

## Environment

***Overarching Goal:** The region will care for the natural environment by protecting and restoring natural systems, conserving habitat, improving water quality, reducing greenhouse gas emissions and air pollutants, and addressing potential climate change impacts. The region acknowledges that the health of all residents is connected to the health of the environment. Planning at all levels should consider the impacts of land use, development patterns, and transportation on the ecosystem.*

*Before it was a major metropolitan area, the central Puget Sound region was a landscape of seemingly limitless mountains, forests, and prairies surrounding the Puget Sound. The region's inviting and life-sustaining waters, shores, and woodlands lie at the heart of the Pacific Northwest, providing rich resources for its renowned quality of life.*

*VISION 2040 stresses the importance of the natural environment in providing ecological and aesthetic benefits, and protecting our water and air. The natural environment is important not only outside the urban growth area, but within it as well. Taken into account is the strong role the environment plays in the region's economic activity, including recreation and tourism. Development of a regional open space system, which conserves and connects these lands, is embraced.*

VISION 2040 approaches preservation and restoration of the natural environment with multicounty policies that address environmental stewardship, which is concerned with the care of our land, water, and air, as well as climate change. (The term *restore* is used primarily to mean re-establishing to an ecologically functioning state, in which natural systems are healthy for plants, animals, and humans.)

VISION 2040 calls for a better understanding of the region's relationship with and impact on larger ecological bioregions. Land use, transportation, air quality, and human health are interconnected and therefore require integrated planning, regulations, and implementation actions. The region's approach to greater environmental sustainability is to improve coordination and increase the commitment to preserving the environment through conservation of resources, protection of habitat, and restoration of natural systems. The region can also capitalize on economic opportunities to develop green technologies and clean processes. A healthy environment and abundant resources must be available for the use and enjoyment of future generations.



## Environmental Stewardship

Each of us is a caretaker of the resources we use — daily, weekly, and throughout our lives. Stewardship means managing those resources in a manner that is fiscally responsible, sensitive to the needs of others (including future generations), and protective of key ecological functions. The result of stewardship is the continuous improvement of environmental actions and undertakings by individuals, communities, the private sector, and governmental agencies.

Analyzing and managing complex ecological systems requires a variety of scientific disciplines and techniques, using an interdisciplinary approach. New techniques, such as low-impact development, green building practices, green street programs, and other sustainable design practices, are applicable in both rural and urban settings.

A regional systems approach considers planning issues in all their complexities and seeks to understand the interrelationships between various natural elements and systems to better address environmental issues in a holistic manner. Yet because gaps remain in scientific information and knowledge of all the facets of natural systems, it is necessary to make planning recommendations without the benefit of undisputed pure scientific knowledge. As new information becomes available, actions may need to be modified or adapted to meet intended objectives better. In this way, actions can be taken and refined as scientific knowledge is advanced.

VISION 2040 calls for coordinating environmental planning in the region and using the best information possible at all levels of environmental planning. It recognizes that a healthy environment translates into better human health and improved habitat for wildlife.

### ENVIRONMENTAL STEWARDSHIP GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will safeguard the natural environment by meeting the needs of the present without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs.

**MPP-En-1:** Develop regionwide environmental strategies, coordinating among local jurisdictions and countywide planning groups.

**MPP-En-2:** Use integrated and interdisciplinary approaches for environmental planning and assessment at regional, countywide and local levels.

**MPP-En-3:** Maintain and, where possible, improve air and water quality, soils, and natural systems to ensure the health and well-being of people, animals, and plants. Reduce the impacts of transportation on air and water quality, and climate change.

**MPP-En-4:** Ensure that all residents of the region, regardless of social or economic status, live in a healthy environment, with minimal exposure to pollution.

**MPP-En-5:** Locate development in a manner that minimizes impacts to natural features. Promote the use of innovative environmentally sensitive development practices, including design, materials, construction, and on-going maintenance.

**MPP-En-6:** Use the best information available at all levels of planning, especially scientific information, when establishing and implementing environmental standards established by any level of government.

