



MOVE AHEAD WASHINGTON STORMWATER RETROFIT

2024 Legislative Report

WSDOT Environmental Services Office
September 24, 2024

[Title VI](#) Notice to Public

It is the Washington State Department of Transportation's (WSDOT) policy to assure that no person shall, on the grounds of race, color, national origin or sex, as provided by Title VI of the Civil Rights Act of 1964, be excluded from participation in, be denied the benefits of, or be otherwise discriminated against under any of its federally funded programs and activities. Any person who believes his/her Title VI protection has been violated, may file a complaint with WSDOT's Office of Equal Opportunity (OEO). For additional information regarding Title VI complaint procedures and/or information regarding our non-discrimination obligations, please contact OEO's Title VI Coordinator at (360) 705-7090.

[Americans with Disabilities Act \(ADA\)](#) Information

This material can be made available in an alternate format by emailing the Office of Equal Opportunity at wsdotada@wsdot.wa.gov or by calling toll free, 855-362-4ADA(4232). Persons who are deaf or hard of hearing may make a request by calling the Washington State Relay at 711.

Table of Contents

Introduction	1
Move Ahead Washington stormwater retrofit proviso	1
Move Ahead Washington proviso reporting.....	1
Second year program accomplishments	2
Finalize WSDOT’s Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map	3
Outreach & Survey123 success	4
Ranked needs list for project scoping	5
Updated Stormwater Retrofit Management Plan	6
Partnership updates.....	7
Ongoing workgroup participation.....	9
Science, monitoring, and research.....	9
Stormwater features inventory.....	11
Green stormwater infrastructure workforce development	11
Project delivery and funding.....	13
Project delivery 2023/2025.....	13
Anticipated funding needs	14
Benefits of immediate funding	14
Funding for stormwater features inventory and maintenance	14
Conclusion.....	15

Figures

Figure 1. Screenshot of WSDOT’s Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map.....	3
Figure 2. Survey123 participation and partnership interest.	4
Figure 3. 122 Survey123 recommended priority stormwater retrofit locations.....	5
Figure 4. 2024 Ranked needs stormwater retrofit project locations for scoping.	6
Figure 5. Current funding versus optimal delivery.	14

Tables

Table 1. Partnership highlights	7
Table 2. GSI workforce development accomplishments of the past year	12

Acronyms and Abbreviations

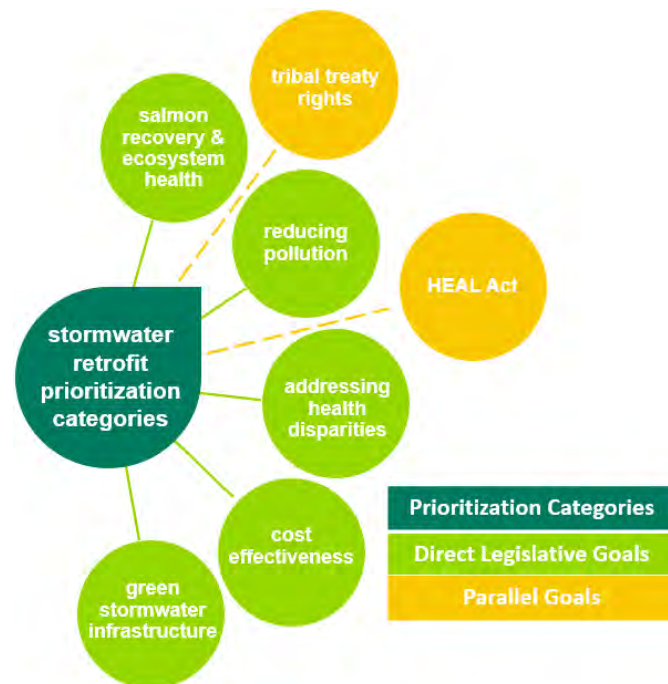
BMP	best management practices
DOC	Department of Corrections
DOT	Department of Transportation
Ecology	Washington State Department of Ecology
EPA	Environmental Protection Agency
FHWA	Federal Highway Administration
GIS	geographic information system
GSI	green stormwater infrastructure
HEAL	Healthy Environment for All Act
MAW	Move Ahead Washington
NGOs	non-governmental organizations
RFI	request for information
SPP	Sustainability in Prisons Project
TAPE	Technology Assessment Protocol – Ecology
WRIA	Water Resource Inventory Areas
WSDOT	Washington State Department of Transportation

