



Spill Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program

Sea Grant Fellowship Program 2020 Application

1. **Host location and contact information**

Washington State Department of Ecology Headquarters
Spill Prevention, Preparedness, and Response Program (Spills Program)
300 Desmond Drive, Lacey, WA 98503

Contact:

Linda Pilkey-Jarvis, Spills Program, Preparedness Section Manager
linda.pilkey-jarvis@ecy.wa.gov, (360) 280-7209

2. **Names of fellowship supervisor**

Linda Pilkey-Jarvis, Spills Program, Spills Preparedness Section Supervisor

3. **Point(s) of contact for Washington Sea Grant, prospective fellows, and finalists**

Linda Pilkey-Jarvis, Spills Program, Preparedness Section Manager
linda.pilkey-jarvis@ecy.wa.gov, (360) 280-7209

4. **Position description**

Work Description

ENSURING INDUSTRY IS SUFFICIENTLY PREPARED WITH THE FINANACIAL RESOURCES TO PAY FOR LARGE OIL SPILLS

The selected fellow will focus primarily on helping the Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) close a substantial gap in our otherwise forward-leaning oil spill preparedness program by researching, analyzing and documenting future regulatory or legislative action to determine and ensure an appropriate level of “financial responsibility” to assign to large oil facilities and large commercial vessels. The research will include review of programs from other states and the federal government, review of existing literature on the cost of spills, interviewing maritime experts on the role of Protection & Indemnity Clubs and documenting the availability of commercial insurance for facilities.

We are looking for a person with strong research skills, strong analytical and writing skills, who can work collaboratively with a diverse group of staff, stakeholders, agencies and tribes to gather information, conduct analysis, and develop key documents. Project management skills are helpful.

BACKGROUND

The United States has a regulatory framework for oil spills based on the premise that the “polluter pays” for cleanup costs and damages caused by oil spills. Both the federal government and Washington State have laws and rules that require large oil handlers to demonstrate evidence of their financial ability to pay for the removal of oil spills, for damages caused to private property, for natural resource damages to public property and for other expenses related to spill response. The federal government puts a cap or limit on the potential liability for the spiller. Washington State has unlimited liability, which allows the state to recover costs and damages beyond the federal limit. More than 20 billion gallons of oil is transported through Washington State each year by vessel, pipeline, and rail. Washington has substantial environmental, cultural and economic resources at risk from spills. “Financial responsibility” refers to the proof or other demonstration that large oil-handlers are able to pay for the costs and damages of a spill up to a specified amount.

Typically, “financial responsibility” is evidenced by an insurance policy or Protection and Indemnity club documents, but also may involve surety bonds, guarantees, letters of credit, or qualification for self-insurance. In Washington, financial responsibility is set by considering the type of vessel or facility, and the total capacity for storage of oil. This fellowship will directly support this effort by laying out the needed groundwork for Ecology to conduct future thoughtful rulemaking or request for changes in state law to fill this gap.

NORTHWEST AREA CONTINGENCY PLAN, CANADIAN-US SHARED OIL SPILL PLANS

International, regional and state oil spill plans that guide the state of Washington in responding to major oil spills are undergoing big revisions. This Fellow will assist Ecology in our participation in these revision processes. This will involve attending and/or organizing and facilitating meetings, use of webinar to conduct meetings, research, analysis and compilation of Ecology comments to documents to be reviewed, research into general planning principles, drafting of language for plans, and formation of a state position on the changes. This is an important transition moment for the state, as these changes will shift how preparedness planning has been conducted successfully for decades in the region.

OTHER

In addition, this position will have the opportunity to participate in the development of strategies for responding to oils that may submerge or sink after being spilled, advancing this state’s response capabilities, policies and tools. This position will help us involve and inform tribes and stakeholders in this initiative, including the use of the [OilSpills101](#) website. This position will have the opportunity to attend drills in support of the agency and Program’s missions, learn about the national Incident Command System and the support the state provides to an oil spill response.

Supervision and Mentoring

This position will be directly supervised by Linda Pilkey-Jarvis who will oversee activities and guide development and mentored by both Linda and Nhi Irwin, Plan review and Development Unit Supervisor. The Fellow will also be mentored by other senior staff, including the sections response technology lead, plan review lead, legislative and strategic policy lead.

The Fellow will have a tailored Performance and Development Plan that provides a comprehensive and integrated approach to managing the relationship between mentors and fellows, evaluating fellows' progress on tasks and professional growth, and ensuring clear and open discussions about opportunities for improvement - using goal-setting, self-evaluation, and supplemental information. These elements establish the foundation for a successful fellowship and career.

Growth and Networking

The Fellow will interact with a wide range of oil spill experts throughout the program and state/federal government as a whole. Other state agencies and decision makers that this position will interact with will include, U.S. Coast Guard, maritime industry, oil industry, environmental organizations and tribes. The Fellow will be encouraged to attend relevant meetings, trainings, and other opportunities to gain exposure of how government organizations work on oil spill issues. When opportunities arise, the Fellow will be encouraged to present work to a variety of internal and external audiences. This opportunity will provide the Fellow an understanding of the many facets of oil spill policy, which involve the state, while at the same time helping inform decision makers about how best to fund and direct oil spill policy into the future.

Agency and Program Background

Ecology's mission is to protect, preserve, and enhance Washington's environment, and promote the wise management of our air, land, and water. Ecology's goals are to prevent pollution, clean up pollution, and support sustainable communities and natural resources.

The Spills Program's mission is to protect Washington's environment, public health, and safety through a comprehensive spill prevention, preparedness, and response program. The Spills Program's vision is to prevent, prepare for, and respond aggressively to oil spills, and to be our best for the State of Washington. Our Spills goal is "zero spills".

Public service allows you to help solve some of the most challenging problems facing our state.

Ecology