

# 2020 Washington Sea Grant Keystone Fellowship Mentor Information and Project Proposal

## Host organization and location

Puget Sound Partnership  
326 East D Street  
Tacoma, WA

## Name and Title for the fellowship mentor

Nathalie Hamel  
Vital Signs Reporting Program lead

## Fellowship Project Description

As the Washington Sea Grant fellow, you will play a critical role in the Vital Signs Reporting program (part of the broader Science Team) 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 is all about compiling and analyzing 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 team work 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](http://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. Furthermore, the statute states that the Action Agenda (the collective road map to recovery) should achieve six recovery goals, which can be summarized as healthy water quality, protected and restored habitat, thriving species and food webs, healthy human populations and vibrant human quality of life. The Vital Signs are the measures by which the Partnership has chosen to communicate about the health of Puget Sound and assess the success of the recovery effort.

Our primary objective for the Vital Signs Reporting Program is to have sufficient data to accurately describe and report on the current condition of indicators, enable an evaluation of change over time, and assess whether the 2020 ecosystem recovery targets are achieved for as many indicators as possible by

2021. This information 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 Leads), and technical work groups coordinated through the Puget Sound Ecosystem Monitoring Program ([PSEMP](#)).

As our fellow, you can work to support both our reporting efforts in the following ways:

1. **Vital Signs messaging:** Lead the crafting of high-level messages for each of the Partnership’s six recovery goals (e.g. [healthy water quality](#)), drawing from a variety of sources, such as the underlying Vital Signs and indicators and other research findings to inform our assessment of whether we are meeting ecosystem recovery goals, focusing the messaging around whether goals are achieved and why/why not. You would be welcome here to find creative ways to tell the “goal story” using story maps and infographics. We will also ask you to assist with developing key messages for our human wellbeing related Vital Signs.
2. **Environmental equity:** Develop and apply an approach and framework to examine environmental inequalities and climate impact questions using one or more of our indicators (e.g. air quality, drinking water, toxics in fish). The goal proposed for this work is to better inform recovery efforts with an additional layer of information that brings attention to potential inequalities associated with ecosystem conditions.

Part of this task will be to think through how best to go about identifying and obtaining data, understanding data availability and gaps for key demographic data useful for identifying vulnerable groups, and the groups or people that ought to be involved. We view the outcome of this task as a stand-alone product like a report and/or a manuscript. This is a new and exciting direction for us and we hope the fellow will take a leadership role in this project.

3. **Vital Signs and Action Agenda:** Analyze the Vital Signs and their indicators in a way that reveals linkages between environmental conditions and progress to the Action Agenda; look for relationships between project and program effectiveness and signals that emerge from our measures; help us better tie in human wellbeing.

In general, the fellow will assist with the development of products and presentations as they relate to the Vital Signs. The fellow will be invited to participate in the Partnership’s Diversity, Equity and Inclusion Working Group.

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).

## Who we are looking for

If you have a flair for data and a passion for science communication, and if you believe that humans are integral in ecosystem recovery, this fellowship is for you! We are looking for someone who is action-oriented, enjoys team work, and communicates effectively both in writing and speaking. We hope for someone who is energetic and enthusiastic about collective efforts to make scientific information useful for managers and policy makers. If you share our passion for a vibrant, enduring Puget Sound, you will be in your element.

Key competencies:

- Communicates Effectively – *Develops and delivers multi-mode communications that convey a clear understanding or the unique needs of different audiences.* Attentively listens to others and encourages open expression of diverse ideas and opinions.
- Action Oriented – *Takes on new opportunities and tough challenges with a sense of urgency, high energy, and enthusiasm.* Readily takes action on challenges, without unnecessary planning. Identifies and seizes new opportunities. Displays a can-do attitude in good and bad times. Steps up to handle tough issues.
- Tech Savvy – *Anticipates and adopts innovations in digital and technology applications.* Anticipates the impact of emerging technologies and makes adjustments. Scans the environment for new technical skills, knowledge, or capabilities that can benefit business or personal performance. Rejects low-impact or fad technologies. Readily learns and adopts new technologies.

## Networking, professional development, and mentorship

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 Leads 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 10 years, and is one of the founding members of the DEI working group. Nathalie was a Hershman fellow back in 2009. 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 interface with colleagues primarily from our Project Effectiveness Assessment program, our Communications team, and our Action Agenda team.

### **More about our agency**

The Partnership is a great place to work and has implemented several "[Employer of Choice](#)" initiatives, including:

- We foster a **healthy work/life balance** by offering flexible/alternative work schedules, and mobile and telework options, where possible.
- We provide **workspaces** at three locations that promote creative thought, innovation, and collaboration among co-workers. Our main office is in a LEED Platinum-certified building on the waterfront in Tacoma, WA within a 10-minute walk of downtown (restaurants, shopping, museums, farmer's market, etc.).