Introduction

Vehicles traveling on roadways are a major source of pollution. Today, there is a renewed urgency to address the toxic effects of stormwater on the environment and human health with the discovery of 6PPD-quinone, a tire leachate which is lethal to coho salmon and harmful to other fish. Additionally, a federal, state, local agency, and tribal focus on improving water quality and ecosystem health in Washington adds to the need for action. The Washington State Department of Transportation (WSDOT) recognizes that the state highway transportation system contributes to stormwater impacts and is committed to avoiding, minimizing, and mitigating the harmful effects of stormwater. Stormwater retrofits are a primary mitigation measure used by WSDOT and other stormwater managers to improve water quality, and they include best management practices for source control, reducing and eliminating pollutants through treatment, and managing flows.

Move Ahead Washington stormwater retrofit proviso

The 2022 Washington State Legislature, through [Substitute Senate Bill 5975 Section 303 \(3\)](#), authorized \$500 million over 16 years beginning in 2023 for WSDOT stormwater retrofits as part of the Move Ahead Washington (MAW) funding package, with an additional \$15 million added in 2023, to enhance stormwater treatment from existing roads and infrastructure with an emphasis on green infrastructure retrofits. The Legislature directed WSDOT to prioritize projects that focus on benefits to salmon recovery and ecosystem health, reducing pollution, addressing health disparities, and cost effectiveness. Of the stormwater retrofit funding, the Legislature provided \$6 million for the Urban Stormwater Partnership - I-5 Ship-Canal Bridge Pilot (Seattle). Move Ahead Washington goals dovetail with the state’s Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act and support tribal treaty rights.



Move Ahead Washington proviso reporting

This legislation directs WSDOT to submit progress reports on its efforts to reduce the toxicity of stormwater runoff from existing infrastructure, recommendations for addressing barriers to innovative solutions, and anticipated demand for funding each biennium. A [year one report](#)

submitted in September 2023 communicated year one program accomplishments and funding needs. This is a year two, 2024 report. It is the intent of the WSDOT Environmental Services Office to submit biennial reports in even years beginning with this 2024 report through the 16-year program.

Second year program accomplishments

In the year since submission of the 2023 year one report, WSDOT has continued to position itself to deliver on the MAW stormwater retrofit investments to meet the legislative goals when funds are directed to the program in the following ways, with each topic discussed in further detail in the subsequent pages:

- **finalizing WSDOT's [Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map](#)** (web map) *to meet legislative priorities for MAW funding, include emerging science on 6PPD-quinone and other pollutants, and incorporate information received from feedback and outreach efforts*
- **conducting outreach, collaborating and building trust and transparency** *with federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, scientists, interest groups, and other parties who have a vested interest in WSDOT's success with delivering the MAW-funded stormwater retrofit program*
by incorporating feedback into both the web map and procedure updates, through outreach events and WSDOT's [Survey123](#) which solicits top priority locations from outside entities
- **developing a robust ranked needs list of highway segments for project scoping** *based on the new web map which will be annually updated as projects are funded and delivered*
- **drafting supporting documentation and procedures** *to accompany the web map, prioritization, and ranked needs process in an updated Stormwater Retrofit Management Plan*
- **inviting partnerships** *with public and non-governmental organizations (NGOs) and tribes as part of our work to leverage investments, maximize benefits, identify and address barriers, and streamline related processes*
- **participating in multiple science and planning workgroups** *regarding 6PPD-quinone, science, monitoring, prioritization, policy, and planning*
- **advancing science, monitoring, and research projects** *through WSDOT programs and partnerships*
- **accelerating stormwater features inventory** *through added capacity of consultant crews*
- **planning green stormwater infrastructure workforce development** *for maintenance and adaptive management of the many new assets that will be added to the state transportation system through MAW*

Finalize WSDOT's Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map

Over the past year WSDOT rolled out a [Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map](#) for review and collaboration (Figure 1). The web map is a GIS, science-based, equitable planning tool, that includes a watershed approach. It will be used by WSDOT to develop annual project scoping lists for stormwater retrofit projects that meet the goals of MAW and deliver high value stormwater retrofit projects across the state.

