

# **ENGROSSED SUBSTITUTE SENATE BILL 5372**

*Creating the puget sound partnership*

## **PROGRAM IMPACTS**

ESSB 5372 creates a new state agency called the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) to oversee protection and restoration of Puget Sound by 2020. Principal requirements and expectations of Ecology include funding programs review and coordination with the Partnership's Action Agenda, continuing and refining accountability mechanisms for the agency's Puget Sound work and support of the ecosystem level strategic science program.

## **RESOURCE IMPACTS**

Ecology received 1.6 FTE and \$347,000 split between the Water Quality and Environmental Assessment Programs to implement the bill.

## **WORK PLAN**

Ecology's implementation of ESSB 5372 will be greatly shaped by how the Puget Sound Partnership exercises its various authorities. Additionally, adaptive management will play a significant role in shaping Ecology's work as the implementation strategies of the 2020 Action Agenda will be revised every two years commensurate with the legislative session and approval of a biennial budget. However, Ecology can shape much of its contribution to the Action Agenda and work of the PSP by proactively articulating a scope of work that contributes to more effective conservation and restoration actions.

The following are key elements of Ecology's work plan to address the agency's commitments in support of the Partnership's goal to protect and restore the health of Puget Sound by 2020:

- a) Enhance coordination and communication on Puget Sound work within the agency through a variety of venues. These include:
  - Hold monthly meetings of a multi-program group to facilitate discussion, coordination and communication among agency actions ("SAGE": Sound Advisory Group of Entrepreneurs);
  - Enhance communication and coordination through management teams and regional directors.

- b) Participate in management conferences reviewing overall performance and accomplishments related to work in Puget Sound.
- c) Contribute to the work of creating the 2020 Action Agenda, through the following:
  - Proactively engage the Partnership on process and timeline to develop the Action Agenda;
  - Solicit feedback informally from throughout the agency on a continuous basis on ideas to advance Puget Sound conservation and restoration. Methods include: compile ideas received from the agency's June Puget Sound Initiative rollouts; utilize the revised intranet site, making it more interactive; solicit feedback at monthly SAGE meetings; and, issue periodic electronic solicitations from the director to all agency staff;
  - Facilitate a formal agency-wide process through the fall of 2007 to solicit ideas to support the primary objectives of the Partnership (i.e., protect habitat, restore habitat, reduce toxic pollution, reduce nutrients and pathogens, manage stormwater, assure adequate water, preserve biodiversity and increase capacity for action); and,
  - Hold a strategy meeting with the director and key staff in late fall/early winter 2007 to review and prioritize ideas to formally forward onto the Partnership for their consideration.
- d) Provide input into delineation of Action Areas through the state caucus. Once Action Areas have been designated by the Partnership, inventory Ecology's resources by Action Area to inform and help shape each sub-regional plan.
- e) Collaborate and provide data, results and interpretation to the Partnership Science Panel. The Panel is to identify environmental indicators by July 31, 2008 and recommend benchmarks needed to achieve Action Agenda.
- f) Track measures significant to Puget Sound ecosystem goals.
- g) Participate in regular state caucus meetings to coordinate agency's work with others in the state family.
- h) Meet with state caucus IT/data experts to develop plan to address needs related to tracking implementation of the Action Agenda.
- i) Contribute to discussions about securing additional resources to support work needed to implement the Action Agenda.
- j) Participate on state caucus communications team to ensure consistency of message and help facilitate region-wide network of educators (ECO).

- k) Participate in federal caucus meetings as requested to facilitate communication and coordination with federal agencies.
- l) Consider the Puget Sound Partnership a regular topic on the Environmental/Tribal Environmental Commission (ETEC) to facilitate communication and coordination with tribal governments.
- m) Coordinate with the Partnership to establish the process for determining criteria for Ecology's grant and loan programs in order to ensure support for projects conforming to the Action Agenda and to inform process for the Partnership to determine "Partners."
- n) Work with the Partnership's Leadership Council to review Ecology's funding programs related to implementation of the Action Agenda. Initial recommendations are due November 1, 2009; final recommendations one year later.

Ecology proposes to hire staff in the fall of 2007 to work on commitments.

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