



# 2017-2018 WORK PLAN

## PURPOSE, OBJECTIVES, AND KEY ACCOMPLISHMENTS EXPECTED IN 2017-18

In 2010, the Stormwater Work Group (SWG) recommended a strategic scientific framework, priorities, and specific steps to implement a broad, comprehensive Stormwater Assessment and Monitoring Program for Puget Sound (SWAMPPS). The *2010 Strategy* is focused on enabling us to know whether or not our management actions are successfully reducing harm caused to Puget Sound by stormwater from developed and developing lands. In 2012 the Washington Dept. of Ecology (Ecology) issued municipal stormwater NPDES permits requiring collective implementation of a Regional Stormwater Monitoring Program (RSMP) – a prioritized subset of the *2010 Strategy*. This document is intended to guide the SWG’s near-term role in implementing the *2010 Strategy*, overseeing the RSMP, and continuing to expand the monitoring program activities.

The SWG’s areas of focus for 2017 and 2018 are:

1. Continue to implement the *2010 Strategy*, our October 2010 *Recommendations for Municipal Stormwater Permit Monitoring*, and subsequent formal recommendations submitted to Ecology.
  - a. Complete the analysis and report on findings from the small streams monitoring sampling collected in 2015; develop recommendations for future sampling.
  - b. Analyze the marine nearshore sediment data that were collected in 2016 and report the findings.
  - c. Analyze the marine mussel data collected in winter 2016 and report the findings.
  - d. Recommend specific next steps for marine bacteria monitoring and assessment.
  - e. Implement and oversee the first round of ten RSMP effectiveness studies and select a second round of studies.
  - f. Recommend specific next steps for Source Identification.
  - g. Approve recommendations for implementing regional monitoring of runoff from agricultural areas.
  - h. Get regular budget and progress reports from our Pooled Resources Oversight Committee (PRO-Committee) and provide Ecology with input needed to successfully implement the RSMP.
  - i. Make additional decisions and provide guidance needed to implement our recommendations successfully.
2. Communicate and coordinate with policy makers, monitoring groups and other interested parties in Puget Sound.
  - a. With support from the Association of Washington Cities, develop and implement a communication strategy to share RSMP findings with stormwater managers, public works directors, permit managers, city managers, and local elected officials.
    - Educate elected officials, city and county staff, legislators, agency directors and staff, and others (such as the Washington Waters Task Force) about our recommendations and findings.
  - b. Send out SWG Reporter issues 5 times each calendar year following SWG meetings.
  - c. Produce an annual report following the close of the fiscal years of 2017 and 2018.
  - d.
  - e. Participate in the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP) as a topical workgroup and engage with the other workgroups.
  - f. Engage more interested parties in our subgroups.
  - g. Stay informed on the design approach and implementation of receiving water monitoring for the Lower Columbia River Basin



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3. Continue to discuss strategic expansions of the *2010 Strategy* to other water bodies, types of NPDES-permitted activities, land uses, or geographic areas of Puget Sound.
  - a. Advise PSEMP, PSP, Ecology, and others on stormwater-related monitoring activities conducted outside of the RSMP.
  - b. Hear from experts on implementation of our recommendations.
  - c. Hear from other topical workgroups at regular SWG meetings.
  - d. Review and set priorities for status and trends monitoring, effectiveness studies, source identification and diagnostic monitoring, and studies/research.

This work plan lays out the proposed tasks that need to be completed, their timelines, and the roles and responsibilities of various parties in completing the work. This work plan is meant to be a starting point.

### WORK PLAN TASKS

The following work plan tasks are proposed to be accomplished during 2016-2017:

- Task 1: Oversee Ecology's administration of the RSMP pooled resources account.
- Task 2: Communicate with stormwater managers, policy makers, and other interested parties.
- Task 3: Oversee implementation of RSMP small streams status and trends monitoring and assessment.
- Task 4: Oversee implementation of RSMP marine nearshore status and trends monitoring and assessment.
- Task 5: Oversee RSMP effectiveness studies and select additional effectiveness studies.
- Task 6: Recommend Source Identification and Diagnostic Monitoring focus and priorities.
- Task 7: Finalize and implement recommendations for regional monitoring related to runoff from agricultural lands.
- Task 8: Discuss, set priorities, and develop implementation plans for additional SWAMPPS activities and identify areas for updates to the *2010 Strategy*.
- Task 9: Participate fully in PSEMP; communicate and coordinate with other regional monitoring groups.
- Task 10: Support, manage, staff, and lead implementation of SWAMPPS.