WSDOT engaged federal and state agencies, tribes, counties, cities, researchers, and others through significant outreach and coordination to garner important feedback to improve the web map with varied perspectives and expertise. This valuable input incorporated into the web map makes it a robust tool built with collaboration and transparency. This engagement process helped build trust and rapport with others who share an interest in improving the state's water quality and habitats, contributing to salmon and orca recovery, accomplishing HEAL Act goals, and honoring tribal treaty rights.

The web map is intended to evolve over time to meet current understanding of the best methods to identify high priority locations to mitigate the harmful effects of stormwater. It will be updated with best available science and continual improvement principals. The web map is ready for use and has been used to establish an initial ranked needs list of project locations for scoping based on the MAW goals, with particular focus on salmon recovery, tribal priorities, and environmental justice.

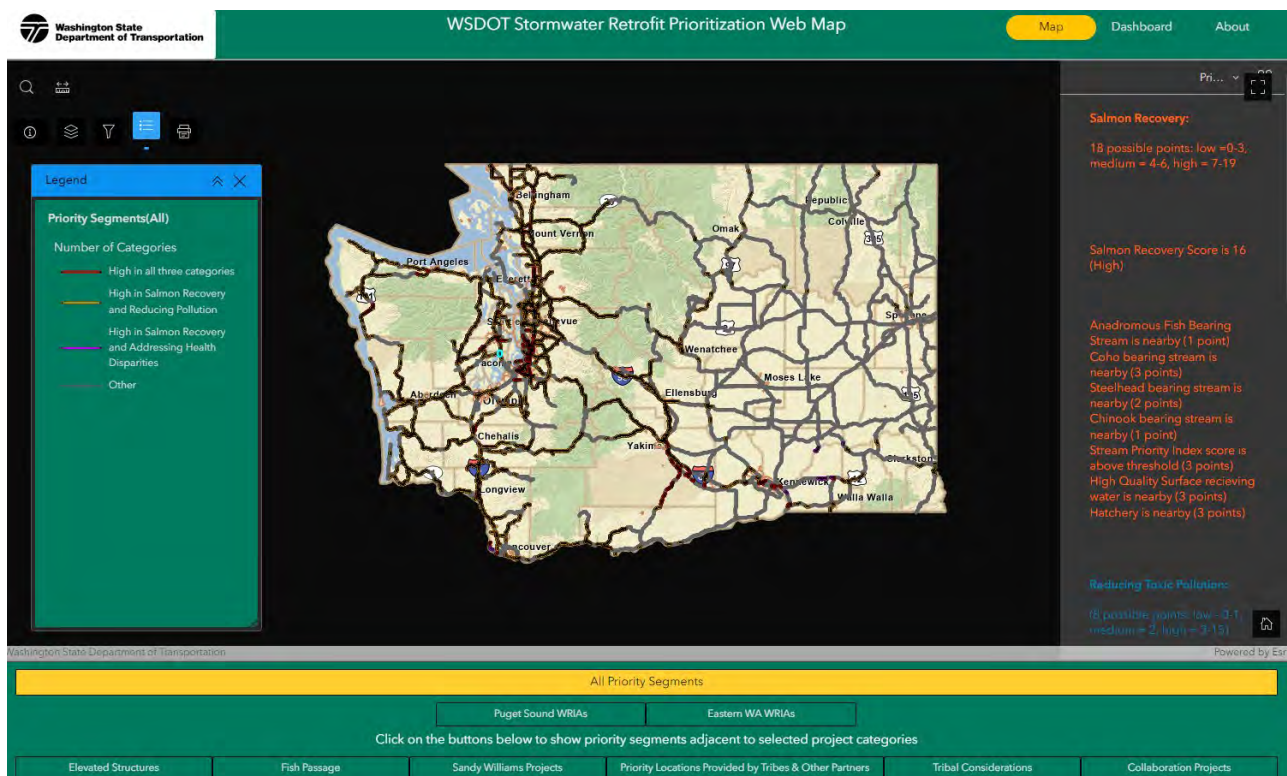


Figure 1. Screenshot of WSDOT's Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map

