

Our Living Shorelines

An Education, Outreach & Stewardship Plan

A Framework for Action



Shorelines Education, Outreach
& Stewardship Team
WA Department of Ecology
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Introduction

Washington has about 28,000 miles of shorelines – more than the distance around the Earth! Our shorelines include the edges of streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, Puget Sound, the Pacific Ocean, and the Strait of Juan de Fuca – all the places where water meets land.

Our shorelines are in trouble. Among other factors, pollution, habitat loss, rapid growth, and development have put our shorelines and the wildlife that depend on them in jeopardy. Protection and restoration of Washington's shorelines will require a multitude of partners and approaches such as enforcement, incentives, and education – all working together.

A Framework for Action – the value and power of collaboration and education

This Framework for Action describes *Our Living Shorelines*, the Department of Ecology's (Ecology's) proposed plan to provide a comprehensive, statewide approach to education, outreach, and stewardship activities for all types of shorelines. The main idea is about bringing partners and stakeholders together, sharing information and strategies, building on existing efforts, and filling gaps as needed.

We believe education is a cost-effective approach that can create long-term shifts in knowledge, awareness, and behaviors as well as reap far-reaching benefits. We can look to an educated, informed public to sustain our shorelines for future generations. Protecting the natural resource now can avoid costly restoration of degraded shorelines in the future. Regulations and enforcement can't do it all. They are only part, and a small part, of the solution. If we want to continue to protect and restore our shorelines, the future depends on an engaged public working together.

With Shoreline Master Programs and the Puget Sound Action Agenda currently in the public eye, the time is right to build on the awareness and interest generated by these efforts. Over 250 potential partners we've already contacted concur.

This document introduces the proposed plan and describes work completed to date. Goals and objectives, next steps, potential funding, and resources are included. The plan is currently envisioned in two parts: early actions, to get the project off the ground and grab the public's imagination, and a long-term strategy to take us into the future. This Framework for Action is a living document, which will change and develop as the project evolves.

Join us!

Join us in providing effective leadership, coordination, and a commitment to the *Our Living Shorelines* project. Your collaboration in developing the long-term plan, seeking funding and resources, implementing the project, and ongoing interest and support can make this effort a success, to the benefit of the people and shorelines of Washington.

Why shorelines?

Shorelines are an important part of what makes Washington a wonderful place to live, work, and play. Residents of our state love their lakes, streams, wetlands, and beaches. They are the places we go to swim, fish and gather shellfish, picnic, and walk. We appreciate their aesthetic value, a place of renewal from our busy lives. Shorelines are the first places where people settled, and these areas carry a profound sense of place, connecting us to the Northwest's cultural, social, and historical identities.

Shorelines are important to the state's economy. We all benefit from having thriving waterfronts made up of ports, marinas, shellfish facilities, and other water-dependent businesses. Fishing, tourism, and recreation provide jobs and income.

Healthy shorelines are part of a healthy environment. For example, they help protect water quality; provide habitat for fish and wildlife; and reduce damage from natural processes such as floods and landslides.

Everyone benefits from healthy shorelines.

Why the name *Our Living Shorelines*?

In January 2011, Ecology conducted a preliminary survey, in part to provide guidance on terminology that resonates within the shoreline education community. Based on the results, our project is currently named "*Our Living Shorelines*." (See section below for more information on the survey.)

Work accomplished to date

In 2010, members of Ecology's executive management team¹ agreed on the importance and timeliness of a statewide campaign, to provide a comprehensive, coordinated approach to education, outreach, and stewardship efforts for all types of shorelines. A small group of experienced Ecology educators and communication specialists began meeting in late 2010 as the Shorelines Education and Outreach team.

The team's first task included identifying what it will take to develop a comprehensive statewide, shorelines campaign strategy: groundwork needed (e.g. identifying potential partners and existing programs) as well as time and resources required to complete a strategy based on social science theories. Over the months, the team has completed a number of tasks, including:

- Developing a preliminary plan for moving forward.
- Conducting preliminary surveys and interviews to identify statewide interest in a campaign and to guide early and ongoing planning efforts.
- Launching a web portal.
- Securing buy-in from Ecology management and other key stakeholders, including state resource agencies.

¹ Dave Workman, Director of Communication & Education; Josh Baldi, Special Assistant to Ecology's Director; and Gordon White, Program Manager of Shorelands and Environmental Assistance.

- Compiling a contact list of hundreds of potential partners/programs. Making initial contacts and conducting preliminary meetings (ongoing).
- Investigating funding sources (ongoing).

Values Survey

In January and February 2011, the team conducted a *Values Survey* with the shoreline education community. The team surveyed 635 educators and service providers regarding shoreline words and phrases that resonate with them, how they personally interact with shorelines, and why they value shorelines. This survey included some questions from prior public opinion surveys conducted by Ecology in 2004 (i.e. Public Opinion on Shoreline Management in Washington State, publication #04-06-028) Based on the *Values Survey* results, the team adopted the project name of *Our Living Shorelines*.

