

## **“GREEN SHEET”**

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**Meeting:** November 8-9, 2012, Commission Meeting

**Agenda item #6 :** Puget Sound Recovery Briefing

**Staff Contact:** Margen Carlson, Puget Sound Policy Lead, Habitat Program

**Presenter(s):** Margen Carlson, Puget Sound Policy Lead, Habitat Program (lead)

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### **Background:**

In a healthy state, the Puget Sound supports an incredible diversity of fish, wildlife, and their habitats, as well as the quality of life that people here enjoy. However, the natural bounty of this estuary of national significance is at risk. The Legislature recognized this and, in 2007, established a goal to restore the Puget Sound by 2020, naming the Puget Sound Partnership to coordinate the effort. WDFW is a committed partner, and is responsible to deliver species and habitat science, ecosystem and habitat restoration and protection, and enforcement of environmental regulations that underpin Puget Sound recovery.

WDFW’s commitment to recovery of the Sound is an expression of our renewed conservation focus, and WDFW is looking at the whole ecosystem to understand how best to:

- deliver scientific information on key species – from marine mammals to threatened rockfish and seabirds – to understand their status, how they respond to our management, and what trends in their health tell us about progress toward Puget Sound recovery;
- improve the condition of Puget Sound by removing blockages from streams, protecting and restoring estuary and other nearshore habitats, and bringing science and technical expertise to salmon recovery efforts led by watershed groups;
- protect Puget Sound species and habitats by regulating construction projects in or near water that may harm fish, and enforcing environmental, fishing, and hunting laws.

Most of these commitments are ongoing activities within the Department that are part of the foundation of Puget Sound recovery. In addition, WDFW has committed to increased or additional activities in the near term. We will evaluate progress on these so-called Near Term Actions by measuring performance and tracking progress toward key steps. We are also driving the actions of other organizations by managing the Puget Sound Marine and Nearshore Grant Program, a pass-through grant program funded by \$12.1 million from the Environmental Protection Agency’s National Estuary Program.

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### **Policy issues:**

None

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### **Public involvement process and outcome:**

None

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### **Action requested:**

None

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**Draft motion language:**

None

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**Justification for Commission Action:**

None

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**Communications Plan:**

WDFW reports on progress toward Puget Sound recovery commitments through the Governor's Natural Resource Government Management Accountability and Performance (GMAP) forums, performance reporting and communications through the Puget Sound Partnership, and the department website. The Puget Sound Marine and Nearshore Grant Program is featured on the department's website, and is currently working with the Puget Sound Partnership and the Environmental Protection Agency to develop a web-based tool to map and describe grants.