**MPP-En-7:** Mitigate noise caused by traffic, industries, and other sources.

#### **Adaptive Management**

*Adaptive management is a structured, iterative process of decision-making when there is incomplete knowledge or a level of uncertainty. It relies on implementing actions to provide knowledge, as well as learning from outcomes, in order to adapt future actions to reduce uncertainty over time.*

#### **Landscape-Scale Ecological Processes**

*Landscape-scale ecological processes address maintenance and function in various subregional ecosystems. This approach gives a broad picture of ecosystems that considers both aquatic and land use processes and how they relate.*

## Earth and Habitat

The central Puget Sound region hosts a wide diversity of native wildlife and habitats. The loss and degradation of terrestrial habitat threatens the region's biodiversity. Fragmentation of habitat, especially in forests, is also a major threat to biodiversity and species sustainability. Connectivity of habitats is more of a concern as new development can jeopardize previously undisturbed areas. Invasive species are also an increasingly difficult problem in the central Puget Sound region. In some cases, invasive species proliferate in disturbed areas and prevent natural plant succession and regeneration.

Measures to reduce habitat fragmentation are important in urban and urbanizing areas, as well as in resource and rural areas. While much attention is given to preserving natural habitat, it is also important to address the quality of the region's urban ecosystems.

Critical areas, such as wetlands, floodplains, aquifer recharge areas, wildlife conservation areas, and certain geologic areas perform key functions that enhance both the natural and built environments, and also protect us from floods and other hazards. Critical areas exist both within and outside the urban growth area. The beneficial functions and values provided by critical areas include air, climate, and water quality protection and enhancement, fish and wildlife habitat, food chain support, flood storage, ground water recharge and discharge, erosion control, and recreation.

One of the first actions local jurisdictions completed under the Growth Management Act was to identify critical areas and develop regulations to protect these areas. However, ongoing assessment and coordination is needed. If the functions of critical areas are not properly protected now, attempting to restore them in the future is likely to be costly, if not impossible. While all designated critical areas must be protected, not all critical areas must be protected in the same manner or to the same degree.

Green places serve as the lungs for communities. Open space is a collective term for a whole range of green places, including natural and environmentally critical areas (such as steep slopes, wetlands, and aquifer recharge areas), parks and recreational areas, and natural resource lands (such as agriculture area and forests). Open space helps to conserve natural resources, protect environmentally critical areas, and preserve cultural and historic resources. Many of these lands are integrally connected and form an ecological system that has unique functions and attributes. They also provide aesthetic, scenic, and recreational benefits. Open spaces provide relief from and buffer urban development and help define urban form.

Climate change will have consequences for habitat and natural ecological processes. Impacts to the physical environment as a result of climate change will likely alter vegetation patterns, food sources for wildlife, snow pack, and runoff cycles.

### Pacific Northwest Ecoregions



#### Planning for Open Space

*The Growth Management Act also directs local governments to identify lands that are useful for public purposes and to identify open space corridors within the urban growth area that are useful for recreation, wildlife habitat, trails, and connection of critical areas (RCW 36.70A.160).*

VISION 2040 calls for preserving habitat and native vegetation, as well as identifying and enhancing the region's open spaces. VISION 2040 recognizes that further work is needed to develop a truly integrated open space and trail system that links urban, rural, and resource lands, provides amenities to all citizens, sustains environmental systems, and contributes to the region's visual identity.

## EARTH AND HABITAT GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will preserve the beauty and natural ecological processes of the Puget Sound basin through the conservation and enhancement of natural resources and the environment.

**MPP-En-8:** Identify, preserve, and enhance significant regional open space networks and linkages across jurisdictional boundaries.

**MPP-En-9:** Designate, protect, and enhance significant open spaces, natural resources, and critical areas through mechanisms, such as the review and comment of countywide planning policies and local plans and provisions.

**MPP-En-10:** Preserve and enhance habitat to prevent species from inclusion on the Endangered Species List and to accelerate their removal from the list.

**MPP-En-11:** Identify and protect wildlife corridors both inside and outside the urban growth area.

**MPP-En-12:** Preserve and restore native vegetation to protect habitat, especially where it contributes to the overall ecological function and where invasive species are a significant threat to native ecosystems.

## Water Quality

In many ways water is the lifeblood of the region. Dozens of rivers and tributaries flow from the nearby mountain ranges and drain into Puget Sound. Many of our communities were originally founded on the shores of Puget Sound — its fish nourished and sustained the region's native peoples and subsequent settlers, and have been a part of our economy.

