

# PugetSoundPartnership

our sound, our community, our chance

## Puget Sound Partnership Science Panel Meeting Summary

October 28, 2009  
NOAA NWFSC Montlake, Seattle

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### Science Panel Members Present:

- Joel Baker
- Guy Gelfenbaum
- Robert Johnston
- Jan Newton
- Timothy Quinn
- John Stark
- Usha Varanasi
- Katharine Wellman

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*It is intended that this summary be used along with notebook materials provided for the meeting.  
A recording of this meeting is retained by Partnership as the formal record.*

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### Action Items:

- Approval of Progress on Implementing the Action Agenda Memo
- Approval of Strategic Science Plan for Public Comment Release

### Meeting Summary:

- Nearshore Science Team/Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Program Presentation
  - Recovery Implementation Technical Team Presentation
  - Partnership Update
  - Proposed 2010 Legislative Package and Budget Update
  - Puget Sound Science Update
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### **CALL REGULAR MEETING TO ORDER – Joel Baker, Chair**

Joel Baker opened the regular meeting of the Science Panel and reviewed the agenda for the day.

## **NEARSHORE SCIENCE TEAM (NST)/PUGET SOUND NEARSHORE ECOSYSTEM RESTORATION PROGRAM (PSNERP)**

Curtis Tanner and Si Simenstad provided an overview of the work being done by the Nearshore Science Team (NST) and Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Program (PSNERP).

Curtis provided a brief overview explaining how PSNERP is a general investigation study sponsored by the Corps of Engineers and Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The program is investigating the problems with loss of nearshore habitat in Puget Sound and hoping to find ways to address that problem. By June of 2011 they plan to have final feasibility study completed. Science Panel members Jan Newton and Guy Gelfenbaum are both on the Nearshore Science Team.

Curtis and Si explained that this presentation touches on the six different aspects of the study and they would come back to a future meeting to provide a more technically detailed presentation on topics where the Science Panel would like more detailed discussion.

The six aspects include:

- Nearshore Geodatabase and Change Analysis
- Strategic Needs Assessment this work needs to be connected with the Partnership's Performance Management System. This is one topic needing further discussion with the Science Panel.
- PSNERP Problem Statement
- Future Risk Assessment Project – This project was funded by the Partnership and uses estimations on population growth over next 50 years and allocates the population into different distribution scenarios to see model outcomes. This topic will be presented in more detail at the November Science Panel meeting.
- Restoration and Conservation Strategies this document is out for peer-review and will be published soon.
- Climate Change and Sea Level Rise Curtis explained that this work is just beginning and it would benefit from Science Panel input. He would like to engage with the Science Panel at a later date on this topic.
- Science and Technology Plan is a major section in the PSNERP plan that is just starting to come together and includes infrastructure and how to coordinate existing efforts. This needs discussion with the Partnership and work with the Corps.

Joel thanked both Curtis and Si for the presentation and noted that it is critical to continue to coordinate efforts. Jan Newton will continue to be the Science Panel connection with PSNERP along with Scott Redman.

### **PUGET SOUND RECOVERY IMPLEMENTATION TECHNICAL TEAM (RITT)**

Norma Sands provided an overview of the work being done by the RITT explaining the mission statement for this group is to aid in the recovery of listed Pacific salmon. (See Web site for additional information <http://www.nwfsc.noaa.gov/trt/puget.cfm>)

RITT tasks include:

- Puget Sound Chinook 3-year project review
- Adaptive management – Puget Sound watersheds
- Skokomish Recovery Plan review
- Ozette Recovery Plan review
- Population prioritization
- Viability status review

RITT is using the open standards model for adaptive management in review of recovery plans. Norma noted that the RITT coordinates with the Partnership through Joe Ryan and the Action Area liaisons. The Partnership liaisons help coordinate meetings and work closely with both the RITT and Lead Entity groups.

Mary Ruckelshaus reported that in Hood Canal the Coordinating Council has been working on its ecosystem plan. The RITT has been asked to review this plan as it includes salmon. The HCCC is also using the open-standards method and coordinating efforts with the Partnership.

### **PUBLIC COMMENT PERIOD**

*Fred Felleman, WAVE Consulting*, discussed concern with Department of Fish and Wildlife's late release Chinook and how this is at cross-purposes with both Killer whale and Chinook recovery. He asked if the Science Panel has reviewed the citizen science report that came out of WSU and stressed the need for citizen science to gather data to be used by the Puget Sound Nearshore Estuary Program (PSNERP).

Joel Baker noted that he did review the report and that the suggestion for PSNERP is a good one.

*Scott Veirs, President, Beam Reach Marine Science School*, provided a quick update on the Killer Whale research. One issue being overlooked is underwater noise pollution – was not included in the critical habitat – calling it a silent crisis but for the killer whales it is far from silent – Killer whales raise their decibel levels due to noise and finding that they are changing their habits due to the noise level – Whales use sound to find salmon so there is a connection between the two. The Panel can hear the sounds through a live hydrophone at [www.Orcasound.net](http://www.Orcasound.net).