Results of the Values Survey: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/livingshorelines/education.html>

Market Analysis

In May 2011, the team completed a *Market Analysis* of shoreline education and outreach services. Over 190 potential partners responded. The survey identified topics that are being well-addressed and those that need more attention, as well as shoreline service locations, approaches, and target audiences.

Results indicated there is a high level of interest and need for a coordinated statewide shoreline campaign, and support for Ecology taking a leadership role in developing the strategy.

Results of the *Market Analysis*: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/livingshorelines/education.html>

Ecology scientists' interviews

The team interviewed 22 Ecology scientists with varied areas of expertise. Scientists were presented a list of 30 shoreline-related topics (the same as those presented in the *Market Analysis*) and asked what top three topics from the list provide the best opportunities for ecological improvements. This information helped the team identify four top priority issues (see below).

Top four priority topics

Based on the *Values Survey*, *Market Analysis*, and scientist interviews, the following four priority areas were identified:

1. Low-impact development.
2. Conservation/preservation.
3. Shoreline stabilization.
4. Climate change/sea level rise.

As the campaign is developed, these priority areas will be further reviewed and evaluated with partners.

Ecology web portal

Ecology established the *Our Living Shorelines* web portal to share survey results and information, and as a communication tool for future work. This site will be updated regularly as the project progresses.

Our Living Shorelines: <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/livingshorelines/education.html>

Goals and Objectives

The overall goal of the *Our Living Shorelines* project is to:

Develop and implement a collaborative shoreline education, outreach and stewardship program that raises public awareness and increases citizen's engagement in restoring and protecting Washington's shorelines.

More specifically, to:

- Inspire, mobilize, and expand shoreline citizen engagement and stewardship through personal actions.
- Create strategic partnerships with agencies, community groups, non-profits, municipalities, and businesses. Use these partnerships to share information, leverage resources, promote shoreline stewardship, and increase capacity to change behaviors.
- Increase awareness and stewardship that leads to greater protection and restoration of shoreline habitat and ecological functions.

Objectives

- Write a comprehensive strategy to carry out the goals of shoreline education, outreach, and stewardship.
- Use social science research to develop, implement, and evaluate a shorelines campaign that is part of the overall strategy.
- Identify barriers and benefit to desired behavior changes.
- Develop messages, materials, and actions that encourage beneficial behaviors and overcome barriers.
- Identify and facilitate funding of education, outreach and stewardship actions.
- Create and distribute shoreline education and outreach materials that deliver key messages and promote desired behaviors. Include materials that are applicable in different settings, including Eastern and Western Washington.
- Develop and use Ecology's *Our Living Shorelines* web portal as a hub for shoreline information and online collaboration.
- Conduct evaluation of campaign implementation based on measurable outcomes.
- Provide input and feedback to the longer term social science work of the Puget Sound Partnership.

Early Actions

Since creating a long-term statewide strategy is anticipated to take at least a year, the Our Living Shorelines team is proposing several early actions designed to jump-start the project and immediately begin to address pollution and habitat loss. These actions will fit and align with the overall long-term efforts. Moving forward will be dependent on funding – estimated costs for each action are included.

The proposed actions provide an opportunity to work with partners and build on existing successful programs and ideas. In selecting these projects, the team looked at many factors, including:

- “The most bang for the buck” – actions that represent efficient and effective opportunities especially considering limited staff time and funding.
- Projects that can serve as pilots to build institutional capacity, test methods and messages, and spread existing successful programs.
- Programs that address one or more of the top four priority topics identified through the team’s surveys and interviews.
- Statewide applicability.

Early Action Projects		
Lead Agency (Contact)	Project Description	Estimated Cost
WSU Cooperative Extension	Integrate a freshwater component into the Shore Stewards program and pilot it in an Eastern Washington location. Deliver a green shorelines training for realtors specializing in shoreline properties. Finalize the Shoreline Management Guide and distribute statewide.	\$75,000
WSU Cooperative Extension	Develop and pilot an online training module for Water Watchers.	\$55,000
Conservation Commission and Districts	Create a statewide ‘green shorelines’ effort within the Conservation Districts. Build on existing efforts by Puget Sound area districts. Provide training at the annual WADE training (June 2013) that increases district staff technical expertise and knowledge about shoreline permitting and about green shorelines stewardship through property owner outreach and materials. Create a package of actions for potential follow up funding	\$12,000 for training and initial follow-up materials.