Human activity and development have affected the water quality of our ponds, lakes, streams, and bays. Sediments from runoff, pollution from farming and roads, toxins from industry and automobiles, sewage outfalls, the spread of non-native plant species, and alteration of natural water courses and shorelines all contribute to their degradation. Impervious surfaces, including pavement and buildings, alter natural drainage and flow patterns, often contributing to flooding and other runoff problems if not properly designed. Dams to control floods or provide hydropower also affect stream flow and water quality.

According to the Washington State Department of Natural Resources, one-third of Puget Sound's shorelines have been modified. The pace of shoreline modifications has slowed in recent years due to shoreline and stormwater management regulations, as well as requirements related to salmon recovery. Aquatic environmental issues are not confined to bodies of water. Some of the most damaging human impacts to water quality and aquatic habitat begin far from the shoreline.

### *Tribes and Water Interests*

*Indian tribes have inhabited the watersheds of western Washington for generations. Their cultures have been based on harvesting fish, wildlife, and other natural resources in the region. The 1974 Boldt decision reaffirmed treaty-protected fishing rights and established tribes as co-managers of the resource. Tribes in the state created the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission to assist in conducting orderly and biologically sound fisheries. With the interconnectedness of all natural resources, tribal participation is necessary in nearly all aspects of natural resource management in the region.*

### *Port Operations and the Region's Waterways*

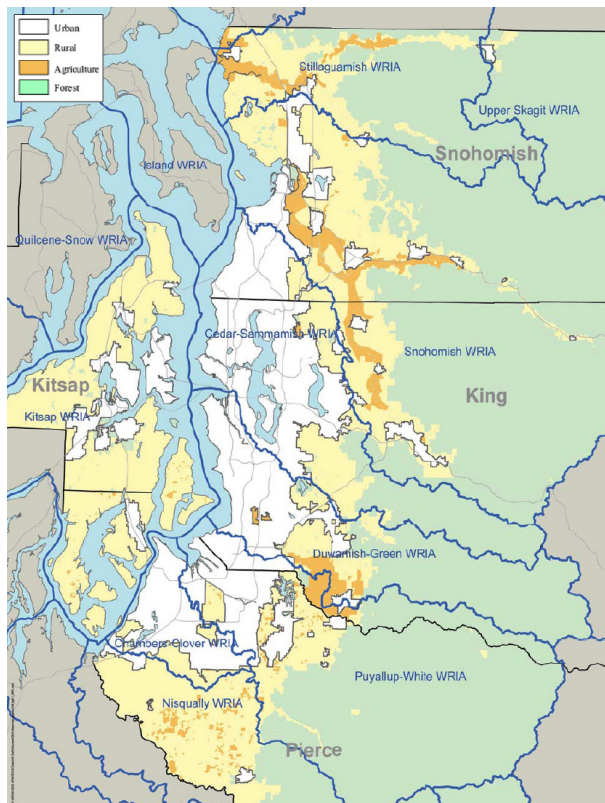
*The region's ports have several challenges, including protecting and enhancing water quality in the region while operating port facilities which serve the local economy as efficiently as possible. Seaport operations — from container and cruise terminals to recreational and commercial marinas — impact fish and other wildlife. The ports are committed to efforts to restore and maintain the chemical, physical, and biological integrity of the region's waters, including rivers, streams, lakes, wetlands, and marine waters.*

**Pollution in Puget Sound.** Puget Sound, the defining geographical feature of the region, is a vast and beautiful estuary; it is also a complex living ecosystem. However, there are signs that the ecosystem is in trouble. Fish and wildlife suffer from toxic contaminants. Water quality is affected by pollution from human and animal waste, including sewer outfalls. More than half the pollution in the Sound can now be traced to transportation-related activities, especially run-off from streets. In 2006, the region experienced the first-ever consumption advisory for Puget Sound Chinook salmon. Broad-scale actions are needed now if we are to leave a legacy of a healthy Puget Sound for future generations.

**Salmon Recovery and Watershed Planning.** In 1999, Chinook salmon were officially listed as a threatened species in the central Puget Sound region. Local citizens, tribes, technical experts, and policymakers are engaged in building a practical recovery plan endorsed by the people living and working in the watersheds of Puget Sound. This effort recognizes that the health of salmon is an indicator of the health of both human and natural communities. In addition to pollution, low in-stream flows in the region's waterways are also a limiting factor in the recovery of fish species listed under the Endangered Species Act.

