

Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring Program Update and Charter Review

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Proposed Action

Science Panel input on the draft Charter and Work Group recommendations for the Puget Sound Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring Program crafted by the program's Launch Committee.

Background

The Puget Sound Partnership is required to “guide the implementation and coordination of a Puget Sound assessment and monitoring program” (RCW 90.71.060).

To this end, a multi-stakeholder “Launch Committee”, staffed by the Puget Sound Partnership, was formed and convened for their first meeting on July 21, 2010 to help with the initial operations of the program. The Launch Committee members (Table 1) are experts and community leaders that work at the science-policy interface, are well grounded in monitoring challenges and issues, and collectively offer multiple perspectives in terms of disciplines and organizations.

The Leadership Council, at their July 2010 meeting, tasked the Launch committee with recommending “a charter by January 2011 based on the essential functions put forth by the Monitoring Consortium in 2008 including: accountability, transparency, science-policy linkages, involvement of all interested and affected parties, strategic approaches including Partnership indicators, stable funding, institutionalized relationships, and regulatory requirements. The charter should define the functions, roles, responsibilities, and relationships of various components”. The Leadership Council will take the recommendations into account to make a decision regarding adopting a Monitoring Program governance structure.

The Launch Committee met five times since July 2010. Participation in the meetings was very high and members have worked very hard to envision the program's structure and functions.

Charter

The draft Charter describes a program that serves the Puget Sound Partnership's adaptive management framework and engages multiple partners and stakeholders at technical, scientific and policy levels within a hierarchical decision-making structure. The outcomes of decisions include priorities and sequencing for monitoring, coordination of monitoring, assignment of data

collection, management and analysis, reporting and communication of findings, and funding needs.

The program, as defined in the Charter, “coordinates and integrates the work of existing and future monitoring efforts to provide information necessary to determine whether investments to protect and restore the health of Puget Sound are improving environmental conditions, and to inform management decisions. The program communicates results transparently and effectively to the public and is an integral part of the adaptive management approach adopted by the Puget Sound Partnership.”

Work Groups

The Launch Committee will provide recommendations for criteria to identify Work Groups topics, and will also suggest specific topics for consideration by the Steering Committee (formed in late winter 2011). The Steering Committee will commission Work Groups in early Spring 2011.

The development of criteria for topics was guided by Chapter 1 of the Puget Sound Science Update, the adaptive management approach adopted by the Puget Sound Partnership (Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation), and best professional judgment.

The draft Charter and recommendations will be circulated for external review in the first half of January 2011. The Charter and Work Group recommendations will be submitted to the Leadership Council at their February 2011 meeting.

Action Agenda Consistency

The development of a coordinated ecosystem monitoring program about “a) status and trends of ecosystem conditions, impacts to important ecosystem goods and services, and factors that affect ecosystem conditions; b) effectiveness of strategies, programs, and projects; and c) cause and effect linkages for issues involving high risks and difficult tradeoffs” is called for in the Biennial Science Plan.

The work of the Launch Committee is consistent with Near-Term Action E.3.2, “Implement transition to a coordinated regional program for monitoring ecosystem status and trends, program and project effectiveness, and cause-and-effect relationships.”

Stakeholder Input

The Leadership Council was briefed about the development of the monitoring program in June and July 2010. The Science Panel was briefed on the proposal for the Launch Committee’s work at their meeting in June.

Table 1. Launch Committee for the Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring program in Puget Sound – August 24, 2010.

Org type	Organization	Name	Title	Email
Local	King County	Jim Simmonds	Supervisor, Water & Land Resources Division; Chair, Stormwater Work Group	jim.simmonds@kingcounty.gov
	Seattle City Light	Scott Powell	Strategic Advisor	scott.powell@seattle.gov
State	WDFW	Ken Warheit	Chief Scientist, Fish Program	kenneth.warheit@dfw.wa.gov
	DNR	Tom Mumford	Aquatic's program senior consulting scientist	thomas.mumford@dnr.wa.gov
	ECY	Rob Duff	Program Manager, Environmental Assessment	rduf461@ecy.wa.gov
State/federal	Washington Sea Grant	Kate Litle	Citizen Science Coordinator	kalitle@u.washington.edu
Federal	EPA	Michael Cox	Toxics Coordinator Puget Sound and Columbia River	cox.michael@epamail.epa.gov
	NOAA	Bruce Crawford	Senior Monitoring Coordinator	bruce.crawford@noaa.gov
	USGS	Rick Dinicola	Associate Director Washington Water Science Center	dinicola@usgs.gov
Tribes	NWIFC	Terry Wright	Director, Fishery Programs	twright@nwifc.org
	Tulalip Tribes	Terry Williams	Fisheries and Natural Resources commissioner	twilliams@tulaliptribes-nsn.gov
Environmental organization	People for Puget Sound	Dave Peeler	Director of Programs	dpeeler@pugetsound.org
Science Panel	University of Washington	Jan Newton	Principal Oceanographer	newton@apl.washington.edu
Monitoring Forum	Puget Sound Partnership	Bill Wilkerson	Chair. Also, Leadership Council member	wilkwilkerson@comcast.net
Business	Stoel Rives LLP	Lincoln Loehr	Environmental Compliance Analyst	lcloehr@stoel.com
Watershed	Hood Canal Coordinating Council	Richard Brocksmith	Director for Habitat Programs	rbrocksmith@hccc.wa.gov