	through long-term OLS plan.	
Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	Create a lower Columbia River ‘green shorelines’ component with Conservation Districts and lower river watershed councils. Create a package of actions for potential follow up funding.	\$12,000 for training and initial materials.
Department of Ecology	Sponsor two “Shoreline Speaks” forums. Offer short (5-15 minute) talks on cutting-edge shoreline science and outreach strategies, and entertainment. Emphasize networking among practitioners. Produce professional videos of each presentation and post online.	\$20,000 – 30,000 (main cost is for the videos)
Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	Host one “Shoreline Speaks” forum (building on Department of Ecology project) in a lower Columbia Oregon community. See notes above.	\$2,390
Department of Ecology	Provide teacher professional development workshops on priority shoreline topics (low impact development, conservation/preservation, climate change/sea level rise). Coordinate with Pacific Education Institute to integrate Project Based Learning, Nature Mapping, and national environmental education curriculums such as Project WILD and Project WET. Pilot 4 workshops that include tours.	\$4,000
Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	Provide one teacher professional development workshop in Oregon on priority shoreline topics.	\$1,565
Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership	Build priority shoreline curriculum for classroom instruction to augment Estuary Partnership existing curricula. Curricula will meet Oregon and Washington benchmark requirements; Estuary Partnership meets with teachers to identify curriculum components and develops curriculum. (Components may include: low impact development, conservation/preservation and climate change/sea level rise). Estuary Partnership will deliver curricula to students as part of existing education program.	\$2,760

Long-Term Project Development

The tasks and subtasks itemized below are anticipated to take approximately 12 months. (The person or group anticipated to hold primary responsibility for each task is listed in parentheses.) The project will include developing a strategy using social science research and tools in a coordinated, collaborative effort between Ecology's Our Living Shorelines team, an Advisory Committee that will include key partners, and a consultant, assistant and/or intern. The strategy will include an overall shorelines campaign, implementation plan, and identified potential funding sources. The details of the long-term project will change as work progresses and partners provide feedback.

Roles and Responsibilities

Project coordination (Ecology)

- Manage project timeline and document the process.
- Hire and supervise consultant, assistant and/or intern.
- Manage budget; identify funding for developing the strategy and Early Actions; apply for EPA environmental education grant and other funds.
- Convene and facilitate inter-agency and intra-agency Advisory Committee. Coordinate and collaborate with existing work at Ecology and other agencies.
- Create and manage partner listserv, SharePoint site and Ecology's *Our Living Shorelines* web site.
- Track and evaluate implementation of both Early Actions and Long-term Project Development.

Strategy development (Advisory Committee)

- Represent key partner organizations during the process: communicate with management as needed, and identify opportunities, connections, available staff, and resources for the process and projects.
- Provide input on the overall process: partnership engagement, social science research, and implementation plan.
- Identify potential partners and assist with getting them engaged in the process.
- Review and provide comments on draft products.
- Actively seek funding for implementation including providing letters of support for grants as appropriate.

Partnership engagement (Consultant, assistant and/or intern)

- Set-up, design, and facilitate partnership meetings and any necessary work groups.
- Create planning process materials/tools as needed.
- Manage contacts with potential partners.
- Engage scientists/obtain their feedback.

Research (Consultant, assistant and/or intern)

- Catalog materials already used by Ecology and others.

- Research other programs and models of success in Washington, other states, and internationally. Review and write up summary.
- Design and conduct testing of campaign messages and materials. Write up report/summary.

Potential partners

Developing the statewide strategy and campaign with partners is fundamental to its success.

Potential partners include:

- Education centers.
- Non-profit, professional, and advocacy groups, associations and organizations.
- Academia.
- Tribes.
- Federal, state, and local government agencies/organizations.

Potential Audiences

Potential audiences are those who will receive the services developed through this project. These are people with the most direct relationship to shorelines – those who most impact and use them. These individuals and groups will be identified during the process based on the top four priority topic areas listed above. Some of these audiences will include:

- Property owners.
- Businesses.
- Recreational users such as swimmers, walkers, and boaters.

Funding and Resources

The Our Living Shorelines team meets regularly with Ecology management to discuss next steps and funding given the current budget crisis. If we identify funding for completing the strategy, a key next step will be engaging partners in developing the details of the project.

The team estimates that \$60,000 to 100,000 is needed to complete necessary social science research and the strategy, and \$190,000 to implement early action projects presented in this Framework.

The Our Living Shorelines team is working with our shoreline partners to explore funding sources for strategy development and early actions, and long-term implementation of the tasks that will be identified in the strategy.

Conclusion

The *Our Living Shorelines* project is not intended to replace existing programs and efforts. The surveys gave us a snapshot of how many people and organizations are currently involved in improving and protecting shorelines across the state. Although these programs are working, particularly in targeting local issues of shoreline stewardship, a comprehensive and collaborative effort is needed to restore and protect our shorelines now and for the future.

Development of the overall project depends on working with partners and building on existing resources and successful initiatives, as well as filling gaps. Collaborations and networking between existing programs will result in better products and services, enabling organizations to work more efficiently and effectively.

Results from the *Values Survey*, *Market Analysis*, and scientist interviews confirm there is a high level of interest and need for a coordinated statewide shoreline effort, and support for Ecology taking a leadership role in developing the comprehensive overall strategy.

It will be a great challenge to improve communication between all of these groups and to showcase the great work currently being done. At such a critical time for our state – financially, socially and environmentally – it is more important than ever for all organizations to work together.

This project aims to increase effective programming, provide access to funding, and improved capacity at the local levels. *Our Living Shorelines* will engage the public and stakeholders in the process of developing and implementing a final strategy. No one agency or group can do it all. It will take a community to protect, restore, and preserve our shorelines.

Join us!

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