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**Alliance for a Healthy South Sound Council Meeting**  
**June 26, 2025, 10:00AM - 12:00PM**  
**Virtual Zoom Meeting**



**Participants**

Andraya Mai, Thurston County  
Ali Brown, City of Lacey  
Amy Hatch-Winecka, WRIA 13 Lead Entity  
Coordinator  
Audrey Coyne, Department of Health  
Barbara Ann Smolko, Pierce County  
Brianna Blackburn, Pierce County  
Cindy Callahan, Tacoma-Pierce County Health  
Department  
Daniel Kuntz, Squaxin Island Tribe  
David Troutt, Nisqually Indian Tribe  
Dustin Bilhimer, Department of  
Ecology/Stormwater SIL  
Emile Ancelet, Pierce County  
Jacob Murray, WRIA 14 Lead Entity Coordinator  
Jen Thurman-Williams, Mason Conservation  
District

Karin Strelloff, Thurston Conservation District  
Kathleen Pozarycki, Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO  
Kyle Amoroso, City of Tacoma  
Kym Foley, City of Olympia  
Lindsay Tuttle, Tacoma-Pierce County Health  
Department  
Lisa Petorak, City of University Place  
Monea Kerr, Puget Sound Partnership  
Nathan Ivy, Washington State University Extension  
Pat Tarzwell, Mason County Commissioner  
Paul Brewster, Thurston Regional Planning Council  
Renee Buck, Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed  
Council  
Sean Goldsmith, Pierce County  
Tom Kantz, Pierce County  
Tristen Payne, Thurston County  
Tye Menser, Thurston County Commissioner

***Meeting Facilitation***

Elizabeth McManus, Ross Strategic  
Haley Morris, Ross Strategic

**Meeting Summary**

The Alliance for a Healthy South Sound Local Integrating Organization (AHSS LIO) Council met virtually on June 26, 2025. Discussion was as follows.

**I. Thurston County Stormwater Road Retrofit Study Overview**

Paul Brewster, Thurston Regional Planning Council (TRPC), provided an overview of the [Thurston County Stormwater Road Retrofit Study](#) which is funded by the National Estuaries Program Stormwater Strategic Initiatives Grant. TRPC and their consultants with Hererra are leading the management of the project with support from project partners such as the City of Lacey, City of Tumwater, City of Olympia, and Thurston County. This study aims to develop a stormwater roadway retrofit prioritization toolkit to implement stormwater projects and address water quality treatment and flow control in the Nisqually, Deschutes, and Kennedy-Goldsborough watersheds. The toolkit will identify up to 20 roadway or regional stormwater retrofit projects along city and county owned roads that will protect and restore receiving waters and will provide an aggregate road retrofit prioritization score based on scores from three modules: a road runoff module, a receiving water module, and a road retrofit feasibility module. This project is broken up into five tasks:

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- **Task 1: Data Compilation and Toolkit Framework** to establish the framework and collect the datasets.
  - **Task 2: Road Retrofit Prioritization Toolkit** which the project team is currently in the process of. Herrera is leading the development of the beta version of the toolkit and default weighting scenarios.
  - **Task 3: Road Retrofit Project Concepts** where twenty concept and planning level cost estimates for retrofit projects will be developed.
  - **Task 4: Prioritization Tool Adaptation and Documentation** to develop a prioritization tool technical report and user guide.
  - **Task 5: Retrofit Best Practices and Retrofit Implementation Strategy Guidance** which will be produced by TRPC to improve policies and procedures for implementing retrofit projects.

Since the project kicked off in April 2024, the project team has facilitated eight stakeholder meetings and completed two of four planned workshops, which engage a broader audience to shape the development of the stormwater toolkit, including discussions on data sources, platform design, and scenario planning. Upcoming milestones include a July 9 steering committee meeting to review weighting scenarios, beta testing in August, a September workshop to narrow retrofit project sites from 40 to 20, field visits in October, and a December review of draft concept designs and cost estimates with opportunities for public participation throughout.

#### **LIO Member Comments/Questions:**

- Barbara-Ann Smolko expressed that she would like to see bacteria added as one of the water quality parameters and shellfish as a priority for the receiving water module.
  - Paul noted that tribes have participated in workshops and have provided data. He also mentioned that there will be opportunities throughout the process to provide this input for consideration.
- Kathleen Pozarycki noted that she would like to see the ranking criteria and rubric to use as a reference for the Snohomish-Stillaguamish LIO geography.
  - Paul shared that the partners involved in this project are considering [these weighting scenarios](#) outlined in table 1 as default queries for the Prioritization Toolkit. Additionally, this [module scoring example](#) provides insight into how the scores for the various modules are being calculated.

#### **II. Impacts of Stormwater Runoff on Salmon**

Nathan Ivy, Washington State University Extension (WSU), conducted research focused on the impact of urban stormwater runoff, particularly the toxic compound 6PPD-quinone on sensitive Pacific Northwest salmon species like Chinook, coho, steelhead, and coastal cutthroat trout. These keystone species, especially juvenile coho that spend over a year in freshwater, are highly vulnerable to pollution during spring outmigration, with studies in Miller Creek showing up to 80% mortality during storm events. Using a real-time exposure system, Nathan and his team demonstrated that stormwater not only causes visible adult die-offs but may also be silently decimating juvenile populations, raising urgent ecological concerns about the long-term survival of these fish and the health of their ecosystems.

Despite major investments in fish passage infrastructure, the lack of stormwater treatment means newly accessible habitats may still function as toxic traps, emphasizing the urgent need for integrated solutions that address both physical and chemical barriers to salmon recovery. Additionally, an increase in water

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temperatures due to climate change is compounding stormwater runoff impacts. Nathan's team at WSU is engaging in ongoing research including embryo and early life stage research which is revealing that stormwater exposure during critical developmental windows can cause significant physiological and behavioral impairments in salmon.

