**Stormwater Work Group**

**Final Summary**
**of the Meeting’s Key Discussions, Decisions and Agreements**

## **November 15, 2023 from 9:00 AM to 12:00 PM**

## **Microsoft Teams meeting**

**Attendees:**

Don McQuilliams, Abby Barnes, Madison Bristol, Chelsea Morris, Brandi Lubliner, Morgan Baker, Jeff Killelea, Leslie Connelley, Todd Hunsdorfer, Yida Fang, Jane Dewell, Tony Bush, Dana de Leon, Dave Kangiser, Amy Waterman, Jessica Huybregts, Jason Karlstrom, Amanda Gillen, Angela Bolton, Mauro Heine, Jessica Atlakson, Emma Trewhitt, Shawn Christensen, Jeff Rudolph, Dimitri Athanasiou, Eliel Cruz, Curtis Hinman, Eric Bayani, Charles Kratzer, Kevin Fitzgerald, Stella Collier, Joey Urquhart, Blaine Chesterfield, Nick Hehemann, Keith Estes, Carol Falkenhayn Maloy, Aaron Burkhart, Nathalie Hamel, Heidi Siegelbaum, Eli Mackiewicz, Tariq Hussain, Laura Haren, Jayde Essex, Carly Michiels, Jordan Manley, Stefan Grozev, Aurore Musy, Troy Fields, Katie Rathmell, Grant Gilmore, Patricia Johnson, Meghan Elkey, Mike Pertersen, Jenna Schroer, Sarah Norberg, Brian Monnon, Aimee Navickis-Brasch, Courtney Littrell, Dustin Bilhimer, Sarah Montero, Nicole Chen, Jordan Manley, James Packman, Erin McCabe, Frances Bothfeld, Darci Mattioda, Carly Michiels, Mike Ehlebracht, Joanna Larson, Nigel Pickering, Julia Stinson Ebert, Scott Groce

**Welcome, introductions, and review of the meeting’s agenda and goals
Don McQuilliams, SWG Chair**

* Welcomes, chat introductions, and review of meeting agenda and goals by Don McQuilliams.

**Vote on Round 4 SAM project proposals
Don McQuilliams, SWG Chair, Angela Bolton, SAM Round 4 Study Selection Subgroup, Brandi Lubliner, SAM Coordinator, and Jeff Killelea, Water Quality Manager**