### ADVISORY SUBGROUPS AND COMMITTEES

As of the date of this work plan adoption the SWG is coordinating with numerous groups that are advising and supporting our recommendations for RSMP and SWAMPPS. In the past we have formed and provided direction to numerous SWG Subgroups; established a formal committee to oversee the pooled resources funding account; and have members and staff participating in other PSEMP workgroups as needed to coordinate SWAMPPS implementation. We will continue to interact with all of the groups listed below. This work plan articulates what we expect to ask from them in the coming year or two.

Active SWG Subgroups with open membership and participation:

- Agricultural Runoff
- Communication
- Effectiveness
- Source Identification
- Work Plan

Committees with formally assigned stakeholder representation:

- Pooled Resources Oversight Committee (PRO-Committee)

PSEMP Workgroups officially commissioned by the Steering Committee and related to our work:

- Freshwater
- Marine Nearshore

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- Marine Water Quality
- Toxics

## PROPOSED MEETING DATES

The SWG will meet five or six times per year depending upon the issues we need to discuss and decisions we need to make. All dates are Wednesdays, and all meetings begin at 9am and continue to noon or later as needed. We may occasionally extend the meeting time so work group members should have their calendars clear until 3pm. At least two weeks’ notice will be given for an extended meeting time.

- In 2017: January 18, March 15, June 7, September 13, and November 15.
- In 2018: January 17, March 21, June 6, September 19, and November 14.

Advisory subgroup meeting dates will be scheduled as needed by subgroup chairs and SWG staff.

## TASK 1: Oversee Ecology’s administration of the RSMP pooled resources account

The SWG has a formally-established role in overseeing Ecology’s service as the administrative entity for pooling NPDES municipal stormwater permittees’ funds. The SWG approved an oversight committee charter in 2012 and in 2014 the Pooled Resources Oversight Committee (PRO-Committee, or PRO-C) was established.

Ecology’s RSMP Coordinator is regularly briefing the PRO-Committee as to the status of implementing the RSMP, and particularly in making contracting decisions to conduct RSMP activities and in reviewing and approving deliverables. The PRO-C seeks additional recommendations from the SWG as necessary or helpful to support contracting decisions and RSMP implementation.

The PRO-Committee will provide Ecology and the SWG with feedback as to their overall assessment of Ecology’s approach to implementing SWG recommendations. This will be done in a “report card” fashion twice during each permit cycle (in the middle and toward the end) following the format of the first evaluation delivered to the SWG in September 2016.

The SWG may also evaluate and recommend other options for administering the funds for the subsequent permit as they become available, although this task is not envisioned to be conducted during the time period covered by this SWG work plan.

Advisory Subgroup: PRO-Committee

Timeline and Deliverables:

Ongoing	Ecology budget and progress reports to PRO-Committee PRO-Committee reports to SWG at work group meetings PRO-C advice on contracting decisions: scope, schedule, budget
January 2018	Second assessment of Ecology’s service as the RSMP administrative entity

## TASK 2: Communicate with stormwater managers, policy makers and other interested parties

The SWG developed a communication plan for the 2010 Strategy and 2010 Recommendations for Municipal Stormwater Permit Monitoring. In this coming biennium the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) will help us develop a new communication plan to share the findings of RSMP activities. The plan will be targeted to these priority audiences: stormwater management program directors, public works directors, permit managers, city managers, and other elected officials. Strategies and channels for delivering key messages to these audiences will be articulated in the plan. Other target audiences will be

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addressed if capacity is available. SWG staff will help AWC convene an advisory committee to support and advise this project.

