

Puget Sound Partnership
Washington Sea Grant Hershman Fellowship 2021-2022

Host Organization

Puget Sound Partnership
326 East D Street
Tacoma, WA

Fellowship Location

The Puget Sound Partnership provides workspaces at three locations (Seattle, Tacoma, Olympia) that promote creative thought, innovation, and collaboration among co-workers. The Fellowship would be based in one or more of these workspaces, pending COVID-19 guidance.

Fellowship Mentor/Supervisor

Nathalie Hamel, Vital Signs Reporting lead (Nathalie.hamel@psp.wa.gov, 360-819-3412)

Position Description

As the Washington Sea Grant Hershman Fellow, you will play a critical role in the Vital Signs Reporting team (part of the broader Science and Evaluation program at the Puget Sound Partnership) and our intra- and inter-organizational work to report ecosystem conditions and progress toward Puget Sound recovery using a suite of indicators known as the Puget Sound Vital Signs. Our team of two (Nathalie Hamel and Mary Ramirez who will be co-mentors for this project) is all about collaborating with partners to compile and analyze a wide range of environmental data from water to whales, and including human wellbeing; synthesizing, mapping and reporting findings in compelling and creative ways to reach our target audiences; and valuing and cultivating our relationships with our partners. In the next year or two, we are excited to further develop one or more of our indicators through an environmental equity lens. We are jazzed about data, enjoy teamwork and collaboration, value diversity, equity and inclusion, and embrace ambiguity and complexity when they come around!

The mission of the Puget Sound Partnership is to accelerate and advance the recovery of Puget Sound. The Partnership is the backbone organization for Puget Sound recovery, and as such: leads the collaborative effort to chart the course of recovery, supports and empowers partners to implement the Action Agenda (the collective road map for recovery) and manages shared measures and accountability. We align the work of our partners around a shared vision and science-driven, prioritized strategies. More information on the Partnership is available at our website: www.psp.wa.gov.

The work of our team stems from the [statute](#) that created the Partnership. The statute says that the Partnership must identify indicators to measure the health of Puget Sound. The statute also says that the Action Agenda (the collective road map to recovery) should achieve six recovery goals, paraphrased as healthy water quality and quantity, protected and restored habitat, thriving species and food webs, healthy human populations and vibrant human quality of life. As the backbone organization for the recovery effort, the Partnership leads the reporting on the health of Puget Sound. The Vital Signs and their indicators are the “[measures of ultimate outcomes](#)” by which the Partnership has chosen to communicate about ecosystem conditions and assess progress towards the achieving goals.

Our primary objective of the Vital Signs Reporting program is to have sufficient data to accurately describe and report on the current condition of indicators at local scales and for the region and enable

an evaluation of change over time. Information about the status and trends of indicators is reported 1) in [Puget Sound Info](#) and 2) in the [State of the Sound report](#) produced in odd years. Our reporting is possible thanks to invaluable collaborations with data providers (aka Indicator reporters), and contributions from technical work groups coordinated through the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program ([PSEMP](#)). The Partnership recently adopted new Vital Signs and indicators. The final report "[Revisions to Puget Sound Vital Signs and Indicators](#)" describes the new and revised Vital Signs and their indicators. Our team will be busy in 2021 and 2022 fostering collaborations with reporting organizations and compiling a first set of datasets to implement these new Vital Signs and indicators. Additionally, the Vital Signs team will be supporting ongoing work to better describe patterns of environmental degradation and their disproportionate impacts on human communities. This focus on equity is important to enable the Partnership to address environmental justice in the process of developing the Action Agenda.

Specific Tasks and Major Project Components

As our fellow, you will help to support the implementation of the new Vital Signs and their indicators in a variety of ways. Your fellowship work will support our Vital Signs reporting efforts in the following ways:

- Work collaboratively with indicator reporters and Partnership staff to research and identify indicator geo-spatial datasets that can be integrated into the reporting of status and trends of indicators. Typically, these datasets are managed by local and regional organizations including government, tribes and community science programs. Data should be credible, compatible and enable analyses of and across indicators at local and regional scales and over time. A goal for this work is to visualize the indicator patterns across the landscape and to understand the disproportionate impacts of environmental degradation on human communities. You will compile data into a database and assist our GIS experts with analyses, mapping and interpretation of results.
- As our indicators are "shared measures" (meaning that the Puget Sound recovery community were part of the process to identify the indicators and that data collection and reporting is shared), our goal is to co-create the monitoring designs and assessments of indicators with relevant partners and experts in the PSEMP network. You will support these collective conversations, and work closely with the PSEMP Monitoring Network Coordinator to identify the need for, convene, and facilitate technical meetings.
- In addition to helping the recovery community understand the condition of the Puget Sound ecosystem, the Vital Signs are intended to inspire focused action to drive progress towards shared goals. You will work with indicator reporters as well Partnership staff from across the agency (e.g., the Adaptive Systems team, the Policy and Planning team, the Communication team) to support the development of other progress measures as well as narrative on the policy, management and conservation implications of indicator status and progress and to develop communication products that reach specific target audiences.

In general, you will assist with the development of products and presentations as they relate to the Vital Signs. You will be invited to participate in many working groups at the Partnership such as the PSEMP Spatial Data Working Group, the Human Dimensions Working Group and the Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group, depending on your interests.

We will work with you to adapt the work to your interests and skills. We will support you in the development of a work plan as a tool to lay out goals, expectations and milestones. We will encourage you to check in with that work plan and adapt it along the way.

Your work will result in a series of useful products during the course of the fellowship. In addition, we will ask you to prepare a final oral presentation summarizing the work you did during your fellowship, to present to our agency (scope and content are flexible and we can work together to figure that out).

Networking and Professional Development Opportunities

As an organization that works with hundreds of partners throughout the region, a fellowship at the Puget Sound Partnership offers great networking opportunities, through interactions with Indicator Reporters and participation in various technical work group meetings, internal cross-team meetings, and conferences. We will support your professional development by offering you first-hand experience coordinating and facilitating meetings, and encouraging best practices for project management. You will be able to learn about the [Conservation Standards](#), the gold standard for adaptively managing conservation efforts.

You will be able to tap into, and contribute to, internal resources like the Partnership's DEI Working Group and Human Dimensions Working Group. You will be able to take advantage of state trainings, including government-to-government (specifically between the state and Indian Tribes), facilitation and communication workshops and a host of other trainings that could help bolster needed skills for this fellowship. The Partnership can help you find affinity or [resource groups](#) within the state family such as Blacks United in Leadership and Diversity.

At the Partnership, you will find people eager to help and support your work. Your primary mentor will be Nathalie Hamel, Vital Signs Reporting Program Lead. She has been with the Partnership for 11 years, and is one of the founding members of the DEI working group. Nathalie was a Hershman fellow back in 2009 and mentored previous Hershman and Keystone fellows. The other person you will work closely with is Mary Ramirez (our Vital Signs program's co-lead). Mary works part time for the Partnership, and also holds a position at the University of Washington School of Aquatic and Fisheries Science in the Wetlands Lab. Others may step in too depending on your affinities. As this project will integrate information from multiple programs, we will expect you to also interface with colleagues primarily from our Adaptive Systems team, our Planning and Policy team and our Communications team.