* Overview of SAM Round 4 solicitation process:
	+ The SAM Round 4 RFP solicitation process started with developing the topics for potential studies. The Study Selection Subgroup reformed to collect and refine through meetings during the Summer and Fall 2022.
	+ The final list of 19 proposed study topics came from old topics from Round 3, recommendations from prior funded studies, Effectiveness and Source ID Subgroup recommendations, and new ideas from the Study Selection Subgroup collected via email surveys.
	+ Solicitation was initiated in January 2023 and a total of eight full proposals were presented to attendees at the SAM workshop in August 2023.
	+ After the presentations, voting by SAM-participating jurisdictions was open for approximately 1 week, and this resulted in proposals FP1, FP2, and FP3 receiving the most votes.
	+ Ecology has reviewed these proposals and identified additional agency funding to support these studies. Jeff Killelea, Ecology’s representative, spoke at the September meeting and offered this funding to three studies: FP1, FP3, and FP8. These studies all involve addressing 6PPD/6PPD-q via stormwater management.
	+ Ecology reiterated their interest in funding 100% of FP1, and partially funding FP3 and FP8. Ecology is also interested in discussions to allow agency funding to be put towards portions of FP2; this would require a negotiation of this proposal’s scope of work to ensure deliverables will fit within Ecology’s two-year proviso funding window. View Ecology’s letter about SAM Funding [here](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1hzzzo-AGxjDbxJN051aj2ynVVVLyXOxe/view?usp=sharing).
	+ Brandi, SAM Coordinator, assured that if FP2 is approved for funding by SWG, then in the contract negotiation stage Ecology will explore the possibility of partial Ecology funding. As a reminder all SAM proposals-turned-funded projects undergo negotiation and subsequent deliverables and cost updates.
* SWG can decide to approve all the project proposals, if they wish, it is just a matter of obligating future funds (outside the two-year timeframe), like the Redmond study. This Round 4 process was set up use two years of SAM revenue which is just shy of $3 million in available funding, and the proposal requests total $4 million. Even with Ecology’s funding offers, not all eight can be funded in this next two years.
* Brandi noted turning proposals into contracts is a front-end heavy workload. It’s noted that this coming summer as current projects wrap, more Round 4 projects will be picked up. SAM studies are a continuously moving process.
* The Municipal Caucus gave the following recommendations on behalf of the caucus after their meeting earlier this month, based on available funds, SAM staff capacity, and municipalities interests in the studies. Timeliness of studies was also a factor.
* The initial recommendation was to immediately fund proposals FP3, FP6, and FP8.
	+ With the updated information from Ecology regarding the possibility of funding a portion of FP2, that recommendation shifted to immediately funding FP2, FP3, and FP8.
	+ FP6 is still a priority for municipalities and in particular Phase I permittees for manual equivalency.
	+ Todd also noted that while 6PPD-q is urgent, and that the caucus’ recommendation is to work to balance this urgency against staff capacity and funding.
	+ The Municipal Caucus did not have as much interest or discussion about FP 4 and FP7. This was partially based on comments received on these proposals.
* Ecology, Jeff and Brandi, noted that FP6 could likely not reach conclusion in time for incorporation into the stormwater manuals being reissued in July 2024. The comment period for the draft manual has ended, and revisions are already underway. These results could, however, inform the 2029 manual.
	+ It was also noted via group discussion that FP6 if started right away would potentially be concluded in time for Phase I manual equivalency review.
* The State Caucusdid not meet to discuss the SAM study proposals. The chair, Abby Barnes, circulated the proposals by email and no discussion ensued.
* Ecology, Jeff Killelea, suggested that FP7 results could be accomplished in other ways via other means, perhaps via collaboration with permit teams.
* The Stormwater Work Group voted with 8 Yes and zero No votes:

FP1 – Approved for full funding by Ecology
FP2 – Approved for SAM funds with immediate start. Use Ecology funds for first deliverables as Ecology is willing.
FP3 – Approved for SAM funds with immediate start. Use Ecology funds for first deliverables as Ecology is willing.
FP4 – Undecided. Revisit this full proposal at a later, undetermined date, dependent upon staff and SAM fiscal capacity
FP5 – Undecided. Revisit this full proposal at a later, undetermined date, dependent upon staff and SAM fiscal capacity
FP6 – Approved for SAM funds and start when SAM staff have capacity.
FP7 – Declined to fund. Suggested communicating to proponent other approaches for accomplishing the study goals.
FP8 – Approved for SAM funds with immediate start. Use Ecology funds for first deliverables as Ecology is willing.

Following the meeting, the SWG formally recommended this vote to Ecology through [this letter](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/StormwaterWorkGroup/SWG_SAM%20Recommendations%202023.pdf). This included instructions to direct SAM funding toward the chosen studies. SAM staff will now contact project proponents to alert them to the selection of their studies for funding and will move forward with the contracting process.

**Updates related to our work
Madison Rose Bristol, SWG Interim Coordinator**

**PSEMP**

* The Puget Sound Partnership released their biannual [State of the Sound report](https://stateofthesound.wa.gov/). PSEMP work groups help to contribute to this report by developing key messages for the Vital Signs, which then gets added into the State of the Sound report.