The region now has a plan for salmon recovery in its watersheds that has been approved by local governments. The plan includes strategies to ensure sufficient flows in rivers and streams to maintain fish habitat — both inside and outside the urban growth area.

### Central Puget Sound Watersheds



### The Puget Sound Partnership

*The Puget Sound Partnership is a new state agency created in 2007 to lead the recovery of Puget Sound by 2020. The Partnership is designed to bring together citizens, governments, tribes, and businesses in that important mission. The Partnership's work includes the actions listed below.*

- Build a long-term recovery plan for Puget Sound
- Engage the public in development and implementation of the plan
- Develop and recommend an organizational framework for taking action
- Review and prioritize funding for the effort
- Recommend how broad-based scientific knowledge should be applied

### Watershed Resource Inventory Areas

*In 1998, the Legislature created a framework for developing local solutions to water-related issues on a watershed basis, which identified 62 major watershed basins statewide, referred to as Watershed Resource Inventory Areas (WRIAs). Planning for WRIAs includes watershed assessment, mapping, monitoring of conditions and trends in streams and lakes, water quality assessment, gathering other environmental information, and development of a watershed plan. The central Puget Sound region is related to 18 designated watersheds.*

*Within WRIAs, the basin steward serves as an advocate and contact person who shares information with members of the community, school groups, and nongovernmental organizations.*

**Water Quality and Quantity.** The region's water supply is affected both by water quality and water quantity. While water supply to serve the region's population and industries is discussed in more detail in the *Public Services* section, it is important to address here that issues of water quantity affect water quality and vice versa. A goal in the *Public Services* section commits to providing the region with high quality drinking water and includes policies that call for developing additional water supply sources to meet the region's long-term water needs. Water conservation and reuse are also addressed. As the region grows and develops, care must be taken to protect and properly manage our finite water resources. This is particularly pressing in light of likely changes in rainfall and snowmelt patterns as a result of climate change.

Water is of critical importance to sustain the natural environment and meet the region's growth needs. To those ends, VISION 2040 calls for maintaining and restoring the ecological functions of the region's waterways and estuaries. It calls for reducing water pollution and taking steps to address the impacts of climate change on the region's water quality and supply.

### WATER QUALITY GOALS AND POLICIES

**Goal:** The region will meet or do better than standards established for water quality. The quality of the water flowing out of the region — including Puget Sound — should be as good as or better than the quality of water entering the region.

**MPP-En-13:** Maintain natural hydrological functions within the region's ecosystems and watersheds and, where feasible, restore them to a more natural state.

**MPP-En-14:** Restore — where appropriate and possible — the region's freshwater and marine shorelines, watersheds, and estuaries to a natural condition for ecological function and value.

**MPP-En-15:** Reduce the use of pesticides and chemical fertilizers to the extent feasible and identify alternatives that minimize risks to human health and the environment.

**MPP-En-16:** Identify and address the impacts of climate change on the region's hydrological systems.

### Air Quality

Air quality is primarily a public health concern, but it also affects plant and animal life, as well as visibility. Air pollutants damage lung tissue and can lead to respiratory disease. Sensitive populations, including children, the elderly, and those with certain health conditions, are most at risk for developing respiratory illnesses. Health experts are increasingly concerned that air toxics may contribute to cancer and cardiovascular disease.

Historically, ground-level ozone, carbon monoxide, and fugitive dust have been the pollutants of primary concern in the central Puget Sound region. Progress has been made in curbing some of these conventional pollutants. However, today — and into the future — the region's most problematic pollutants are and will continue to be fine particles and toxic emissions, along with ground-level ozone. Greenhouse gases are also major air pollutants. Impaired visibility and climate change concerns compound the problems related to air quality. Dirty air obscures many of our most scenic vistas, such as views of the Olympic and Cascade mountain ranges, including Mount Rainier.