In addition to the quarterly reports detailing cash flow and contracting actions, the RSMP Coordinator will compile content and develop key messages for an annual report to the PRO-C. This content can be repurposed for other outreach needs.

The “SWG Reporter” keeps a large audience apprised of our progress. It is emailed to between 500-600 individuals between work group meetings. Communication Subgroup members review each issue in advance of distribution. A new listserv will be created for delivering issues in 2016. All editions are archived on the SWG’s webpage <http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/reporter.html>

The SWG has used caucuses to communicate our key decisions, and the reasons behind them, to staff members at a large number of organizations and entities across Puget Sound. To augment the communication and outreach that takes place through the caucuses represented by SWG members, the Association of Washington Cities (with input from an advisory committee drawn from the Communication Subgroup and caucuses) will develop and review draft presentation and briefing materials for multiple audiences. We will continue to update our “lessons learned” document.

Work group members are asked to alert SWG staff to outdated content and propose improvements to our web pages.

At least two workshops will likely be held in 2017. The first will be as part of the processes of identifying the next round of effectiveness studies. The second will be a symposium to kick off of the new RSMP logo and share RSMP findings to date. The Association of Washington Cities will help the SWG articulate needs identify the best approaches to update interested parties, share RSMP findings broadly, and gather input on SWAMPPS implementation.

Advisory Subgroup: Communication Subgroup, PRO-Committee, RSMP Coordinator, AWC staff. For the AWC project a new Communication Advisory Committee will be formed featuring members of these groups and people representing key target audiences for RSMP findings.

Timeline and Deliverables:

After each SWG meeting	SWG Reporter issued Web archives and current content updated
Months 2, 5, 8, 11 each year	RSMP Quarterly reports for previous quarter
Month 10 each year	Revised second quarter currently report
July each year	RSMP Annual Report for previous fiscal year
Early 2017	Communication strategy for sharing RSMP findings RSMP logo Templates for delivering summaries of the findings of studies First annual RSMP findings workshop Listserv for SWG Reporter distribution
April 2017	RSMP Effectiveness Studies selection workshop
As needed/TBD	Source identification tracking and reporting workshop Other workshops and briefings Update “Lessons Learned” document

**TASK 3: Oversee implementation of RSMP small streams status and trends monitoring and assessment**

The first round of RSMP stream monitoring was conducted in 2015. The highest priority for 2017 is to complete data management, analysis, interpretation, and public reporting for this RSMP component that:

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- Provides a summary of the status of stream indicators that tell the best story about stormwater, including relevant human and environmental explanatory factors,
- Connects our work to other monitoring efforts in Puget Sound, and
- Makes recommendations for future RSMP data collection efforts to assess trends, including:
  - What parameters to continue monitoring, and at what sites, frequency, and timing; and
  - Stream gauging locations and a stream gauging program design.
- Contribute relevant findings to the PSEMP Toxics Workgroup’s synthesis report.

A group of scientists is implementing a scope of work for completing the analysis and reporting of the RSMP data. Ancillary data have been collected and compiled, and data analyses are underway. The team will make recommendations for future data collection and analyses. As part of this effort, the Lower Columbia Habitat Status and Trends Monitoring study design and approach are being reviewed and considered.

The PSEMP Toxics Workgroup is working on a synthesis report for the period from 2010-2015. The RSMP Coordinator provided our 2015 streams toxics data for this report.

Advisory Subgroups: PSEMP Freshwater and Toxics Workgroups

Timeline and Deliverables:

Summer 2017	All analyses completed and recommendations prepared
November 2017	Reports and preliminary recommendations delivered to Ecology and SWG
2018	Approve recommendations for the next round of RSMP streams monitoring and develop implementation plan for stream monitoring and gaging recommendations

### **TASK 4: Oversee implementation of RSMP marine nearshore status and trends monitoring and assessment**

The first component of RSMP nearshore monitoring is contaminants in caged mussels; the Washington Dept. of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) is leading that effort. Sampling was conducted in winter 2015-16. The analysis, interpretation, and reporting on this component will be completed in 2017. A second round of this sampling is planned for winter 2017-2018.

