

Appendix A: Application to Regional Planning

For state and regional agencies' planning and prioritization, the Characterization can be a useful decision-support tool. Areas of potential application include State planning, construction, and management; State grants and loan awards; and State policy and regulatory framework intersection with local planning. We remind the user, however, that the Characterization is only a first screen to narrow and focus additional work or priorities to a more local, site-specific scale. Although it is not appropriate to use this tool alone to make site-specific decisions, the Characterization offers a regional perspective on conditions, resources, and existing impacts available through no other means.

The Puget Sound Partnership is charged with setting and updating the Action Agenda and setting targets to measure progress in achieving recovery of Puget Sound. Prior to the Characterization framework, there was no uniform, consistent, and comprehensive analysis of spatial coverage and scale for understanding environmental conditions throughout the Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Characterization provides an improved scale and consistency for basin-wide planning, prioritization and target-setting in the context of ecological processes (water flow, water quality, and (pending) fish/wildlife habitat) from the headwaters through all of the contributing watersheds to the nearshore of Puget Sound.

A variety of other local, state, and Federal agencies can also make use of the Characterization results. For example, the Characterization may be useful during updates to existing regulations related to critical areas (the State of Washington has already recognized the need to avoid development within floodplains, and State funds cannot be invested where such development would occur). State agencies charged with planning and management of large-scale state lands and facilities could also benefit from the guidance contained in the Puget Sound Characterization. State and Federal agencies provide grants and loans to partners to accomplish specific objectives, such as planning for land use and shorelines, providing infrastructure, recreational amenities, environmental mitigation, restoration, conservation or preservation. In order to assure the highest and best use of scarce public funds, prioritization is necessary. The Puget Sound Characterization can be used at the assessment unit (AU) scale to narrow the field of candidate locations for investments through grants and loans to implementing agencies. For example:

- For funds dedicated for storm water quality retrofit purposes, the AU that would best benefit from restoring water quality and related processes could be identified for more in-depth analysis to bring the evaluation to the site scale. Grants for planning for stormwater quality improvements in high-priority AU's could be directly allocated for planning purposes, or receive extra consideration in a competitive process.

- If an existing watershed plan contained a stormwater retrofit project that was ready for design or construction and also was within a high-priority AU for water-quality restoration, the grant award criteria could allocate extra consideration in a competitive process.

The State also has considerable policy and regulatory roles for which the Puget Sound Characterization can provide guidance. The Draft Stormwater Vision and Financing Strategy for Puget Sound (Table A-1; from Bissonnette 2011) summarizes the many opportunities that State agencies have to look to the Puget Sound Characterization for instructions and guidance.

In addition to State agencies, the Puget Sound Characterization could be useful to other regional planning organizations, such as the Metropolitan Planning and Regional Transportation Planning agencies within the Puget Sound basin. At a smaller scale than the State, these organizations perform some similar functions, such as planning for a regional transportation network and making funding awards to local agencies.

Table A-1. Local and Regional Planning Processes benefiting from Watershed Characterization Guidance and capable of Implementing the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Plan	Responsible Entity	Statutory Basis	Relationship to PSP Action Agenda (see below)	Approver	Relationship to Development
Comprehensive Plans	Counties and cities	Chapter 36.70A (Growth Management Act)	Protect intact ecosystem processes, structures and functions. Prevent water pollution at its source. Action Agenda Priorities A & C	Local government	GMA duties
Shoreline Master Programs	Counties and cities	Chapter 90.58 (Shoreline Management Act)	Protect intact ecosystem processes, structures and functions. Prevent water pollution at its source. Action Agenda Priorities A & C	DOE and local government	SMA duties
Critical Areas Ordinances	Counties and cities	Chapter 36.70A.060 (Growth Management Act)	Protect intact ecosystem processes, structures + functions. Prevent water pollution at its source. Action Agenda Priorities A & C	Local government	Refinements via periodic reviews and updates to reflect best available science (BAS) per GMA duties
Water Supply Plans and	Cities, Counties, Water Districts	43.20 RCW, 70.116 RCW (Public Water	Instream flows; temperature. Protect intact ecosystem	DOH	Water supply for domestic and

Coordinated Water System Plans		System Coordination Act)	processes and Restore ecosystem processes. Action Agenda Priorities A & B		industrial uses – may be regional
Sewer Comprehensive Plans	Cities, Counties, Sewer Districts		Discharge water quality; water reuse Action Agenda Priorities A & C	DOE & DOH	Waste management
Flood Hazard Mitigation Plans	Counties and cities	Chapter 86.15 (RCW)	Floodplain restoration. Action Agenda Priorities B	DOE	Flood hazard prevention and habitat management
Comprehensive Solid Waste Plans		Chapter 70.95 (RCW)		DOE	Waste management
Local Hazardous Waste Plans	Counties and cities	Chapter 70.105 RCW	Action Agenda Priorities A & C	DOE	Waste management
Surface Water Management Plans (NPDES permits)	Counties and cities	Clean Water Act (delegated to Ecology in WA)	Stormwater management; water quality. Action Agenda Priorities A & C	DOE	WQ Protection – may be regional
Salmon Recovery Plans	NOAA/US Fish and Wildlife (in partnership with state and local agencies)	Endangered Species Act; Chapter 77.55 RCW Salmon Recovery	Encompassed within all PSP Action Agenda priorities (A, B, C, D, E).	NOAA/ US Fish and Wildlife; coordination with Tribes and WDFW	ESA duties Habitat restoration and addressing cultural needs – may be regional
Watershed Plans	Cities, counties, water districts	90.82 RCW (“2514”)	Cooperative water resource planning. Action Agenda priorities: A, B, D	Water planning unit members, including counties, cities, Ecology	WQ Protection – may be regional