#### **LIO Member Comments/Questions:**

- Tom Kantz raised the concern that many state-owned culverts are being replaced without much consideration for stormwater impacts, and asked what can be done in situations where infiltration options are limited due to proximity to the water crossing?
  - Nathan explained that there are promising approaches like green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) and filtration systems that could help. His team at Miller Creek is preparing to launch one of the first large-scale, real-time studies testing these systems to assess their effectiveness on fish populations. He also emphasized the importance of source control, particularly finding safer alternatives to 6PPD in tires and noted that while infrastructure improvements are essential, they must be paired with upstream pollution prevention to truly protect aquatic ecosystems.

#### **III. Healthy Shoreline Action Plan Next Steps**

Elizabeth McManus shared that the AHSS LIO is in the early stages of developing a Healthy Shoreline Action Plan, which aims to organize and elevate the work needed to improve shoreline health in the South Puget Sound. These Action Plans serve as a bridge between regional strategies and local efforts, helping to ensure that funding is directed toward community-identified priorities. They also offer LIOs an opportunity to collectively review and update their Ecosystem Recovery Plans and allow regional funders to use the plans to better understand local needs and align funding opportunities accordingly. The Healthy Shoreline Action Plan is scheduled for completion by August 31, and partners are invited to contribute project ideas including barriers, needs, and opportunities through this [Easy Retro Board](#). Contributors are encouraged to align their actions with specific strategies such as [regulatory approaches, incentives, long-term planning, design, and restoration](#).

#### **LIO Member Comments/Questions:**

- Tom Kantz asked if the Healthy Shoreline Action Plan will include freshwater shorelines, rivers, and lakes in addition to marine shorelines and if that is included in the Action Agenda?
  - Elizabeth noted that freshwater shoreline projects should be captured even though it's still not decided if the 2026-2030 Action Agenda will focus on freshwater shorelines as it's both required and necessary to include them in Shoreline Management Plans (SMPs).
- What is the next step for the development of the Action Plan?
  - The Easy Retro Board will be reviewed regularly by the AHSS LIO Coordinators who will follow up with people to ask clarifying questions and ensure that the actions are fully understood. The projects will then be transferred to the PSP format.

#### **IV. LIO Updates**

- **South Sound Science Center** – The AHSS LIO Executive Committee has proposed exploring the idea of a South Sound Science Center, which can serve as a hub for addressing scientific questions and compiling usable information for decision-makers. This initiative would build on the work of the South Sound Science Symposium Planning Committee, which has long gathered regional scientific data. The current focus is on collecting key scientific questions from partners to guide the center's scope and identifying potential funding opportunities to support this work.

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- **Ecosystem Coordination Board (ECB) Local Forum** – The ECB includes representatives from state agencies, tribes, nonprofits, businesses, and local action areas, and plays a key role in guiding and advocating for Puget Sound recovery. Every few years, local groups have the opportunity to present challenges or successes to the ECB, which can lead to meaningful support. The AHSS LIO is asked present at the Local Forum on November 6, 2025. Leading up to that presentation, the current goal is to brainstorm potential topics from the South Sound that could benefit from ECB attention, whether to highlight progress or request assistance. Members suggested the following ideas:
    1. Demonstrate estuary restoration efforts in the South Puget Sound such as the Deschutes Estuary, Whiteman Cove, and Chambers-Clover restoration projects to share what it takes to restore an urban estuary in terms of collaboration and funding. The discussion could focus on ensuring that the Puget Sound recovery system can enable this work to continue and guarantee that these restored estuaries can be maintained.
    2. Address the increasing pressure on working and open space lands in the South Sound due to accelerating population growth by identifying where this pressure is most concentrated, what responses are underway, and what ongoing needs remain. This includes tracking the loss of agricultural, timber, and habitat lands and understanding the impacts of groundwater withdrawals on streamflow.

#### **V. Round Robin**

- Dustin Bilhimer shared that the Stormwater Strategic Initiative Lead (SIL) had an open request for proposals (RFP) for the Neighborhood Stormwater Education and Assistance funding opportunity which closed on July 9, 2025. This funding will be used to encourage implementation and maintenance of stormwater best management practices (BMPs) and local neighborhoods.
- Sean Goldsmith provided an update on the Chambers Bay Estuary Restoration project led by Peirce County. A consultant, Floyed Snyder was hired to assist with the project which will encompass a bridge replacement, dam removal, and estuary restoration which will be tied together for the permitting process.
- Amy Hatch-Winecka noted that the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 13 received an allocation of funding from both the regular round of Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) funding as well as a riparian allocation which will be used to fund one and a half of the projects they have planned. One of the projects will involve the strategic component of outreach and landowner engagement in the middle Deschutes River. WRIA 13 is also trading funds with Nisqually, which will help to fully fund the second project.
- Renee Buck expressed concern about the City of DuPont’s conditional use permits related to the South Parcel de-watering and critical areas ordinance, especially regarding potential impacts on salmon habitat, shoreline springs, and Sequelitchew Creek. The Chambers-Clover Creek Watershed Council successfully influenced the final Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) to reflect a losing reach instead of a dry one, however, many of their other comments were overlooked. The matter is now in the hands of the hearing examiner, with an appeal to the EIS also filed based on cultural resource concerns.

#### **VI. Next Steps**

The Council will meet next on September 18 from 10:00am-12:00pm. If you have suggestions for agenda topics, please email Haley Morris, [hmorris@rossstrategic.com](mailto:hmorris@rossstrategic.com).