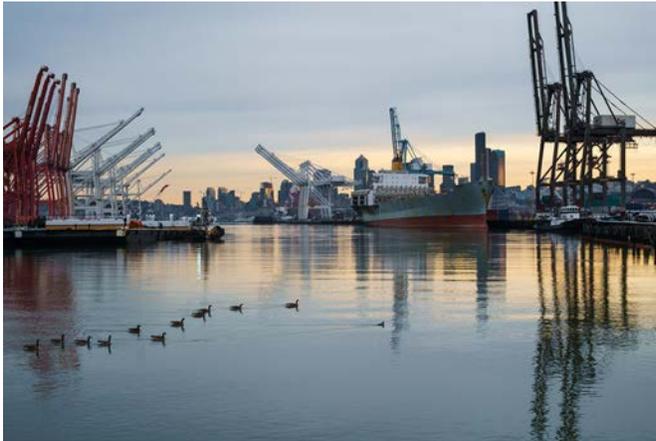


URBANWATERS

FEDERAL PARTNERSHIP

Restoring Urban Waters, Revitalizing Communities

Green-Duwamish River Watershed/Seattle (Washington)



Ambassador
Tracy Stanton (USFS)
(301) 520-0668
tstanton@me.com

Overall Assessment of the Partnership Since the Beginning

The Green-Duwamish Partnership, launched in September 2013, grew from a foundation of social science research across the watershed and the region through the Green Cities Research Alliance, led by the U.S. Forest Service (USFS) Pacific Northourst (PNW) Research Station. The work of the partnership has had the biggest impact on two key groups: a local government entity charged with salmon recovery and a community-based organization that focuses on engaging and building community capacity, leadership, and empowerment in the areas of environmental and community health. The partnership is poised to deepen existing relationships with federal agency partners, most notably the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) Region 10, while expanding to better connect with the programmatic interests of other federal agencies actively working in the watershed.

Operations of the Partnership-The Process for Collaboration

The Green-Duwamish Partnership currently operates as a modified collective impact effort, providing vital connections among the many federal, regional, and local entities engaged in

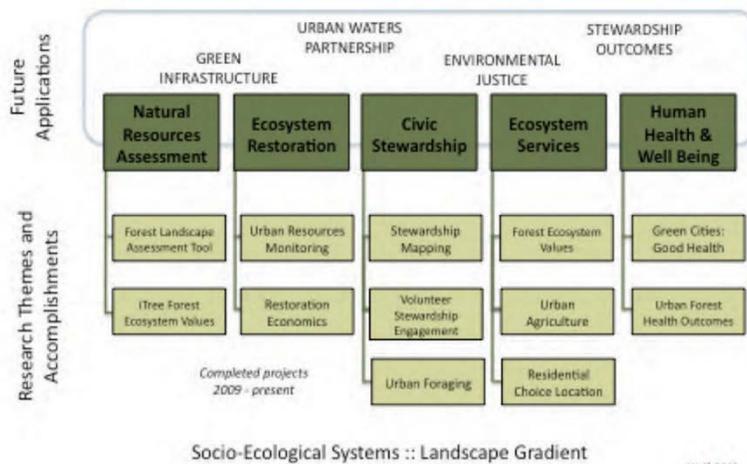
work across the watershed. This model was adopted due to the specific input from agencies and organizations historically involved in the restoration and conservation of the watershed. While this group was supportive of the Urban Waters Partnership concept at the initial meeting convened to discuss the designation of the Green-Duwamish watershed, they wanted to see the work organized around specific project activity rather than through a formalized stakeholder group.

With that guidance, the Urban Waters Ambassador began work to connect with existing entities, programs, or projects by going to their regular meetings or participating in their activities to begin to identify where/how to add value to the ongoing work in the watershed [through the lens of the Urban Waters Federal Partnership (UWFP) goals]. As a collective impact model, the aim is to provide a platform that helps connect stakeholders across federal agencies and all the myriad of entities; connecting them by their common interest and desire for improved conditions for the people, the ecology and economy of the watershed.

