

## Washington Sea Grant Hershman Fellowship: Host Application

To: Deborah Purce, Washington Sea Grant

From: Steve Nicholas, Senior Manager  
Air Quality & Sustainable Practices Program, Northwest Seaport Alliance

Date: April 18, 2022

### Host Organization Location & Contact Information

#### [Northwest Seaport Alliance](#)

Seattle Office: 401 Alaskan Way (Terminal 46, on Elliott Bay)

Tacoma Office: 1 Sitcum Way (on Commencement Bay)

[Facebook](#)

[LinkedIn](#)

### Name, Title, & Contact Information for Fellowship Mentor/Supervisor

Steve Nicholas, Senior Manager, Air Quality & Sustainable Practices (AQSP)

### Position Description

*The Team/Program/Organization:* The AQSP Program is part of the NWSA's broader Environmental & Planning Services Department. Other programs within that department focus on water quality, habitat restoration and permitting, remediation, and planning. The AQSP Team is responsible for the NWSA's myriad clean air and climate initiatives, as well as promoting sustainable corporate practices more broadly. We work very closely with most of the other major business units at the Alliance (commercial, operations, maintenance, engineering, public affairs, communications, etc.) – and with a wide range of external industry (marine terminal operators, trucking companies, etc.), government (US EPA, WA Department of Ecology, Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, etc.), community (Duwamish River Clean Up Coalition, Citizens for a Healthy Bay, etc.), and nonprofit partners (Climate Solutions, Front & Centered, etc.). We also work closely with other ports, notably the Port of Seattle and the Vancouver-Fraser (B.C.) Port Authority. The WSG Fellow will quickly become an integral member of the NWSA's three-person AQSP Team, which consists of [Nicola Graham](#), [Steve Nicholas](#), and [Graham VanderSchelden](#). The team meets twice weekly, and the Team Leader (Steve) meets weekly with each team member.

*The Work:* This is an especially exciting time for a WSG Fellow to join the AQSP Team, as our workload and opportunity for impact is increasing dramatically, for several reasons:

- The 2020 update to the [Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy \(NWPCAS\)](#) was unanimously adopted by the Managing Members of the NWSA (10 port commissioners) in April 2021. It sets the goal of phasing out emissions of both diesel particulate matter (DPM) and greenhouse gases (GHG) across all seaport activities by 2050 or sooner. In addition, in December 2021 both the Port of the Tacoma and the NWSA adopted a five-year Clean Air Implementation Plan to advance the

ambitious goal of zero-emission by 2050 or sooner. The AQSP Team leads a complex, multi-dimensional effort to collaborate with many internal and external stakeholders and partners to execute on both the 2020 NWPCAS and the associated implementation plans;

- In addition, the AQSP Team continues to be responsible for delivering on critical strategic initiatives for the CEOs and Senior Executive Teams of both the Port of Tacoma and the NWSA; and
- The focus on clean air, climate solutions, sustainability, and environmental justice is increasing significantly in the public policy arena (state, local, federal, and international), within near-port communities, and across the maritime industry. This is a positive development, and one that leads to increased demands on our time and opportunities for impact. Examples include potential engagement in the creation of a Pacific Northwest “Clean Hydrogen Hub” and/or one or more international “green shipping corridors;” engagement in implementation of the new state Clean Fuel Standard and/or Climate Commitment Act; and pursuit of a growing number of state and federal grant opportunities.

We have many interesting and important programs and projects underway, and many more on the near-term horizon. Our preference is to collaborate with the Fellow, once identified, to agree on the best match with that person’s skills, experience, and preferences. Our goal will be to assign the Fellow a lead role on at least one major project, and a support role on one or two others. That said, here are three specific project sense to give WSG and prospective Fellows a sense of what the work here might entail:

- **Engaging in “green corridors”:** One of the exciting initiatives emerging from COP26 in Glasgow late last year is the Clydebank Declaration, through with 26 countries (including the U.S.) committed to creating at least six “green shipping corridors” by 2030. The NWSA is actively exploring engagement in one or more of these “green corridors,” in which key stakeholders – ports, cargo owners, ocean carriers, marine terminal operators, fuel-providers, etc. – will collaborate to accelerate the transition to zero-emissions. The Hershman Fellow could support this work, for example by assessing zero-emission fuel options or doing research on, and outreach two, potential partners.
- **Advancing environmental justice in near-port communities:** We know from the WA Department of Health’s Environmental Health Disparities Map that people living near seaport activities are experiencing significant environmental health disparities, and that the NWSA has a key role to play in addressing those disparities. The Hershman Fellow could support the NWSA’s work to better understand its role vis-à-vis these disparities and develop policies and programs to address them. One specific example could be a program to help low-income drayage truck drivers find financing to purchase zero-emission trucks as they become available and affordable in the Puget Sound region.
- **Strengthening community engagement:** The NWSA’s 2021-2025 Clean Air Implementation calls for significant improvements in the NWSA’s communications and engagement with near-port communities, including development of a quarterly newsletter, web portal, and on-going engagement program. The Hershman Fellow could play a vital role in these efforts, including serving as editor-in-chief of the newsletter and chief web portal curator.
- **Strengthening engagement in international, federal, and state policy development and implementation:** The Clean Air Implementation Plan also calls for increased engagement by the

NWSA in key international, federal, and state policy arenas and initiatives. The Hershman Fellow could support this work, for example by tracking key activities of the International Maritime Organization (the arm of the UN that regulates international shipping) and the International Association of Ports & Harbors (which represents ports in the international policy arena). In addition, the Fellow could support the NWSA's participation in implementation of the new state Clean Fuels Standard and/or Climate Commitment Act, which will create a state-wide carbon market and new revenue streams that could help fund port-related emission-reducing activities.

*Mentoring & Networking:* We will make this a priority. Steve will serve as the primary mentor and supervisor and will meet with the Fellow on a regular basis. As noted above, by dint of the work we do and the environment in which we operate, there will be numerous opportunities for the Fellow to network both internally (with staff from a wide range of business units at the Port and NWSA) and externally (with industry, government, community, and nonprofit partners). The AQSP Team participates in numerous networks and associations – such as the Washington Public Ports Association (WPPA) and the International Association of Ports and Harbors (IAPH) – which will afford additional opportunities for networking across the maritime industry.

*Location/Work Environment:* The NWSA is co-located, with offices on the waterfronts of both Elliott Bay and Commencement Bay. The Tacoma office serves as NWSA headquarters and is larger – with 150-200 employees (in normal times) working out of that building or on the terminals. The Seattle office is much smaller, with about twenty employees (in normal times). Since March 2020, the NWSA's Air Quality & Sustainable Practices Team has been working from home (one in Seattle, one in Tacoma, and one in Port Orchard). By the time this Fellowship begins, we anticipate that we will be splitting our time, as a team, between being on-site in Tacoma (perhaps once a week), being in the Seattle office (perhaps once a week) and working from home the rest of the days.

### **NWSA's Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Statement/Policy/Program**

*"The Port of Tacoma and the NW Seaport Alliance respect and value the rich diversity of their employees, customers, vendors, contractors, and stakeholders. Regarding our employees, we are committed to building and maintaining a work environment that: is inclusive and welcoming to all; values diverse thought and expression in pursuit of the organizations' missions; and reflects the demographics of the community we serve."*

The Port of Tacoma (which houses the NWSA) has a robust Diversity & Inclusion policy, plan, and program. The Port reports annually on its Diversity & Inclusion Plan, key elements of which include recruitment and hiring practices, employee training, and community outreach. This focus is strengthened in the Port's new Strategic Plan. DEI is cited as one of the seven core values of the port, and one of the six key strategies under the "organizational success" goal of the Plan.

In addition, reducing the Port's contribution to the environmental health disparities that exist in communities living near port activities in both Seattle and Tacoma is a central goal of the Northwest Ports Clean Air Strategy, on which the WSG Fellow would be working.

Please let Steve Nicholas know if you need or want more information on this.

**Level of Financial Support**

We propose a second-year host contribution of \$42,000 (60%).