For the second nearshore component, sediment chemistry sampling took place in 2016 led by USGS. Analysis and reporting should be completed in 2017.

For the third nearshore component, bacteria, a compilation and analysis of other programs’ data was conducted in 2016 in lieu of monitoring to collect new data. The findings of this analysis were presented at the September 2016 meeting. Recommendations for future scientific work on

In this work plan period the scientific authors and technical subgroups will develop recommendations for future RSMP marine nearshore trends monitoring under each component. The SWG hopes to consider and make decisions about most of these recommendations before the next permit is issued.

The SWG should also provide and pursue ongoing opportunities to hear from experts on implementation of our recommendations.

Advisory Subgroups: PSEMP Toxics and Marine Water Quality Workgroups

Timeline and Deliverables: Specific plans for 2016-2017 include:

2017:	Complete mussel contamination data analysis, interpretation and reporting; Finish sediment data analysis, interpretation and reporting; and Make recommendations for future RSMP marine nearshore trends monitoring in all three nearshore components
Fall 2017:	Begin second round of RSMP nearshore mussel data collection

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2018: Begin analysis of second round mussel data

### **TASK 5: Oversee RSMP effectiveness studies and select additional effectiveness studies**

In 2014 the SWG went through a process to identify a first round of ten RSMP effectiveness studies that answer priority questions we recommended in 2013. All of these studies are underway, and one was completed in 2016. Another round of studies needs to be identified to utilize the funds that remain available in the RSMP pooled resources account. In fall 2015 the Effectiveness Subgroup proposed a process for selecting these studies that built on the experiences and feedback from the 2014 process.

The new process began with a request for “Letters of Interest” in July 2016. The subgroup gave feedback to each study proponent and full proposals were due in December 2016 and technical review is underway. Following technical review the SWG will host a workshop for permittees and other interested parties to learn about the studies. Permittees will be given an opportunity to vote on the studies to provide a recommended ranking to the SWG. The SWG will decide which studies should be done at its June 2017 meeting. The new studies are expected to begin in fall 2017.

As the Washington Dept. of Transportation (WSDOT) completes their permit-required effectiveness studies, the SWG will task a subgroup with reviewing WSDOT’s monitoring reports and advise the SWG as to more detailed and specific recommendations for future permit-required transportation-related effectiveness monitoring and means of sharing the studies’ findings.

Advisory Subgroup: Effectiveness

#### Timeline and Deliverables:

Spring 2017	Complete technical review, host a workshop, and conduct permittee voting to advise SWG in selecting the second round of studies at its June 2017 meeting
Fall 2017	Begin contracting for second round of RSMP Effectiveness Studies
Ongoing	Connect our effectiveness studies to broader work and other monitoring activities

### **TASK 6: Recommend focus and priorities for Source Identification and Diagnostic Monitoring**

“Source Identification and Diagnostic Monitoring” was one of the 4 key strategic components of the Stormwater Assessment and Monitoring Program for Puget Sound recommended by the SWG in 2010 (the others being status and trends, effectiveness studies, and research). The objectives are to:

1. Move from anecdotes to data to set priorities on reducing sources of stormwater pollution,
  - a. Ensure consistent reporting to support desired regional analyses,
  - b. Ensure that data is stored in a way that can searched and downloaded,
2. Identify the best ways to solve (fix/reduce/eliminate) these problems, and
3. Use results to inform funding decisions to address common source control issues and reduce pollutants.

In meeting the above objectives we also want to ensure that permittees are required to enter IDDE information only one time in order to comply with permit requirements for real time spills and annual reporting. The current NPDES permits include a requirement that permittees submit key information for each Illicit Discharge Detection and Elimination (IDDE) incident with their annual reports. A consultant reviewed and compiled all of the incident tracking reporting data for 2014 reported the findings of the analysis to the SWG Source ID Subgroup. The Subgroup then met to recommend data fields, frequency, and budget for future analyses. The Subgroup agreed that the data being currently submitted by permittees, due the variety of formats used for these submittals, is not of sufficient uniformity to continue these analyses during this permit cycle.