Outreach & Survey123 success

WSDOT recognizes and values collaboration, engagement, diversity, equity, and inclusion. WSDOT participated in over 70 outreach and engagement events, primarily meetings and webinars, with key WSDOT staff, federal, state, and local agencies, tribes, scientists and researchers, NGOs, and other interested parties from January 2023 through July 2024. The time invested in this effort has yielded high value outcomes in developing and improving the [Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map](#) which informs WSDOT on where to look to invest in priority stormwater retrofit projects across the state.

Included in the prioritization web map is a dataset created through WSDOT outreach efforts via a [Survey123](#) which solicits top priority locations from tribes, local agencies, and other interested parties. The survey invites partners to inform WSDOT of their top priority locations based on elements such as their own watershed planning, species and habitat recovery goals, cultural priorities, environmental justice planning, and science and data insights. In the first year of the survey, from May 2023 through July 2024, 122 locations were provided by 48 entities, including 11 tribes, with partnership interest indicated at 96% of the suggested locations (Figures 2 and 3).



Figure 2. Survey123 participation and partnership interest.

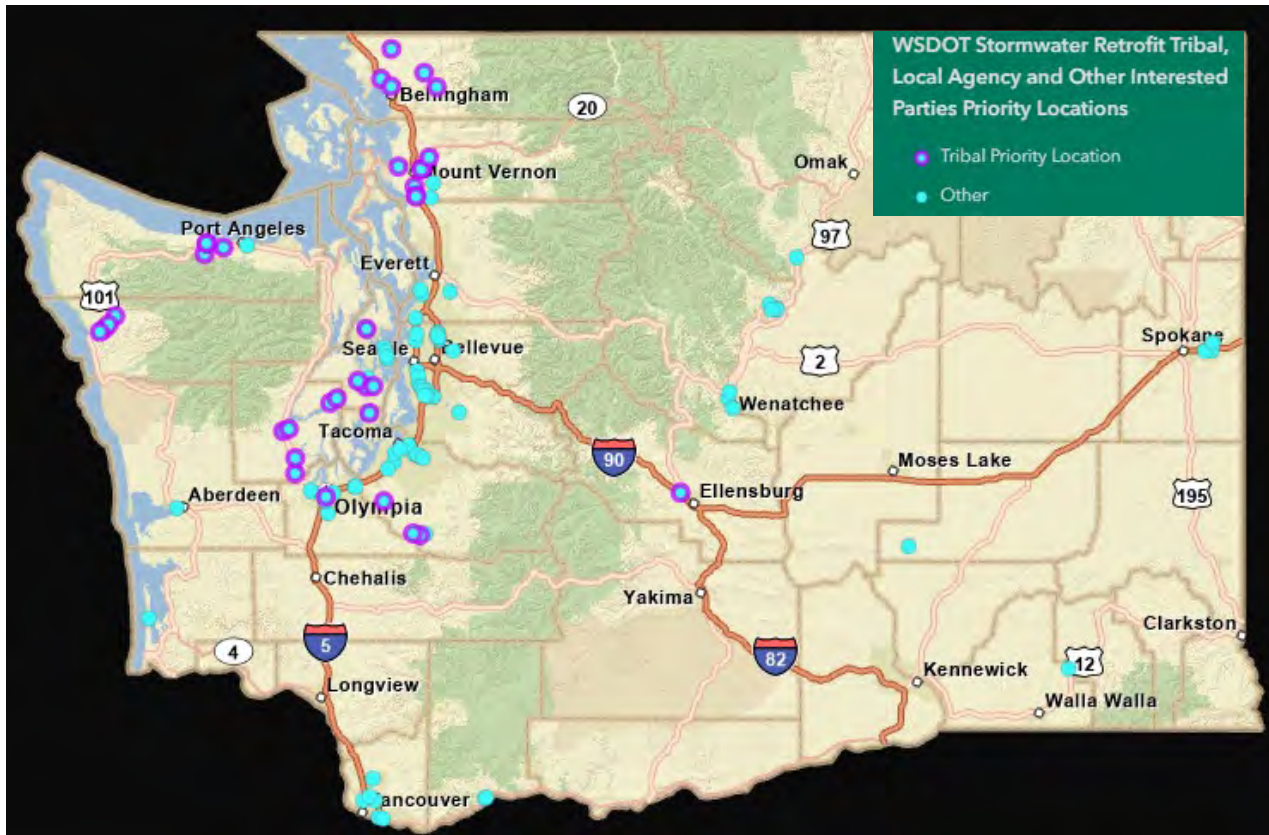


Figure 3. 122 Survey123 recommended priority stormwater retrofit locations.

The survey remains open for the foreseeable future as a valuable tool for continued community engagement with data evaluated annually and used to inform annual updates to the ranked needs list for project scoping. The spirit of collaboration and transparency offered with the web map development, including the Survey123, demonstrates WSDOT’s earnest effort for inclusion and quality in developing an equitable, science-based planning tool for stormwater retrofit prioritization by incorporating and valuing external expertise.

The nature of this subject, with emerging science informing planning and management, means continual improvement is inherent, and partnering will produce better outcomes. Outreach is ongoing and collaboration will be continual throughout the life of MAW.

Ranked needs list for project scoping

In July 2024, WSDOT updated its annual ranked needs list of prioritized stormwater retrofit locations for project scoping and delivery using the new web map that incorporates MAW goals (Figure 4). The list includes 41 locations, for a total of 282 highway miles, spanning 24 different [Water Resource Inventory Areas](#) (WRIAs), across four WSDOT operating regions. Of these, 145 highway miles are related to tribal recommended Survey123 locations, recommended by 11 tribes, and 172 highway miles occur in areas with identified health disparities (high [Washington Environmental Health Disparities Map](#) scores and/or tribal-provided Survey123 locations).