The Ambassador has identified and connected with key organizations that encompass a large cross section of entities along the urban to rural gradient in the watershed. For example, the Watershed Recovery Inventory Area 9 (WRIA 9) is tasked with salmon recovery in the Green-Duwamish Watershed. WRIA 9 is a large collaborative of 17 local governments, including the City of Seattle and King County; water utilities; private sector companies such as Boeing; and numerous nongovernmental organizations (NGOs) and community groups engaged in the conservation and restoration of the watershed. At the federal level, the Green-Duwamish Partnership collaborates with the Puget Sound Federal Caucus (recently re-branded as the Puget Sound Task Force), which represents all federal agencies involved in the recovery of Puget Sound, in close connection with the Puget Sound Partnership. The partnership is also working closely with key community groups to ensure that its work responds to the needs of local communities, especially those identified as environmental justice communities.

GCRA

Research Themes and Accomplishments



Partnership Leadership

The original application for the designation of the Green-Duwamish Partnership was led by the USFS PNW Research Station, with support from the EPA Washington Operations Office (Region 10) and the Natural Resource Conservation Service (NRCS). Since its designation, funding for the Ambassador position and project activity has been provided by the USFS PNW Research Station. Beginning in 2016, the USFS State and Private Forestry, Region 6, joined in provided funding to support the operations of the partnership. This diversification of core funding is part of an intentional strategy to build a more sustainable, long-term funding base for the partnership. The ideal funding base would be shared by the USFS (PNW Research and State and Private Forestry), US EPA (Region 10), as well as support from the private and foundation sectors.

Monthly meetings are held with the Ambassador and the core partnership team including the USFS leadership-both the Research and the State and Private staff, and the EPA Region 10, Urban Waters lead to discuss partnership operations, program activities and opportunities.

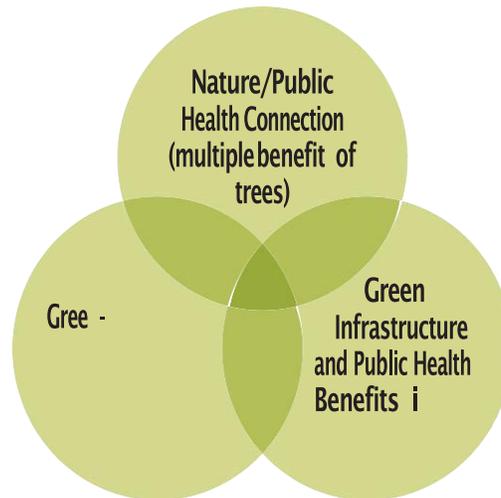
List of Partners

Federal Partners

- U.S. Department of Agriculture Natural Resources Conservation Service
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10, Washington Operations Office
- U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10
- U.S. Geological Survey Washington Water Science Center
- National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration

- U.S. Forest Service, Pacific Northwest Research Station
- U.S. Forest Service, Coop Forestry, State and Private Forestry
- U.S. Forest Service, National Forest System, Mt. Baker/Snoqualmie

Planning for Action: Leveraging the Urban Waters Partnership



The graphic above shows how the work of the Green-Duwamish Partnership is built on the strengths and emerging priorities of the USFS PNW Station’s Urban Research Program, with the aim of establishing a long-term research program that will document and quantify the benefits of trees, restoration, and community forestry activities for individual, social, and ecological health and sustainability. The Urban Research Program is aiming to connect its work to the existing priorities identified by those in the watershed, especially those at the community level. At the same time, discussions are underway to better align the priorities of the USFS PNW’s Urban Waters Partnership program and its overall research capacity with the work and priorities of EPA Region 10.

Major Actions Taken Since the Beginning of the Partnership

Major actions by the partnership include:

- Hosting a kick-off event for the partnership (attracting some 75 people)
- Securing funding from USFS PNW Research to launch the partnership and fund all operations for the first three years
- Securing funding from USFS State and Private Forestry to co-fund the partnership, starting in 2016
- Recruiting and supporting the Ambassador

- Developing, executing, and revising the plan of work
- Securing research funding for the Middle Green Research Project (in partnership with USFS, EPA, NRCS)

Project activities include:

Watershed Engagement—Green-Duwamish Re-vegetation Strategy The project aims to improve collaboration between various entities and funding sources in the watershed to improve overall watershed health, with a focus on mitigating temperature loading on the Middle Green River and its tributaries. Working together with WRIA 9, King County, the Muckleshoot Tribe, and representatives from key NGOs, the result is a prioritized re-vegetation strategy focused on planting trees in the Middle and Lower Green River. <http://www.govlink.org/watersheds/9/pdf/GreenRevegStrategyPlan-Oct2016-Final.pdf>

Seed Funding to Launch the Duwamish Valley Youth Corp. The USFS, through funding from the PNW Research Station and State and Private Forestry, supported the launch of the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition’s (DRCC) Youth Corps Program. The Youth Corps hired a project coordinator and has engaged upwards of 100 local youths in restoration, tree planting, and other community social ecological projects since 2014.