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For the remainder of this permit cycle (ending mid 2018), the goals are to:

- Share appropriate findings about the most common pollution sources and seasonal and/or geographic distribution, as data allowed. Share and discuss the findings at the RSMP Symposium in Spring 2017.
  - Share reporting results
  - Prioritize common source control issues for regional efforts
  - Confirm data needs for future analyses
  - Propose source control topics for effectiveness study RFPs in future rounds
- Develop a simple reporting approach for providing data in future permits
- Estimate costs for analyzing source control reports in future permits

Also still to be considered are: a survey of permittees about where they are focusing their IDDE efforts; and a “sprint” type brainstorming workshop: What would help you? What has worked? [The Subgroup is meeting November 28, 2016 to articulate unmet needs of this effort so far.]

Advisory Subgroup: Source Identification

Timeline and Deliverables:

Winter 2016-2017	Future data fields identified, along with costs and frequency of future analyses
Spring 2017	Workshop, built on results of IDDE incident tracking analysis, to develop recommendations for final list of data fields for future IDDE reporting
Summer 2017	Simple reporting approach developed

**TASK 7: Approve recommendations for regional monitoring related to runoff from agricultural lands**

Stormwater runoff from agricultural lands is partly addressed by the prior recommendations of the work group, but new recommendations are needed to address agricultural runoff issues in a broader, more comprehensive way. The SWG commissioned a subgroup in early 2011 to propose expanding the *2010 Strategy* and building upon the *Recommendations for Municipal Stormwater Permit Monitoring* and other efforts to address agricultural issues. This subgroup is supported by Washington State Conservation Commission staff. The subgroup assembled several interim packages of recommendations which the SWG discussed and approved in 2011-2014. The next step was to piece them together into a final implementation and funding plan which was shared with the SWG at the end of 2016. The subgroup will consider the SWG feedback given and finalize an implementation plan including collective recommendations for monitoring agricultural runoff.

Advisory Subgroup: Agricultural Runoff

Timeline and Deliverables:

Early 2017	Recommended scientific framework, implementation plan, and funding approach submitted to PSP, WCCC, WSDA, and Ecology
2017-2018	Implement agricultural runoff strategy

**TASK 8: Discuss, set priorities, and develop implementation plans for additional SWAMPPS activities and identify areas for updates to the 2010 Strategy**

The *2010 Strategy* described a comprehensive regional framework and set priorities for early implementation. The October 2010 *Recommendations for Municipal Stormwater Permit Monitoring* further narrowed down monitoring activities to implement in Puget Sound. In the scientific framework and in our communications to others, we have emphasized the need to expand this framework and

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priorities to other water bodies (*i.e.*, lakes, groundwater, wetlands, open marine, rivers), land uses (*i.e.*, industrial, forested), permit types (*i.e.*, WSDOT, industrial, construction), combined sewers, and geographic areas in Puget Sound.

It is most important to successfully implement our 2010 recommendations in advance of expanding program implementation, but parallel processes can be launched using additional capacity and by recommending specific next steps including funding and implementation strategies to PSP and Ecology.

Other permits, combined sewers, additional water bodies, and parameters are all possible expansions of the *2010 Strategy*. Resetting priorities and cutting back on parameters, media, or monitoring components are also appropriate focuses of updates. The SWG will invite interested parties to champion their issues. The SWG will consider what topics are being addressed by other PSEMP work groups and discuss how we can best support those efforts to expand SWAMPPS and build on the RSMP.

Later in this work plan period, the SWG will begin considering what areas of the *2010 Strategy* need to be updated in light of what we've learned about stormwater management, monitoring program implementation, and other developments since 2010. The SWG will reinvigorate the effort to expand participation and effort beyond the municipal permits in keeping with the SWG Charter, or it may consider redefining the Charter and Bylaws to reduce the scope and stakeholder participation to just the municipal permits and permittees and continue with current funding approach.