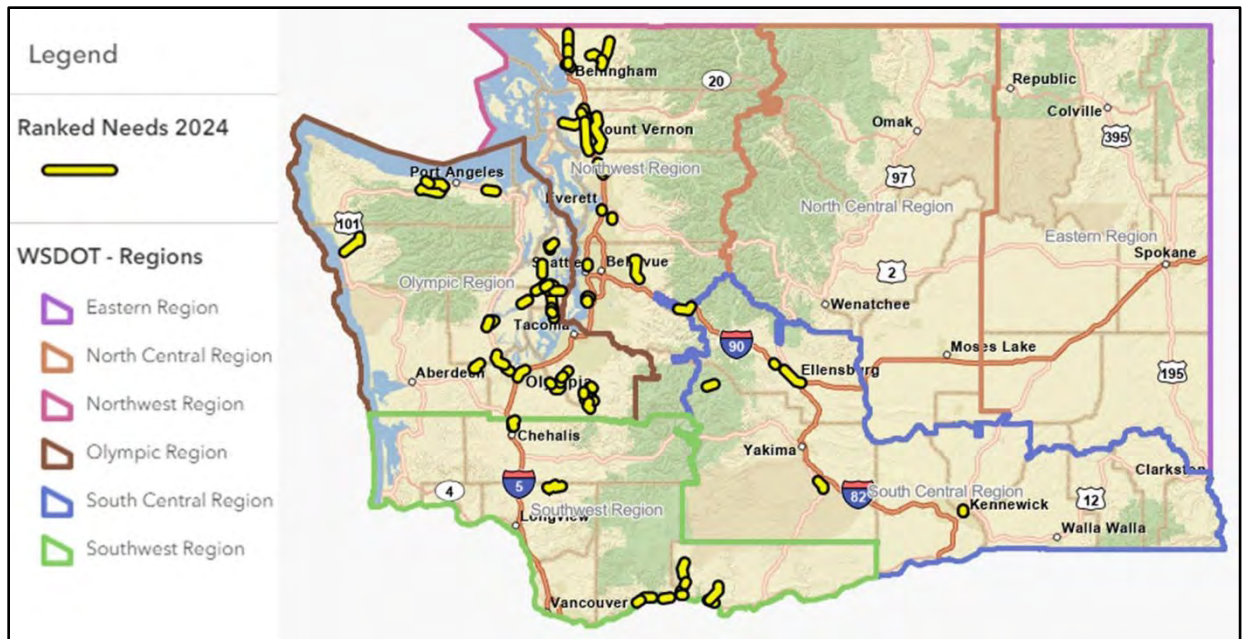


Figure 4. 2024 Ranked needs stormwater retrofit project locations for scoping.

The 41 locations indicated for stormwater retrofit project scoping and delivery on the ranked needs list are based on the following priorities in the order listed:

1. Carry overs from pre-MAW ranked needs list – many of these locations align with high priority segments on the new web map and each has undergone some level of effort for scoping, pre-design, or design that should be carried forward, so work is not lost
2. Tribal priorities provided through the Survey123
3. [Puget Sound Stormwater and Transportation Charter Group](#) low risk/high reward sites
4. [Sandy Williams Connecting Communities Program](#) year one projects
5. [Columbia River Cold Water Refuges](#) - these are tribal priorities and many are also priority chinook stocks for chinook/southern resident killer whale recovery (many with coho presence as well) as documented here: [Southern Resident Killer Whale Priority Chinook Stocks Report](#)
6. Some locations near rivers with very high salmon scores (13 or greater on the web map) and indicated as [Southern Resident Killer Whale Priority Chinook Stocks](#)

The ranked needs list will be updated annually as funding becomes available and stormwater retrofit projects are built to inform subsequent annual project scoping efforts.

Updated Stormwater Retrofit Management Plan

