



Stormwater Strategic Initiative Recruitment for Toxics Pod Members

Why Toxics issues are so critical and why we need you.

We are awash in mixtures of chemicals, the synergistic effects of which we are not entirely clear about. Toxic chemicals are poorly regulated but there are many opportunities for pollution prevention and strategic interventions throughout the chemical supply chain and production continuum. We are interested in soliciting your experiences with policy, incentives, underlying science and novel approaches which can help us reduce risk to Puget Sound aquatic species and human alike.

These complex issues require diverse skills and perspectives and this is where we would enjoy your help.

Who are we?

The [Stormwater Strategic Initiative Lead](#) (Stormwater SIL) team is part of the [Puget Sound National Estuary Program](#). The team is led by the WA Department of Ecology and is an active team collaboration between the [Washington State Department of Commerce](#), and Washington State University's [Washington Stormwater Center](#) with funding from the US EPA. The Stormwater SIL is guided by a Strategic Initiative Advisory Team (SIAT) consisting of regional science experts, policy-makers and planners from local, state, and federal governments to advance the recovery actions in the [2022-26 Puget Sound Action Agenda](#).

Our job is to operationalize and fund actions from the [Toxics in Fish](#), [Marine Water Quality](#), and [Freshwater Quality](#) Implementation Strategies to improve Puget Sound, protect our shared natural resources, and meet the healthy water quality [Puget Sound Vital Sign indicators](#). We use topical advisory groups (Pods) to deep dive into discussions that broaden a shared understanding of regional issues and inform recommendations for implementation actions and priorities.

We are forming a Toxics Pod and want to recruit members of the stormwater, toxicology, and environmental planning communities of practice to participate. The Toxics Pod will assist the Stormwater SIL to implement and advance the [Toxics in Fish Implementation Strategy](#).

What will the Toxics Pod do?

The Toxics Pod will develop strategic information and recommendations for toxics reduction in stormwater that support and operationalize priorities from the Toxics in Fish Implementation Strategy (TIF IS). The TIF IS was finished in 2021 and outlines a recovery plan focused on reducing the levels and impacts of toxic contaminants on Puget Sound aquatic life and the people who consume them.

More specifically, the objectives of the Toxics Pod include:

- Objective 1:** Provide strategic planning input to inform recommendations to the Stormwater Strategic Initiative Advisory Team.
- Objective 2:** Curate quality Toxics in Fish project proposals and connect our implementation strategy goals to our audience's goals.
- Objective 3:** Incorporate Tribal Treaty Rights and Environmental Justice into Toxics in Fish implementation actions and engage with the stormwater community of practice on these principles.
- Objective 4:** Develop policy recommendations to advance programmatic improvements for protection and prevention.

Once the Toxics Pod is formed, members will help define Pod tasks to achieve these objectives in support of the Stormwater SIL.

Pod member expectations.

Most meetings will be held virtually to make it easier to include participants from around the Puget Sound region and reduce travel costs and other barriers. We envision having monthly to bi-monthly virtual meetings from 2023 through 2026. Pod members participate on a voluntary basis.

Pod members will be expected to participate in most meetings and contribute feedback to documents or other content developed to meet the Pod objectives. Total time spent on Pod activities will vary from month to month, but Pod members should expect to commit 4-6 hours per month on average (including meeting times).

We want to find members with the following knowledge and experience:

- Environmental, aquatic, or human toxicology or chemistry
- Water quality monitoring or modeling
- Stormwater practices, planning, or policy at the municipal or county level
- Stormwater or hazardous waste policy or planning at the federal or state level
- Natural resource or local public health planning or policy
- Engagement, applied social science and communication practices related to toxics issues
- Implementation of environmental justice policies or planning
- Industry or professional associations whose interests and/or assets are affected by toxics
- Community involvement/advocacy related to environmental or public health

How can I get involved?

There is not a formal application process. If you are interested to know more about the Toxics Pod and would like to be a Pod member, please contact the Toxics in Fish Implementation Lead, Dustin Bilhimer.



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