Development can affect air quality by changing the physical environment. For instance, it may replace vegetation with paved surfaces and buildings, concentrate uses and activities, and require the movement of people and goods between different areas. Removing natural vegetation for development changes the local ambient temperature, and results in more carbon in the atmosphere, thereby contributing to climate change. While a number of human activities

#### **Transportation and Air Quality**

*Areas near heavily traveled freeways experience significantly elevated levels of pollution, especially fine particulates. Such exposure contributes to asthma and other respiratory illnesses. The impacts of freeways on various communities and residents, including hospitals and schools in urban environments, need to be addressed when considering increasing road capacity.*

### Growth Management and Air Quality

The Puget Sound Clean Air Agency's emphasis on growth management planning as a means of improving air quality presents an opportunity to reinforce VISION 2040. Alternatives to single-occupancy vehicle travel, including carpooling, biking, telecommuting, and a wider range of transit options, are important ways to improve air quality.

In 2007, the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency adopted six policies for local jurisdictions to use in their growth management planning efforts.

- Implement air- and climate-friendly design, construction and operation
- Promote cleaner travel choices
- Reduce exposure to air pollution
- Install clean fireplaces and stoves in new home construction
- Support environmental justice
- Use the State Environmental Policy Act as a tool and safety net

— including indoor and outdoor burning, construction dust, and lawn care — affect air quality, motor vehicles are by far the largest source of air pollution in the region.

Development that accommodates walking, biking, and transit use, such as in centers and compact, mixed-use communities, can have air quality and climate benefits. Well-designed communities with good access and mobility provide alternatives to driving alone, which in turn reduce emissions.

VISION 2040 calls for improving air quality and reducing airborne pollutants and emissions.

### AIR QUALITY GOAL AND POLICIES

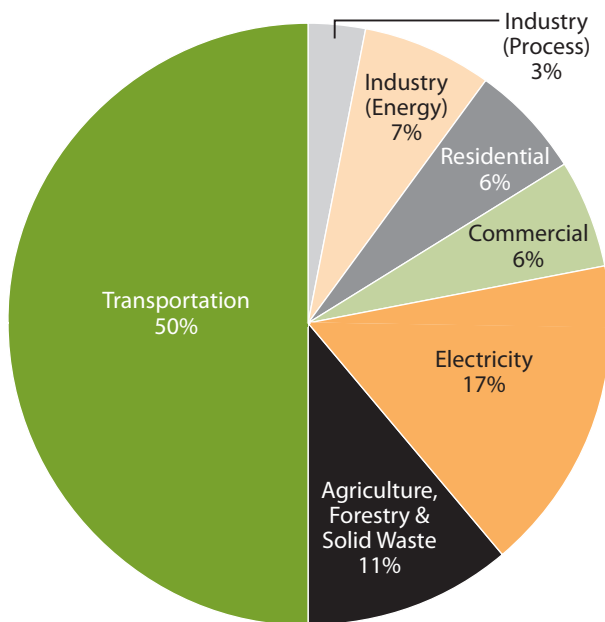
**Goal:** The overall quality of the region's air will be better than it is today.

**MPP-En-17:** Maintain or do better than existing standards for carbon monoxide, ozone, and particulates.

**MPP-En-18:** Reduce levels for air toxics, fine particulates, and greenhouse gases.

**MPP-En-19:** Continue efforts to reduce pollutants from transportation activities, including through the use of cleaner fuels and vehicles and increasing alternatives to driving alone, as well as design and land use.

### Sources of Greenhouse Gas Emissions in the Central Puget Sound Region



Source: Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, 2000

### Climate Change

Climate change has the potential to affect almost every other issue identified in VISION 2040. Though a global issue, local governments can play an important role in reducing its impacts. According to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, for every gallon of gasoline used, automobiles release roughly 20 pounds of carbon dioxide, one of the primary greenhouse gases contributing to climate change. In the central Puget Sound region, cars and trucks contribute more greenhouse gas emissions than any other source. Burning conventional diesel and gasoline in our motor vehicles and equipment is responsible for the bulk of our greenhouse gases and other air toxics. Choosing cleaner alternatives and retrofitting older machinery to be less-polluting are affordable ways to protect our air.

VISION 2040 calls for reducing our contribution to greenhouse gas emissions and preparing for the anticipated impacts of climate change. Agencies at all levels of government should seek ways to both mitigate and adapt

to climate change. This includes efforts to maximize energy efficiency and increase renewable energy, reduce greenhouse gas emissions of new vehicles, reduce motor vehicle miles traveled, improve the convenience and safety of nonpolluting transportation modes such as bicycling and walking, protect the natural landscape and vegetation, and increase recycling and reduce waste.