**PSP**

* Nathalie Hamel joined the meeting to present an in-progress project that SWG may have interest in, re-creation of the [Puget Sound Stream Benthos (PSSB)](https://pugetsoundstreambenthos.org/) database hosted by King County. <https://pugetsoundstreambenthos.org/> Benthic Index of Biotic Integrity (BIBI) scores are an indicator for stream health.
* Contributors can add their macroinvertebrate data. BIBI data is used in a variety of ways from salmon recovery to stormwater management.
* This database is publicly accessible, and hosts over 500,000 samples and is actively utilized by dozens of agencies. SAM’s status and trend studies in the Puget Sound and Lower Columbia River basin upload macroinvertebrate data to this database.
* This database was built in 2007, and its current platform suffers from outdated technology and is subsequently strained.
* It is still funded and governed by King County, who notes that an update isn’t feasible.
* PSP is seeking to co-design a system that aligns well with user needs, leverages technology that already exists, and establishes a sustainable funding and governance model.
* Ideally, the PSSB database will be representative of the entire user and collaborator community.
* Nathalie is looking for a planning committee of about 6 people –Chelsea Morris, SAM Scientist, has agreed to serve! – and they’re looking for city, county, tribal, and special interest groups like SWG. They are in the process of hiring a facilitator and want to plan a series of workshops for engagement from both users and contributors. Look out for future opportunities to engage.
* For more information, see this [draft proposal](https://pspwa.app.box.com/s/y6cj36oyk0tpibh8mp2r30iq51uczi5i) or contact Nathalie at nathalie.hamel@psp.wa.gov.

**Department of Ecology**

* Madison Bristol, 6PPD Stormwater Planner, notes that Ecology is coordinating to produce communications regarding funding opportunities from Ecology’s ’23-25 biennium 6PPD proviso funds. Ecology is operating on a “rolling” system of Interagency Agreements – IAAs – for Tribal nations, public universities, and government agencies, and expects to release an RFP for consultants in the coming weeks.
* Dustin Bilhimer, NEP Stormwater SIL, also notes their impending RFP for BMPs to address hotspots for contaminants of emerging concern will be released in the coming months. Additional information regarding the SIL and its RFP can be found [here](https://pugetsoundestuary.wa.gov/stormwater-sil-rfp/).

**Vote on PRO-C Charter Revisions and other PRO-C updates
Todd Hunsdorfer, PRO-C Chair and Brandi Lubliner, SAM Coordinator**

* Todd notes that the PRO-C Charter was updated to current processes, representation, including opportunities for EWA permittees to participate, and to improve readability.
	+ After the September meeting, everyone should have received a copy of the draft charter.
	+ Todd received no responses to that email.
	+ The PRO-C members approved the new Charter as the guiding documentation for how the PRO-C operates, and they have also created a best practices document that is a living document providing even more guidance. Everyone on PRO-C provided a role in providing comments and feedback on charter.
	+ The workgroup voted to approve the PRO-C Charter with no dissents. The revised Charter is available from Todd Hunsdorfer or will be made available on the SAM Administration [website](https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/reporting-requirements/stormwater-monitoring/stormwater-action-monitoring/administration#proc).
* There will be one more amendment of funding for Redmond’s paired watershed study, a 10-year study, next summer.
* Thanks to Brandi, Chelsea, and Madison for their continued efforts to keep up on SAM communications.
* Brandi noted how SAM study findings are incorporated into the recent permit and manual drafts, and that Chelsea’s capture of this effort in an Ecology Blog was also impeccable. A more in-depth coverage is captured in the [Municipal Stormwater Permit’s Fact Sheet for the draft permit](https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/ezshare/wq/permits/MS4_2024_FactSheet.pdf).
* Abby and Brandi discussed the idea of replicating the SAM booklet that is a compilation of completed SAM projects. SAM staff are actively exploring publishing another one for this permit term (2019-2024).
* PRO-C will soon be reviewing the scope of work for the last Round 3 project, Permeable Pavement Lifecycle Costs. Costs for this and the last amendment for the Redmond Paired Watershed study are current SWG obligations.

**SWG Comment Letter: Draft Municipal Stormwater Permits
Don McQuilliams and Todd Hunsdorfer, PRO-C Chair**

Don notes that SWG sent a letter to Ecology regarding permits in 2019. SWG intends to do so again this year to:

* Support allowing EWA permittees to participate in S8 like Western WA permittees.
* Support keeping the remainder of S8 language as proposed, which is the same as last permit term language.

