

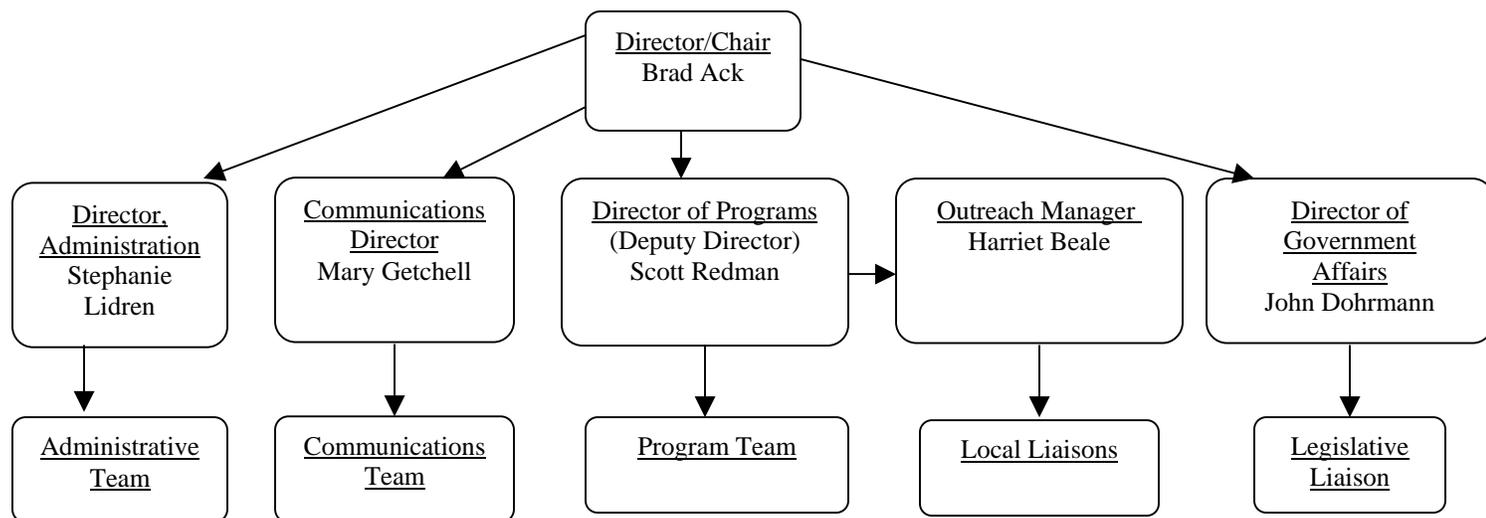
## Puget Sound Action Team Transition Briefing – October 2004

Contact: Brad Ack, Director and Chair – 360-725-5437 <http://www.psat.wa.gov>

Agency Responsibilities: The Puget Sound Action Team is an interagency, intergovernmental partnership that defines, coordinates and implements the state’s environmental agenda for Puget Sound. Authorized at 90.71 of the RCW, specific responsibilities include:

- Coordinating interagency environmental planning for Puget Sound. Produce a biennial work plan and budget to guide the state’s work to protect and restore the Sound.
- Carrying out conservation actions around Puget Sound, through the work of the Action Team partner agencies, as well as direct work by Action Team staff.
- Informing and involving Puget Sound residents, businesses, elected officials and others in conservation. The Action Team staff funds such work via the Public Involvement and Education fund. The Action Team also produces educational materials and conducts outreach to citizens, policymakers, and resource managers. Staff works to build public understanding and support for the environmental regulatory framework and the costs of programs needed.
- Developing Puget Sound environmental policy. The Action Team defines priority issues, recommends policy, tracks and participates in significant policy development, and promotes practical solutions and environmentally sustainable alternatives.
- Conducting research and monitoring. The Action team assesses environmental trends through the Puget Sound Ambient Monitoring Program and hosts a biennial regional research conference.