### **CLIMATE CHANGE GOAL AND POLICIES**

**Goal:** The region will reduce its overall production of harmful elements that contribute to climate change.

**MPP-En-20:** Address the central Puget Sound region's contribution to climate change by, at a minimum, committing to comply with state initiatives and directives regarding climate change and the reduction of greenhouse gases. Jurisdictions and agencies should work to include an analysis of climate change impacts when conducting an environmental review process under the State Environmental Policy Act.

**MPP-En-21:** Reduce the rate of energy use per capita, both in building use and in transportation activities.

**MPP-En-22:** Pursue the development of energy management technology as part of meeting the region's energy needs.

**MPP-En-23:** Reduce greenhouse gases by expanding the use of conservation and alternative energy sources and by reducing vehicle miles traveled by increasing alternatives to driving alone.

**MPP-En-24:** Take positive actions to reduce carbons, such as increasing the number of trees in urban portions of the region.

**MPP-En-25:** Anticipate and address the impacts of climate change on regional water sources.

### **Initiatives in Washington to Address Climate Change**

*In 2007 both the Governor and the Legislature took actions to address climate change. While using different benchmark reference points, the two initiatives are compatible in their targets.*

### **Washington Climate Change Challenge**

*In February 2007, the Governor established greenhouse gas emission targets, calling for the state to reduce emissions to 1990 levels by 2020, 25 percent below 1990 levels by 2035, and 50 percent below 1990 levels by 2050 — a 70 percent reduction below normal projections. The order further directs state agencies to move forward with the Challenge, a process designed to consider the full range of policy options that may be enacted to achieve the state's targets. The Challenge also calls for the full implementation of existing Washington laws for emission standards, building efficiency standards, and biofuel and renewable energy initiatives.*

### **Legislative Action**

*The Washington Legislature has established specific greenhouse gas emission targets to address climate change. By January 1, 2020, the annual statewide greenhouse gas emission levels must be no greater than the emission levels that occurred in 1990. By January 1, 2035, the annual statewide greenhouse gas emission levels must be 25 percent below the levels in 1990. By 2050 the levels must be 50 percent below 1990 levels. (RCW 80.80.020)*

*This legislation also affirms the Governor's targets for reducing greenhouse gases by reducing energy imports and increasing energy jobs. It also sets emissions performance standards for major new power plants or power purchases. The law authorizes additional financial incentives for electric utilities to invest in energy conservation. Finally, it authorizes electric utilities and counties to continue to invest in reducing their contributions to climate change.*

### **Cities and Counties**

*Individual cities and counties in the region have already taken steps to address climate change by establishing action plans, including both King County and Seattle. Seattle, Bremerton, Everett, Tacoma, and more than a dozen other cities across the region have signed on to the U.S. Mayors Climate Protection Agreement.*

### **VISION 2040 and Climate Change**

*Climate change is an issue that affects all facets of VISION 2040 — the natural environment, the built environment, the economy, transportation, and other infrastructure and services. With this recognition, VISION 2040 provides guidance in all policy sections of the plan for reducing air pollution and protecting the climate.*

*While the entire set of multicounty planning policies has been crafted to be integrated and mutually supportive, the following list identifies those policies that address climate change, the reduction of greenhouse gas emissions, or related environmental impacts.*

<i>En- 3</i>	<i>En-22</i>	<i>T-6</i>
<i>En-16</i>	<i>En-23</i>	<i>T-22</i>
<i>En-17</i>	<i>En-24</i>	<i>T-23</i>
<i>En-18</i>	<i>En-25</i>	<i>T-25</i>
<i>En-19</i>	<i>DP-45</i>	<i>PS-1</i>
<i>En-20</i>	<i>Ec-15</i>	<i>PS-12</i>
<i>En-21</i>	<i>T-5</i>	<i>PS-13</i>

*In addition, VISION 2040 includes an implementation action calling for the development of a regional climate change action plan (see En-Action-7). Other actions that contribute to protecting the climate and reducing emissions include:*

- En-Action-6*
- DP-Action-9*
- T-Action-14*

*Finally, VISION 2040 includes monitoring provisions in the Implementation section that call for measuring emissions of greenhouse gases and tracking local jurisdictions' programs and efforts to address climate change (En-Measure-5, En-Measure-6).*

## VISION 2040 ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

The following VISION 2040 actions have been developed to help implement the environment policies. Detailed information on specific measures that will be used to monitor implementation and performance is contained in *Part IV: Implementation*.

### REGIONAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

#### Regional Environmental Planning: En-Action-1

The Puget Sound Regional Council, in particular the Growth Management Policy Board, will determine its ongoing role in regional environmental planning and coordination, including sustainable development and addressing the impacts of climate change.

- Short-term / MPP-En-1, 2
- Results and Products: *report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board, best practices toolkit or other resources to provide guidance for addressing environmental provisions in VISION 2040*

#### Regional Green Space Strategy: En-Action-2

The Puget Sound Regional Council, its member jurisdictions, open-space agencies, and interest groups shall develop a regional green space strategy. (Address regional trail development in such a strategy.)

- Mid-term / MPP-En-8, 9
- Results and Products: *Regional Green Space Strategy*

#### Critical Areas Coordination: En-Action-3

The Puget Sound Regional Council will review and report on efforts between counties and cities to coordinate the designation and protection of critical areas.

- Mid-term / MPP-En-2, 6
- Results and Products: *report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and countywide coordination groups*

#### Water Quality: En-Action-4

The Puget Sound Regional Council will determine its role in addressing regional water quality issues.

- Mid-term / MPP-En-13 through 16, MPP-PS-17 through 20
- Results and Products: *report and recommendations to Growth Management Policy Board and Executive Board*
- See also action for counties and cities (below), as well as action on water quantity in the Public Services section

#### Estuary Restoration: En-Action-5

The Puget Sound Regional Council will work with its member jurisdictions and other relevant agencies to develop a best practices toolkit for estuary restoration and redevelopment along urban waterways.

- Mid-term / MPP-En 14
- Results and Products: *best practices toolkit for local jurisdictions*

#### Air Quality: En-Action-6

The Puget Sound Regional Council and its member jurisdictions will work with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency to identify steps to improve air quality beyond the minimum standards.

- Mid-term / MPP-En-17 through 19
- Results and Products: *air quality guide with identified steps*

#### Climate Change Action Plan: En-Action-7

The Puget Sound Regional Council and its member organizations will work with the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency, state agencies, and other environmental professionals to prepare an action plan containing regional and local provisions. The plan should investigate ways to: (a) address climate change in accordance with the Governor's 2007 Climate Change initiative and state legislation on greenhouse gas emissions reduction (RCW 80.80.020), (b) reduce greenhouse gas emissions, and (c) take specific mitigation steps to address climate change impacts. The plan should also address establishing a regional climate change benchmark program.

- Short-term / MPP-En-20 through 25
- Results and Products: *action plan for climate change, climate change benchmark program*

## COUNTY-LEVEL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

### Critical Areas Coordination: En-Action-8

Counties and cities will coordinate their work to designate and protect critical areas to make identifying and regulating environmentally sensitive areas more consistent.

- Short-term / MPP-En-2, 5, 6
- Results and Products: *Revised Countywide Planning Policies and/or other coordinated plans, regional report and recommendations on progress and outcomes*

### Habitat Assessment: En-Action-9

Counties and cities shall develop common methodologies for assessing the habitat needs of critical and sensitive species.

- Short-term / MPP-En-10 through 12
- Results and Products: *common methodology*

### Water Quality Standards and Targets: En-Action-10

Counties and cities, together with water providers, will develop standards and targets to monitor the region's waterways.

- Mid-term / MPP-En-14, 15, MPP-PS-17 through 20
- Results and Products: *local standards and targets*

## LOCAL ENVIRONMENTAL ACTIONS

### Environmental Planning: En-Action-11

Local jurisdictions, with assistance from the Puget Sound Regional Council, will expand their efforts to conduct environmental planning, specifically to incorporate a more comprehensive systems approach to ecological considerations. The Regional Council will:

- Assist with information on system approaches, such as landscape-scale analysis and adaptive management principles
- Provide guidance on how to incorporate regionwide environmental planning initiatives — such as the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) process — into local comprehensive plans
- Develop a system of map overlays to enhance a systems approach to environmental planning

- Mid-term / MPP-En-2
- Results and Products: *expanded ecological assessment in the preparation of local plans*