been ranked by the Science Panel based on ecological criteria. The Partnership received subsequent information from federal agencies on their detailed work programs related to habitat and these were included as an appendix to the Action Agenda.

6. There needs to be more emphasis on Tribal treaty rights.

There were substantial improvements from the draft to the final in relation to Tribal treaty rights. Tribal partners provided information to the Partnership and to the Leadership Council as part of their input on the strategic initiatives, with a focus on habitat restoration and protection. Tribal habitat priorities are detailed in Book 1 of the Action Agenda. The federal response to "Treaty Rights at Risk" is included in the Appendix.

7. Local area information and local integrating organizations (LIOs) should be better represented, including local funding challenges.

The Partnership worked with Local integrating organizations to refine their profiles. Local Near Term Actions were integrated into the Action Agenda under the appropriate sub-strategy to ensure that these actions received equal consideration in performance tracking, cost estimation and budgeting. The Leadership Council will include additional Near Term Actions that might be proposed by LIOs for inclusion in amendments to the Action Agenda through the Report Card process. In addition, there is an ECB subcommittee that will be quantifying local need and identifying potential funding sources.

8. Federal actions should be better represented.

Federal agencies provided a detailed spreadsheet of ongoing federal actions and new actions related to habitat, which were included as an appendix in the Action Agenda. A new Near Term Action was also added to address implementation: A 6.2 NTA 1 “Implement the Puget Sound Federal Agency Action Plan.”

9. Near Term Actions are either too ambitious or not ambitious enough and are underfunded.

There was a range of views on this subject. A number of near term actions were refined after release of the draft to reduce the number of actions that were process or study oriented. This included the development of the Strategic Initiatives. Chapter 4 provides greater detail on the fiscal issues related to funding the 2012 Action Agenda.

10. There needs to be more focus on the economic health as part of recovery.

The Partnership agreed with commenters that improving economic health is part of protecting and recovering Puget Sound and agrees with data that demonstrates that Puget Sound is an economic driver in the region. Development of the Quality of Life Index, and economic targets related to the index, will further advance this work. There are also a number of Near Term Actions that focus on the development of fiscal incentives that are intended to address economic concerns of stakeholders in the region who are being challenged to contribute to the recovery effort.

11. There needs to be more attention on climate change.

The final Action Agenda incorporated many more climate change considerations than the draft. In addition, a consultant to the Partnership conducted a consistency review of the action agenda. This work is discussed in Chapter 1 of the State of the Sound (pp.xx-xx). The Action Agenda acknowledges that climate change will continue to be a key element of any future adaptive management considerations in the region as well as in the development of future near term actions.