

STORMWATER WORK GROUP STATUS & TRENDS SCIENTIST SUBGROUP

Updated August 2025

We are reconvening the Status & Trend Scientist subgroup of the Stormwater Work Group in 2025 to discuss ongoing adaptations and clarifications to the Stormwater Action Monitoring (SAM) program's study design. The subgroup maintains a webpage at [Stormwater Work Group - Status and Trends](#).

The goal of SAM's status & trends (S&T) monitoring is to provide a regional assessment of receiving water health, and to evaluate whether collective management actions protect and improve receiving water conditions.

Three Puget Sound regional studies completed their first round of monitoring in 2015-2018. Read a [short summary of these receiving water studies](#) or watch the [video](#). Since 2020, USGS, WDFW, and Clark County have collected data under a revised study design and provided status reports. What's needed next is an analysis of the data to identify any trends in water quality, stream habitat, and benthic macroinvertebrate populations.

SAM maintains project webpages for each of three active receiving water studies:

- [Puget Sound small streams](#)
- [Puget Sound nearshore](#)
- [Lower Columbia urban streams](#)

SUBGROUP PURPOSE & GOALS

Mission: To bring together regional scientific expertise to guide long-term monitoring programs and support collective learning about improved stormwater management.

Goals: To recommend robust methods for collecting data and analyzing trends in water quality, habitat, and biological health in waters receiving or otherwise impacted by municipal stormwater discharges. To help regional partners evaluate whether our stormwater efforts are protecting and improving aquatic ecosystems.

SUBGROUP WORKPLAN TASKS FOR JULY 2025-DECEMBER 2027

The subgroup will focus on the following tasks for 2025 and may add tasks for 2026 and 2027 as the need arises.

Analysis of Existing Data- 2025

1. Assemble group of water quality scientists and ecologists with expertise in the Puget Sound and Lower Columbia River basins.
2. Revisit the purpose of the S&T data analysis, the data sources, and the expected outcomes.
3. Make recommendations to SWG on study questions for data analysis. Subgroup will consult SWG on the kind of information and study questions to answer. Analysis could include non-SAM data.
4. Make recommendations to SWG on how data analysis should be conducted –through a contract with a gov't agency, award a contract through an RFP process, or another avenue. Make recommendations on the timeline for completing this work, on track with the 2029 permit

reissuance timeline. Aim to have the findings presented to all interested parties ahead of the preliminary draft municipal stormwater permit.

Adjustments to Existing Studies & Identifying New Small Studies– 2026-2027

5. Consider adding new parameters (e.g. 6PPDQ, PFAS, alkylphenols) or methods (non-targeted high resolution mass spectrometry or HRMS) to one or more of the three existing studies.
6. Make recommendations to SWG on funding new studies and sub-studies. Examples include updating the Puget Sound nearshore sediment study in conjunction with the mussel study and a study of pesticides in stream sediments in conjunction with both stream studies.
7. Provide feedback on trend analysis quality assurance project plan (QAPP) and final report.

MEETINGS

The subgroup will meet monthly through December 2025. In November 2025, the subgroup will revisit the meeting schedule and determine future frequency together.

The S&T Subgroup planning team will develop the agendas. Meeting agendas will be posted on the [subgroup's webpage](#) and distributed via email before each meeting. Meeting notes will be posted to the webpage and distributed via the next meeting's scheduling invitation.

Proposed meeting dates:

- July 24, 2025
- August 21, 2025
- September 25, 2025
- October 23, 2025
- November 20, 2025
- December 18, 2025

TIMELINE & MILESTONES

Early June 2025	Draft subgroup charter (this document) and begin recruiting members to subgroup. Project kick off announced via SWG email list; continue membership call, distribute subgroup project charter
July 2025	First S&T subgroup meeting. Review and approve subgroup work plan with team members, continue membership call if needed.
August 2025	Second S&T subgroup meeting. Develop draft list of study questions
September 2025	Third S&T subgroup meeting. Deliver exploratory data analysis results. Overview of statistical methods used in similar watershed trend analyses. .
October 2025	Fourth S&T subgroup meeting. Refine draft list of study questions, methods, and funding recommendations.

November 2025	Deliver recommendations to SWG
December 2025	Transition to next task
Mid 2026	Provide feedback on trend analysis QAPP
By Late 2027	Provide feedback on final trend analysis report. Trend analysis report to be completed by end of 2027.