

Launch Committee for the
Puget Sound Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Program

February 11, 2011

Leadership Council
Puget Sound Partnership
326 East D St.
Tacoma, WA 98421

Dear members of the Leadership Council,

On behalf of the members of the Launch Committee, we are pleased to present a draft Charter for the Puget Sound Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Program (Program), along with recommendations for forming a Steering Committee for the Program. At their meeting in July 2010, the Leadership Council specifically asked the Launch Committee to “recommend 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” (July 2010 staff memo to the Leadership Council).

The Launch Committee is a multi-stakeholder group staffed by the Puget Sound Partnership. Members (Table 1) collectively offer multiple perspectives in terms of disciplines and organizations, are experts and community leaders that work at the science-policy interface, and are well grounded in monitoring challenges and issues.

Our process has been very collaborative with meetings open to the public and all meeting materials available throughout the months on our website. As part of our process, the Launch Committee circulated the draft Charter to over 300 stakeholders and partners asking for feedback. We received 23 responses from 22 organizations. The range, quality and depth of the feedback are a testament to the broad and keen interest in the success of this program. The Ecosystem Coordination Board also had the opportunity to give feedback on the charter at their February 3rd meeting. A summary of their discussion is attached to the February 2011 memo provided by Puget Sound Partnership staff.

Charter

The draft Charter describes a program intended to coordinate and facilitate the work of existing and future monitoring efforts in a manner that supports the goals of the Puget Sound Partnership and the many organizations and entities at all levels that are committed to improving the health of Puget Sound.

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We have worked very hard to attend to concerns of committee members particularly about transparency, credibility, efficiency, and science-policy linkages. The mechanisms built in the charter to address these essential characteristics include:

1. An independent, multistakeholder, collaborative Steering Committee staffed by Puget Sound Partnership employees.
2. A Steering Committee that oversees development and implementation of the program, including commissioning and overseeing multi-stakeholder topical work groups.
3. A Steering Committee that shapes priorities for monitoring. Monitoring priorities and findings will be integrated in the Action Agenda, the Strategic Science Plan, the Biennial Science Work Plan and the State of the Sound report.
4. The Science Panel acting as a review and advisory body.
5. A program that coordinates monitoring at all levels of activities. The program is not a centralized system of managing all monitoring programs in the region. Data collection, analyses and management will still be deployed across a variety of monitoring entities but the intent is to better coordinate efforts. The Puget Sound Partnership will compile, synthesize and analyze information from different sources to report monitoring program findings at the Puget Sound scale to fulfill their mandate.
6. A third party, objective and independent review every four years to ensure that monitoring findings are credible, independent, effective, open and transparent, legitimate, and salient.

Steering Committee

The Launch Committee recommends that the Puget Sound Partnership form a Steering Committee without delay. We recommend that the Steering Committee be an inclusive group with broad representation of tribes (3), environmental organizations (2), businesses (2), local jurisdictions (4), state agencies (4), federal agencies (3), watershed-based groups (1), Lead Integrating Organizations (2), academia (1), and citizen-science organizations (1). We believe that the various caucuses and associations should be empowered to appoint members upon invitation from the Puget Sound Partnership. Please refer to our recommendations for more detail the criteria, membership and appointing process.

The Charter offers a framework for the Program, but we want to be clear that it is not a work plan. As the Program continues to develop, we recommend that priorities should be placed on commissioning topical work groups and discussions about strategies for acquiring long-term funding for monitoring; better defining the link between the monitoring program and performance management at the Puget Sound Partnership particularly with respect to implementation, effectiveness, status and trends monitoring; and how best to integrate and coordinate the work of existing monitoring efforts like the salmon recovery adaptive management and monitoring program and the Puget Sound Assessment and Monitoring Program (PSAMP).

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Puget Sound Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment Program

The committee has one more meeting left before they sunset where they will finalize the Charter based on input received at the Leadership Council.

Feel free to contact us at 360.407.6699 or Robert.Duff@ecy.wa.gov, or 206.543.9152 or newton@apl.washington.edu.

Sincerely,



Robert M. Duff, Chair
Launch Committee
Washington State Department of Ecology

Jan Newton, Vice-Chair
Launch Committee
University of Washington

Enclosures

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Table 1. Launch Committee for the Coordinated Ecosystem Monitoring and Assessment program in Puget Sound.

Organization type	Organization	Name	Title
Local	King County	Jim Simmonds	Supervisor, Water and Land Resources Division; Chair, Stormwater Work Group
	Seattle City Light	Scott Powell	Strategic Advisor
State	WDFW	Ken Warheit	Chief Scientist, Fish Program
	DNR	Tom Mumford	Aquatic's program senior consulting scientist
	ECY	Rob Duff	Program Manager, Environmental Assessment
	Puget Sound Partnership	Nathalie Hamel	Monitoring Program Manager and staff to Launch Committee
State/federal	Washington Sea Grant	Kate Litle	Citizen Science Coordinator
Federal	EPA	Michael Cox	Toxics Coordinator Puget Sound and Columbia River
	NOAA	Bruce Crawford	Senior Monitoring Coordinator
	USGS	Rick Dinicola	Associate Director Washington Water Science Center
Tribes	NWIFC	Terry Wright	Director, Fishery Programs
	Tulalip Tribes	Terry Williams	Fisheries and Natural Resources commissioner
Environmental organization	People for Puget Sound	Dave Peeler	Director of Programs
Science Panel	University of Washington	Jan Newton	Principal Oceanographer
Monitoring Forum	Puget Sound Partnership	Bill Wilkerson	Chair. Also, Leadership Council member
Business	Stoel Rives LLP	Lincoln Loehr	Environmental Compliance Analyst
Watershed	Hood Canal Coordinating Council	Richard Brocksmith	Director for Habitat Programs