*Doug Myers, People for Puget Sound*, is encouraged that the Panel is still continuing on climate change efforts and the PSENERP is working on sea level rise and climate change. He suggested the Panel review the emerging body of literature on the benefits

of tidal marsh restoration. He also noted the need for the Partnership to engage at both the national and state level for capital funding investments in acquisition of both functioning and restorable properties.

### **SCIENCE PANEL OFFICERS**

Candidates Tim Quinn, Jan Newton, and Joel Baker discussed their desire to be chair/vice chair of the Panel. (See meeting notebook for details.)

Ballots were then handed out for Panel member voting.

### **PARTNERSHIP UPDATE**

David Dicks provided an overview of work done since the last Science Panel meeting. (See meeting notebook for details.)

### **PROPOSED 2010 LEGISLATIVE PACKAGE AND BUDGET UPDATE**

David Dicks provided an overview of the suite of legislative concepts the agency presented to the governor. (See meeting notebook for details.)

He reported that the agency pulled back on a couple of the concepts after receiving feedback from the Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB). The concepts that went forward included:

- Protection of nearshore habitat with no new shoreline overwater structures nearshore or feeder bluffs
- Preventing the largest source of copper from contaminating waters by banning copper brake pads – This issue could raise to the national level
- Manage and improve water quality health by adding stormwater low impact development requirement to state buildings – state leading by example

Natural Resource agencies are working to get governor support this session for HB 1614 which would tax barrels of oil at point of entry to pay for solutions for stormwater. This would fund retrofits and other stormwater fixes.

Joel asked what role the Science Panel should play in the legislative work. David would love to have the Panel engage in this effort and will come back to the next Panel meeting with ideas for the Science Panel role.

The Panel discussed the need for a risk assessment when putting legislation forward. David agrees and the agency clearly wants to go that way. He would like to go to the legislature each year with one or two big issues with the science behind it. Getting a risk assessment process in place is another role for the Science Panel and should start on that once the Science Program Manager is on staff.

David noted the State of Sound Report is coming out on Monday, November 2, this report is the first report letting people know the direction the Partnership is heading. He

commended Joel, the Science Panel, and Scott on the work done on the status and trends section in the State of the Sound Report.

### **HOOD CANAL UPDATE**

Jan Newton provided an update on the process developed by the Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC). She noted the HCCC is proposing corrective actions on:

- Wastewater
- Land use
- Agriculture
- Forest
- Riparian restoration
- Nearshore restoration and mediation
- Outreach and education on reducing personal nitrogen loadings

Scott Brewer will be convening working groups and looking for assistance on this work. Jan asked Panel member to let her know if they have names of people who may be interested to help with this project.

### **APPROVAL OF PROGRESS ON IMPLEMENTING THE ACTION AGENDA MEMO**

Joel Baker reviewed the proposed memorandum for submittal with the State of the Sound Report. This memorandum is required by statute. (See meeting notebook for details.)

Joel explained how he drafted this memorandum as a general response since things haven't been implemented yet and the reporting sequence is off. Better timing would have been to have the State of the Sound available for review prior to writing the memorandum. At this meeting the Panel can:

- Approve the memorandum as written,
- Make revisions and provide to the Leadership Council by Monday, November 2, or
- If the Panel can not agree on the response, not do the assignment

The Panel agreed that they would like to get this memorandum into the State of the Sound Report as is required, although it is not good timing. The Panel discussed several revisions and plans to send any additional comments to Joel by the end of the day Thursday, October 29. Joel will then finalize and provide to the Leadership Council by Monday, November 2, 2009.

### **PUGET SOUND SCIENCE UPDATE**

Mary Ruckelshaus updated the Panel on the status of the Puget Sound Science Update providing an overview of the draft report outline. The Panel discussed the need to have a half-day work session during the November Panel meeting for interaction with the author leads. The Science Panel is encouraged with the progress made and process used. (See meeting notebook for details.)

### **STRATEGIC SCIENCE PLAN**

Jan Newton walked the Panel through the current version of the Strategic Science Plan noting that this version still needs to go to Trina Wellman for her final review. Jan had hoped that the final review draft would be complete by this meeting. Since it isn't, she proposed the Panel approve the release for public review at its November meeting. The Panel was asked to get any additional comments to Jan by Wednesday, November 4, 2009.

Bob Johnston asked about the follow-up with the summary of comments on the Biennial Science Work Plan and Action Agenda that he provided. Jan believes it is a good document and can be used to inform what the Panel does with the Strategic Science Plan but it should be a stand-alone document, not a companion document to the Strategic Science Plan.

### **ANNOUNCEMENT OF NEW OFFICERS**

The result of the voting was announced with 2010 officers being Tim Quinn as the new Science Panel chair and Joel Baker as the new vice-chair.

**4:00 p.m.    ADJOURN**

Respectfully submitted by:  
Tammy Owings  
Special Assistant to the Boards

Next Meeting:            November 17 & 18, 2008  
                                 Carkeek Park Environmental Learning Center  
                                 Seattle