Organizational Chart and Budget – Action Team Staff (note: the Action Team partnership and the Puget Sound Council – the other two entities that make up the overall Puget Sound Action Team structure – each have their own organizational structures)



2003-05 Program Budget and Fund Source: Puget Sound Action Team (23.7 FTEs)  
\$3.89 Million Water Quality Account and \$1.14 Million General Fund - Federal

Most Pressing Issues and Challenges: There are a number of challenges in Puget Sound facing a new administration. They are *briefly* outlined below in two categories.

### **1. Environmental Challenges**

Notwithstanding years of effort, Puget Sound continues to provide evidence of a system in a serious state of decline. Significant drops in populations of killer whales (orca), rockfish species, marine birds, and forage fish (herring), loss of shellfish growing areas, listing of salmon species, and low dissolved oxygen problems and fish kills in Hood Canal are warning signals that Puget Sound is under serious stress. The Sound's ecological integrity – its very fabric of life – may be at risk. Growth in human population, wastewater discharges, extensive conversion of natural habitats throughout the region, and increase in impervious surfaces all contribute to the downward trends observed in the health of the Sound.

The Action Team Partnership has identified six core environmental priorities that must be addressed simultaneously and at the appropriate scale to reverse these downward trends in the Sound's living resources. These are: clean up contaminated sites and sediments; significantly reduce continuing toxic contamination; significantly reduce the ongoing harm from stormwater runoff; control and prevent nutrient and pathogen pollution (from septic and animals primarily); protect functioning shorelines and other critical areas; and restore degraded nearshore habitats. Each of these issue areas has their own substantive and technical challenges, their own politics and controversies, and each is under funded. The Action Team's success in addressing these core issues will be greatly enhanced if they are a high priority in the Governor's office and some direct attention is provided.

### **2. Governance Challenges**

The Action Team partnership attempts to establish a Puget Sound focus within the work of state agencies with statewide mandates, and to coordinate individual agency efforts to protect and restore the Sound. Success in recovering Puget Sound requires actions by numerous state agencies, and those actions needed to be coordinated, integrated at times, well-focused and well-managed. This is even more important in an era of declining funding. The Action Team organic act creates the structure to make this happen, and assigns staff the responsibility, but falls short of giving staff any authority to carry out this job. Under the current framework, the level of participation of the agencies and their willingness and energy to collectively plan and implement Puget Sound conservation actions depends in part on having clear goals and expectations communicated by the Governor's office.

Coordinating the state's efforts alone is not enough to achieve success. There are many levels of government in the Puget Sound basin with overlapping responsibilities for natural resource and environmental issues – including 12 counties, 17 tribes, numerous federal agencies, 110 plus cities, and a variety of special districts. Coordinating environmental planning and action (e.g. newly adopted watershed plans, salmon recovery plans, GMA updates, TMDLs and SMP updates), ensuring consistency of minimum environmental standards, and avoiding duplication of efforts among the diverse levels of government are all significant challenges. Another significant challenge is to establish and ensure the state's interests in particular environmental outcomes in light of the delegation of authority for those outcomes to the local government level, and in light of the cumulative impacts of many individual actions. Management of on-site sewage systems illustrates this challenge, with the state's overriding interest in protecting water quality subject to local government's discretion in application of regulations. Other examples abound.

## Board Member Listing by Board Position

### PUGET SOUND ACTION TEAM (NS205)

Agency 075 - Office of the Governor	Senate Conf. N	Positions: Maximum 012
Authority Governor	Public Disc. N	Minimum
Authoriztn. RCW 90.71.020	Term Length	Actual 003
Rem. Auth. GC	Meetings/Yr.	

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
001	McShane, Dan 1451 Grant Street Bellingham, WA 98225	A	C	07/31/2002	12/31/2030
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	County representative		

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
002	McGilton, Joan 2640 SW 164th Place Burien, WA 98166	A	C	10/07/2002	12/31/2050
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	City representative		

<u>Pos. #</u>	<u>Name and Address</u>	<u>Status</u>	<u>Race</u>	<u>Appointed</u>	<u>Expires</u>
003	Williams, Daryl 7615 Totem Beach Road Marysville, WA 98271	A	NA	10/01/2000	12/25/2030
		Terms Served	01		
		Position	a member		
		Comments	Tribal representative		