WSDOT has begun updating its Stormwater Retrofit Management Plan to reflect MAW goals, the new web map prioritization, and the ranked needs project scoping process. The draft will be released to WSDOT employees to use in tandem with the web map, to solicit input, particularly on documenting region processes on stormwater retrofit project delivery, and for clarity and completeness in the web map user guide sections of the plan. A final plan will be published after about a year of internal WSDOT user testing and feedback.

Partnership updates

Partnership is key to tackling the vast stormwater problem that goes beyond the state transportation system. Actively pursuing partnerships as part of WSDOT's Stormwater Retrofit Program is a relatively new aspiration that has the potential to maximize benefits and investments. WSDOT is working to build and strengthen relationships with a variety of partners to develop processes, support innovation, identify barriers, and work towards solutions.

Several partnerships are underway and are in various stages of development (Table 1).

Opportunities for growth to encourage and leverage partnerships:

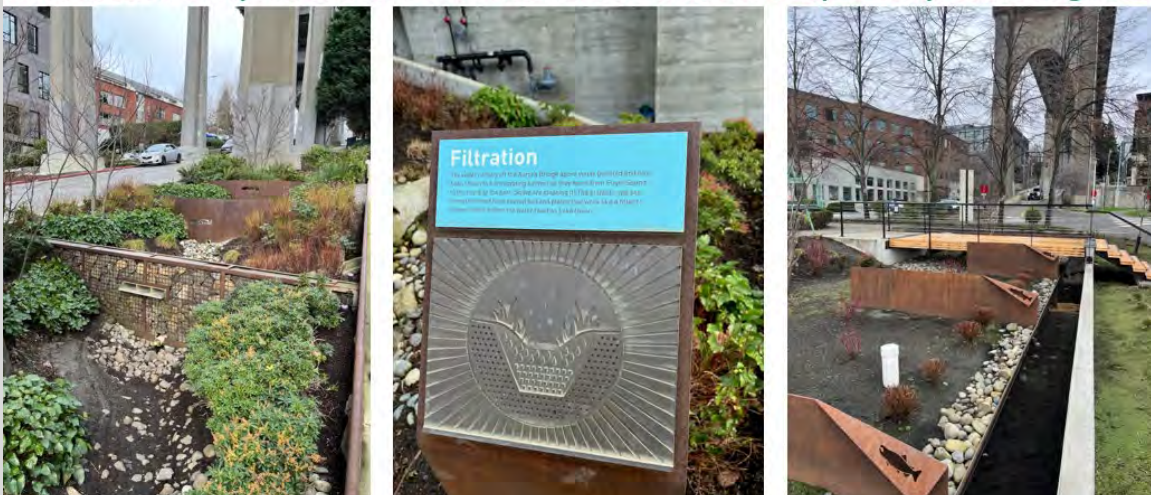
- Flexible funding in the transportation budget to financially position WSDOT to maximize partnership opportunities.
- Document a clear pathway supporting partnerships interested in incorporating community co-benefits with stormwater retrofits such as art, parklike features, and educational elements.
- Develop templates, examples, checklists to expedite partnership implementation, including for contracts and leases.