This is in preparation for a 2020 update to the overall SWAMPPS strategy:

- Revisit our *2010 Strategy*:
  - Discuss what recommendations we might make to the PSMEP Steering Committee regarding the important gap in serving the former role of PSAMP which is not currently being filled.
  - Investigate our role in and capacity to be involved in and understand other stormwater monitoring and research activities in the context of each component of the RSMP, and
  - Discuss what priorities envisioned in the *2010 Strategy* are/are not being implemented and consider what new initiatives we should undertake, and
  - Determine what updates to the *2010 Strategy* should be considered for a 2020 update.

Advisory Subgroup: Work Plan, PSEMP staff, and interested work group members

Timeline and Deliverables:

Early 2017	Updated description of implementation of SWAMPPS strategy
2017-2018	Discussion of adjustments to SWAMPPS priorities
Summer 2018	Priorities for SWAMPPS expansion and <i>2010 Strategy</i> updates

### **TASK 9: Participate fully in PSEMP; communicate and coordinate with other regional monitoring groups**

The SWG is one of many topical work groups that have been formally commissioned by the Steering Committee for the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program (PSEMP). The SWG staff deliver occasional briefings to the PSEMP steering committee. In early 2012, the SWG designated an official spokesperson to deliver briefings to the steering committee in addition to the chair and staff; the selected liaison retired in summer 2015 and the role has not been assigned to another steering committee member.

The SWG chair, members, and staff continue to coordinate with the PSEMP workgroups and other technical groups. All PSEMP workgroups are expected to provide each other with opportunities to contribute to work in our areas of overlap.



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The SWG will continue to coordinate with other work groups, particularly freshwater, toxics, salmon habitat, and marine waters as those groups develop new recommendations. The SWG will continue to develop, improve, and expand our regional stormwater monitoring strategy and gather support. We will:

- Improve coordination and effectiveness of current monitoring efforts
- Make recommendations for improving data-sharing
- Hear regular updates about the work and decisions of the PSEMP Steering Committee
- Stay apprised of related work by other PSEMP workgroups
- Keep other PSEMP workgroups apprised of our work and findings
- Hear regular updates from the APWA stormwater coordination meetings on discussions related to our work

Advisory Subgroups: Rely on chair, vice chair, staff, and official delegates and alternates as liaisons to PSEMP Steering Committee and other workgroups.

### Timeline and Deliverables:

Ongoing and/or standing agenda items for regular SWG meetings:

- Presentations and briefing materials
- Participation in PSEMP as a topical work group
- Exchange of information with related work groups
- Regular updates from Steering Committee

### **TASK 10: Support, manage, staff, and lead implementation of SWAMPPS**

A broad, diverse membership has been used since 2008 to engage regional stakeholders in the process of developing a regional stormwater monitoring program. The SWG will continue to use their perspectives to implement SWAMPPS and demonstrate its success as a functional, meaningful, and cost-effective regional program. Ecology has assigned staff to support the work group and hired an RSMP Coordinator. Participating entities and caucuses also provide support, expertise, and services.

A chair and vice chair for two year terms will be nominated in January and selected in March of odd-numbered years. The chair executes the duties described in the SWG's bylaws.

Biennial work plan updates will be discussed in November and officially adopted by the SWG in January of each year. The SWG will continue to evaluate its progress and adapt the work plans as needed.

To implement this work plan, and full set of the SWG's October 2010 recommendations, the SWG staff and members will pursue opportunities for additional funding and resources to implement SWAMPPS. Specifically, the SWG will continue to develop, improve, and expand our regional stormwater monitoring strategy and gather support by:

- Improving coordination and effectiveness of current monitoring efforts, and
- Setting priority topic areas for additional work group effort or incremental improvements.

Advisory Subgroup: Work Plan, and chairs/staff of all other SWG advisory subgroups  
SWG, RSMP, and PSEMP staff to coordinate and assist as needed

### Timeline and Deliverables:

Ongoing	Pursue funding/leveraging opportunities as they become known/available
January 2017	Nominate SWG Chair and Vice Chair 2017-18 Work Plan adopted
March 2017	SWG Chair and Vice Chair selected for two year terms
Fall 2017	Annual update of two-year work plan
January 2017	2017-18 Work Plan adopted
Fall 2018	Annual update of two-year work plan

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