Green-Duwamish Watershed Symposium The Green-Duwamish Urban Waters Partnership, with support from the USFS PNW Research Station, co-sponsored the first ever watershed-wide symposium. The event was held on February 29, 2016, and was designed to bring together the many organizations doing work across the watershed to better facilitate learning and networking. A resounding success, the event was over-subscribed with some 250 people in attendance. Planning is already underway for another symposium to be held in February 2018.

Green-Duwamish Urban Waters Mapper This is a mapping tool being developed to help visualize the myriad of project activities across the watershed. The tool is designed to showcase local project activity and thus can be utilized in other watersheds across the country.

Major Impacts of the Partnership

One major impact of the partnership to date has been engaging in “opportunity triage”: identifying high-impact opportunities in which to invest the partnership’s time or dollars. In some cases, this has meant funding long-identified community priorities, such as described above. The Ambassador is vital to working at the community level connecting needs with the resources required to fulfill them.

The partnership has also helped achieve vertical and horizontal integration within the USFS (connecting research to community needs/priorities), developing connections across the three main deputy areas of the USFS (Research and Development, State and Private Forestry, and National Forest Systems) and further connecting the USFS with other federal agencies engaged in work across the watershed, most notably EPA R10.

Furthermore, the partnership has invested in creating a platform for collaboration rather than investing in one singular project. Based on the characteristics of both the needs of and the players in the watershed, this seems to be a more sustainable approach to partnership creation and longevity. Investments to help build long-term capacity in key organizations at the government level (as with WRIA 9) and at the community level are already demonstrating success and serve as a foundation to help others achieve success.

This approach has enabled the following high-impact opportunities:

Green-Duwamish UWP Collaboration with Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition's Healthy Waters/Healthy Community Initiative The DRCC was awarded an EPA Urban Waters Small Grant, enabling the UWFP core team to join as a partner in support of this project. The project focused on the connection between communities, nature, public health, and environmental protection. For more information, visit <http://duwamishcleanup.org/programs/duwamish-community-health-initiative/>. The work is rooted in the spirit of authentic community engagement, where the community drives the agenda, the priorities, and the approach.

Duwamish Valley Youth Corps Program The USFS, through funding from the PNW Research Station and State and Private Forestry, supported the launch of the DRCC's Youth Corps Program. This program had long been a priority of the community in search of sufficient seed funding. The Youth Corps hired a project coordinator and has engaged nearly 100 local youths in restoration, tree planting, and other community social ecological projects since 2014. In addition, Youth Corp members serve as mentors to 4th graders (at the local elementary school) through the Every Kid in a Park program (with funding from the USFS and the National Park Service).

Lower Duwamish Transition Zone Blueprint Salmon recovery is a critical driver of restoration activity across the whole of Puget Sound. Recovery efforts in the Green/Duwamish Watershed depend on improving the quality and quantity of habitat in the lower Duwamish estuary to support migrating juvenile salmon. The Blueprint, completed in 2014 with funding from the USFS PNW Research Station, includes a prioritized list of habitat improvement projects, evaluation criteria, and strategies for moving the needle toward vital watershed improvements.

Major Actions Planned in the Future

Efforts are underway to align the USFS PNW Research Station's work with EPA Region 10 priorities. This is likely to unfold in a series of meetings convened throughout 2017/18. In addition, the partnership is aiming to connect with the city of Seattle's new Equity and Environment Agenda since its key goals overlap significantly with those of the UWFP. Work is also underway to better connect the Green-Duwamish Partnership with the PNW's emerging Cascadia Urban Research Strategy, specifically helping to connect the research work with both watershed and community priorities. Work is also planned for enhancing the partnership's web and marketing presence. Lastly, the partnership will continue to support ongoing efforts to develop an interactive mapping tool to better visualize the varied project activities across the watershed.

Major Challenges in the Future

The two major challenges for the partnership going forward will be to 1) secure sustainable funding for the day-to-day operations and for high-impact projects, especially those identified by community groups; and 2) to expand the reach of the partnership to connect with a greater number of federal agencies involved with ongoing work in the watershed.