Table 1. Partnership highlights

Urban Stormwater Partnership - I-5 Ship-Canal Bridge Pilot (Seattle) – a partnership to demonstrate the potential for multijurisdictional stormwater facilities in the Puget Sound Basin, to treat high volumes of stormwater for 6PPD-quinone and other pollutants, and for WSDOT stormwater retrofits to integrate with community needs in an urban area. The project also offers research opportunities for 6PPD-quinone.

Project Update: The project team finalized a Consultant Scope of Work in August 2024, the result of which will provide research, survey, planning, predesign engineering, and communications support for the development of a preliminary stormwater treatment plan and community outreach and engagement plan. Construction is anticipated to begin summer of 2027, allowing one year for pre-design and two years to develop the contract.

While the SR 99/Troll Avenue Bridge stormwater treatment facility in Seattle, pictured here, is not a WSDOT project, it offers an example of what community co-benefits and stormwater partnerships can look like and inspiration for the future Urban Stormwater Partnership - I-5 Ship-Canal Bridge Pilot



Example of stormwater treatment partnership with community co-benefits

Stewardship Partners Adopt-a-down spout – test ability of small scale, inexpensive green stormwater infrastructure bioretention boxes to treat polluted stormwater coming off the I-5 Ship Canal Bridge in Seattle. Partnership with WSDOT, The Nature Conservancy, and Stewardship Partners.

*Note: this project is independent from the Urban Stormwater Partnership - I-5 Ship-Canal Bridge Pilot (Seattle) described above, despite both projects being located under the I-5 Ship Canal Bridge.

Project Update: preliminary results produced favorable results for the function of this stormwater treatment method at significantly reducing levels of 6PPD-quinone, metals, inorganics, oil and bacteria. The Nature Conservancy is working on obtaining grant funding from Department of Commerce and Stewardship Partners secured a grant through Department of Ecology's (Ecology), National Estuary Program [Stormwater Strategic Initiative Lead](#) to expand the project to two additional bridge drains in the Puget Sound Basin with the intent of pursuing Ecology's stormwater treatment approval process known as TAPE ([Technology Assessment Protocol - Ecology](#)).



Adopt-a-downspout stormwater treatment test project.

Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS) stormwater treatment with community co-benefits – exploring partnership to determine feasibility of adding stormwater treatment under an on-ramp to I-5 in the Georgetown neighborhood of Seattle, while opening the space to community co-benefits such as park-like features, educational signage, and community art.

Project Update: WSDOT is working with Attorney's General for council on implementation barriers, solutions, and exploration of lease agreements and contracts. ECOSS has submitted two sets of conceptual drawings for project proposal. Next step is for ECOSS to submit a Business Plan to WSDOT outlining roles, responsibilities, financial assurances, and other elements.

Science and Research - WSDOT is partnering with others on science and research. See the Science, monitoring, and research section below for details.

Partnerships are critical to accomplishing this work, with the potential to span many different jurisdictions and entities and align and maximize our collective efforts to improve water quality, ecosystems, and human health. WSDOT will continue putting effort into developing partnerships and eliminating barriers.

