

Washington Coastal and Shoreline Program Enhancement Fellowship

Washington State Department of Ecology | 300 Desmond Drive Southwest, Lacey

Mentors:

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Position Overview

This is an exciting opportunity to join an enthusiastic team that believes in the growth and development of Fellows while working on important new program initiatives that address environmental justice and climate change impacts. As the [coastal zone management](#) and [shoreline management](#) agency lead in Washington State, our program will provide an opportunity to shape influential policy, program decision making, and community and Tribal support in balancing resource use, economic development, and conservation.

Fellowship Areas of Focus

In preparation for the 2022-2023 Fellow, we have completed a gaps and opportunities assessment that identified key work areas for a Fellow to enhance state efforts in coastal and shoreline management. We have designed this Fellowship to include a range of professional experiences across different sectors as well as mentorship from a diverse set of policy and planning experts and collaboration opportunities with internal and external partners. Depending on the Fellow's interests, the Fellow's work could involve research and writing, policy analysis, strategic planning and project management, event planning and facilitation, partnership building and coordination, stakeholder engagement, web design and content development, and internal and external communications.

With the support from staff leads, the Fellow will have ownership of projects and tasks and will contribute to team efforts to accomplish short- and long-term goals for the program. A range of experiences that are available to the Fellow are presented below. The Fellow will support the program's work across all three focus areas, but may choose to develop their Fellowship to prioritize work in certain area(s) depending on their interests, skills, and capacity.

Supporting Local Government Coastal and Shoreline Planning Priorities

[Shoreline Master Programs \(SMPs\)](#) are local land-use policies and regulations that guide use of Washington coastal and shoreline areas. In 2021, we launched a new statewide [Shoreline Master Program \(SMP\) Competitive Grant Pilot Program](#). The purpose of the grant program is to support efforts to advance local shoreline planning priorities, improve the implementation of SMPs through monitoring and adaptive management efforts, and advance sea level rise planning. This is the first time in almost 20 years when local governments will be finished with state-required SMP updates and Ecology is able to provide funding for local governments to focus on local planning priorities. The pilot program is a small-scale trial that will help Ecology prepare to administer a larger-scale competitive grant program in 2023-2025. The Fellow will be responsible for:

- Helping staff collect and disseminate lessons learned from local projects.
- Synthesize best practices to develop policy and procedural guidance for the expansion of the grant program.
- Contribute to recommendations for improving funding guidelines and supporting equity and environmental justice.

Delivering Resilience Planning and Project Design Resources to Communities and Tribes

Many of Ecology's coastal resilience efforts focus on areas with capacity constraints at the local level and communities that are most vulnerable to the impacts of sea level rise and other coastal hazards.

Working in close partnership with Washington Sea Grant and other key partners, the Fellow will provide additional support to address resilience planning gaps and needs. This will include:

- Supporting Ecology partnership efforts to deliver coordinated assistance to plan, design, permit, and fund multi-benefit projects with communities and Tribes.
- Organizing the [Washington Coastal Hazards Resilience Network](#) annual meeting and improving the network's suite of information and resources.
- Writing [sea level rise and hazard resilience project case studies](#) to support knowledge exchange across communities.
- Coordinating with community-based resilience initiatives such as the [Cascadia Coastlines and Peoples Hazards Research Hub](#) or [Washington Sea Grant King Tides Program](#).

These efforts may involve community events and site visits and are centered on fostering collaborative partnerships and delivering planning and project design resources to vulnerable coastal communities and Tribes.

Public Access Assessment and Program Planning

Providing public access to coastal and shoreline areas across Washington is foundational to federal and state coastal and shoreline management. Our program is focused on improving our understanding of the intersection of public access, environmental justice, and climate impacts. [SMPs include provisions requiring public access](#), however, there is a need to:

- Work with local governments to understand how effectively these provisions are being implemented.
- Inventory existing public access efforts beyond local government SMP implementation.
- Develop the methods for evaluating how public access will be impacted by climate change.
- Collect and analyze policies and program efforts from across the county on environmental justice in public access planning.
- Provide recommendations on priority actions our program can take to prepare for the future and ensure shoreline areas can be accessed and enjoyed by people of all races, cultures, and incomes.

Project Partners:

Local Governments (cities, towns, and counties)
Office of the Governor
Washington Sea Grant
The Nature Conservancy
FEMA Region X
State Emergency Management Division
Washington Coastal Marine Advisory Council
State Department of Commerce

State Department of Fish and Wildlife
State Department of Natural Resources
Washington Marine Resource Committees
Washington Recreation and Conservation Office
Washington State Parks & Recreation
Tribes
U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
Washington Department of Transportation

Fellow Mentoring and Agency Connections

The Fellow will work with the Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program at the Department of Ecology in Lacey, Washington. The Fellow will have two mentors and one supervisor who will oversee activities and guide development.

The Fellow will have a tailored Performance and Development Plan (PDP) that will provide a framework for how the Fellow will work with the mentors and supervisors throughout the Fellowship. The PDP will support evaluation of the Fellow's progress on tasks and professional growth and will ensure 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.

The Fellow will be part of a cross-sector, multi-agency team supported by a range of coastal and shoreline management experts, including ocean policy, shoreline management, coastal geology and engineering, floodplain management, wetlands and other critical areas, and legislative engagement professionals.

The Fellow will be encouraged to attend relevant coordination meetings, trainings, and other opportunities to gain exposure and understanding of how government and non-governmental organizations work on regional shoreline and coastal management. When opportunities arise, the Fellow will be encouraged to present work to a variety of regional audiences. This experience will connect the Fellow to state, regional, and national partners and encourage coordinated participation in larger conversations centered on fundamental and unified approaches to protecting resources, people, shoreline access and ecosystems services.