Don will send the SWG letter on the draft permits and manuals to Ecology after receiving any impending input from SWG members.

To view the final SWG letter, see [this document](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/Portals/_1962/Documents/StormwaterWorkGroup/SWG%202024_2029%20NPDES%20Permit%20Comments.pdf).

**SWG 2024-2025 Work Plan
Don McQuilliams and Abby Barnes, SWG Chairs and Madison Rose Bristol, SWG Interim Coordinator**

Abby notes thatthis [workplan](https://drive.google.com/file/d/1CUbbHrKws0rX7nHhPJE1fFqSe_Rkhv73/view) focuses on the next two years of SWG work.

* There is a large focus on how communication is going: notably, decision to discontinue the SWG Reporter. Chairs are looking for feedback regarding this and other communication matters. There was once a Communications Subgroup, and if we feel that there’s a gap or need to do so, the chairs can pull it back together.
* There are also ongoing discussions regarding SWG’s role as a PSEMP workgroup and if SWG needs a liaison from SWG to represent at PSEMP meetings and events. If there is no interest from workgroup members, the chairs are amenable to taking this on.
	+ SWG can also nominate someone for this role. There are expectations to report SWG news at PSEMP events. It’s also noted that because of Jenna Judge’s exit, Katrina Radich is managing things temporarily right now, and things are in a momentary state of flux.
* The group also discussed the potential for virtual voting, with tools like DocuSign, email voting, and caucus input as suggestions.
* **Are you interested in helping revise the work plan?** If so, please reach out to madison.bristol@ecy.wa.gov

**Hear update from SWG 6PPD Subgroup**
Eli Mackiewicz, SWG 6PPD Subgroup Co-Chair

* The subgroup met in September and received a lot of information, largely from Ecology regarding hiring and integrating new requirements for street sweeping and retrofits into permits.
* The group also heard significant updates regarding funding available for the department of Ecology, who has roughly $2.5 million to spend before 2025.
* The subgroup requests SWG to send topics and ideas to cover through 2024.
* The subgroup additionally heard from graduate student Chelsea Mitchell, who, under the guidance of Dr. Ani Jayakaran, studied permeable pavement as a management option for 6PPD-q. That study is now a published paper, which can be found [here](https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S0048969723068638?via%3Dihub)!

**Wrap up: recap of today’s meeting**

* The workgroup approved seven SAM Round 4 proposals for SAM funds, and the chairs will supply their formal letter to Ecology.
* The workgroup approved the revised PRO-C Charter.
* The workgroup should expect a draft workplan around January 2024 – members will discuss the workplan at the next meeting, and will vote for its adoption via email.

**Future Meeting Dates:**

The next regular SWG meeting is **February 7, 2024**. Please mark your calendars for these dates in 2024 are February 7, May 15, September 11, and November 13 – all Wednesdays, from 9-noon. We may occasionally extend our meeting time; any extended meeting time will be determined at the previous meeting.

At our meeting on Wednesday, February 7, we will:

* Hear findings from the SAM Source Identification project: [Mobile business stormwater source control and coordination](https://ecology.wa.gov/regulations-permits/reporting-requirements/stormwater-monitoring/stormwater-action-monitoring/sam-source-identification/mobile-business-source-control)
* Hear findings from SAM’s Mussel Monitoring receiving water project
* Discuss the 2024-2025 SWG Work Plan in preparation for a vote
* Hear about EPA’s MS4 permit options for Army – JBLM to join SAM
* Hear other updates related to our work

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**View the SWG Website:**

We regularly update the [SWG website](https://sites.google.com/site/pugetsoundstormwaterworkgroup/home) with information about upcoming meetings, past meeting materials, and important SWG documents. If you have additional questions about the SWG, contact madison.bristol@ecy.wa.gov.