

Stormwater Work Group Reporter

October 2010

Key news and information you need to stay current on the effort to create a regional stormwater monitoring and assessment strategy for Puget Sound

Stormwater Work Group finalizes latest recommendations for Ecology

The Stormwater Work Group (SWG) has submitted a final report to the Department of Ecology detailing its 33 new *Recommendations for Municipal Stormwater Permit Monitoring*. The new report builds on recommendations the SWG submitted to Ecology and the Puget Sound Partnership on July 1, 2010 (known as the 2010 Strategy), that are aimed at creating a new regional stormwater monitoring program for the Puget Sound region. The focus of this latest report is on recommending monitoring requirements that Ecology should include in the next round of NPDES municipal stormwater permits. After the 2010 Strategy was released last summer, the SWG began to develop the specifics of a strategy for pooling resources to conduct regional monitoring and assessment activities and to provide more technical detail and implementation specifics about the 2010 Strategy's experimental designs and approaches. "A lot of hard work and deliberations went in to developing these recommendations, and if adopted, we believe they will help the next round of municipal stormwater permits to play a meaningful role in supporting a new regional stormwater monitoring program," said SWG Chair Jim Simmonds.

More information (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/swworkgroup.html>)

What the pay-in option means for local governments in Puget Sound

A major component of the Stormwater Work Group's new report is a set of recommendations creating a means for pooling local government funds to conduct coordinated monitoring and meet the permit monitoring requirements. "The overall concept of creating a new pay-in option to conduct regional monitoring and assessment activities enjoys strong support by our diverse group of stakeholders on the Stormwater Work Group," said SWG Chair Jim Simmonds. Specifically, the new SWG report lays out key characteristics for the administrative entity to handle money contributed by municipalities and others to support and conduct regional monitoring. The pay-in option is important to allow all permittees, including small jurisdictions with no monitoring capacity or expertise, to contribute collectively and equitably to a regional monitoring program that answers important questions about managing stormwater. The report goes on to endorse, albeit not by consensus, having the Department of Ecology serve as the administrative entity for the 2012-2017 permit term. The belief is that Ecology could best serve this administrative role at the current time because it has the capacity in place to quickly implement a pay-in option. This recommendation is contingent on a number of factors, including the requirement for an independent oversight and evaluation of the administration of the funds.

More information (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/swworkgroup.html>)

More work ahead -- Next steps for the Stormwater Work Group

Now that the Stormwater Work Group (SWG) has made its 33 further *Recommendations for Municipal Stormwater Permit Monitoring*, the group will continue to work with the Department of Ecology and others to ramp up for implementation of the new regional stormwater monitoring program. The group will turn its attention to working with the Puget Sound Partnership to incorporate their efforts into the ecosystem monitoring program currently being developed by a launch committee. In the coming months, the SWG will begin developing a new work plan for 2011 and beyond, detailing how it plans to continue progress toward a comprehensive regional stormwater monitoring program.

About the Stormwater Work Group

The Stormwater Work Group is a coalition of federal, tribal, state and local government, business, environmental, agriculture and research interests working to develop a Stormwater Monitoring and Assessment Strategy for Puget Sound at the request of the Puget Sound Partnership and Department of Ecology. The strategy is intended to provide a coordinated, integrated approach to quantifying the stormwater problem in Puget Sound and to help us efficiently and effectively manage stormwater to reduce harm to the ecosystem.

More information (<http://www.ecy.wa.gov/programs/wq/psmonitoring/swworkgroup.html>)