Ongoing workgroup participation

Washington continues to be a leader in working to address contaminants of emerging concern including the toxic chemical 6PPD-quinone with sources from tires, recycled rubber, and other rubber products. WSDOT regularly works with other Washington State agencies including Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, Natural Resources, and Health, the Governor’s Salmon Recovery Office, and others working on this issue including federal and local governments, tribes, and NGOs. Together we are working towards solutions to address both source control and stormwater treatment and flow control, pooling resources and expertise where possible, sharing and advancing science, and identifying research gaps. WSDOT also has regular internal coordination to align stormwater retrofit planning and project delivery with environmental justice requirements under the HEAL Act and National Environmental Protection Act, agency policies for tribal outreach and consultation, and opportunities to dovetail work with WSDOT [Fish Passage](#), [Chronic Environmental Deficiencies](#), [Active Transportation](#) and [Complete Streets](#) projects.

Below is a list of regular workgroups and meetings WSDOT participates in regarding stormwater retrofit and emerging contaminants of concern.

- Washington State Interagency 6PPD Forum
- [6PPD Action Plan](#) Advisory Committee
- [Puget Sound Stormwater and Transportation Charter Group](#)
- 6PPD-quinone West Coast State DOTs/DEPs MS4s Meeting
- [Stormwater Work Group](#) 6PPD Subgroup Meeting
- [Interstate Technology and Regulatory Council Tire Anti-Degradants \(6PPD\) Team](#)

Science, monitoring, and research

Scientific research allows for informed decisions on how to best manage stormwater, mitigate its harmful effects, and focus limited resources on cost-effective solutions. There is an ongoing need for more research, particularly around 6PPD-quinone and how it affects the environment and human health and effective treatment methods. WSDOT is committed to advancing stormwater science so that informed and efficient planning will result in cost-effective, high functioning stormwater treatment across Washington. WSDOT has a stormwater monitoring and research program to advance stormwater science and continually develop more effective treatment methods. WSDOT also partners with others and contributes funds to relevant research. As the science advances, so too will the effectiveness of our planning and implementation for addressing the problem.

Recent advancements include the release of a [draft test method for 6PPD-quinone water testing](#) in January 2024 by the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA). However, lab capacity for testing 6PPD-quinone remains limited both regionally and nationwide. In May 2024 the EPA also released [acute aquatic life screening values for 6PPD-quinone and 6PPD in freshwater](#). Best available science is quickly evolving as illustrated with these examples.

Reference the [year one 2023 Legislative Report](#) Research section for a list of research WSDOT is involved with, much of which is ongoing, with some studies recently complete.

New research and existing research highlights to advance science and understanding around stormwater management and 6PPD-quinone for this year include:

Proposed Stormwater Treatment Testing Greenhouse (internal WSDOT)

WSDOT is proposing a Stormwater Treatment Testing Greenhouse which will test novel stormwater treatment technologies, with a goal of informing larger stormwater best management practices (BMP) field studies. Conducting pre-BMP research at this scale allows faster determination of useful mixes/designs, overwhelmingly lower expenses, and greater feasibility (i.e. working out “bugs” at a small scale before constructing ~100 foot bioswales to test a novel media). The greenhouse will deploy a variety of technologies, such as column testing, jar/suspension tests, micro-swales, planter boxes, and others.

Proposed New Swale Stormwater Treatment Test Facility (internal WSDOT)

WSDOT is proposing a new research stormwater treatment test facility south of Olympia on I-5, which would include several swales to test effectiveness of various media and soil mixes for the ability to treat stormwater pollutants including 6PPD-quinone.

Box of Rain/Adopt-a-Downspout (partnership)

In partnership with The Nature Conservancy and Stewardship Partners, WSDOT advanced research to treat polluted stormwater from bridge drains with low cost bioretention planter boxes. Early monitoring data at the initial installation showed significant reductions in 6PPD-quinone and other common stormwater pollutants. The partners have secured a grant to expand the project to two additional bridge locations in the Puget Sound Basin to further test the effectiveness of this stormwater treatment device, identify maintenance requirements, and collect enough data and prepare materials to submit to Ecology’s stormwater treatment approval process known as TAPE.

Federal Highway Administration (FHWA) [Transportation pooled fund study: Stormwater Management to Address Highway Runoff Toxicity Due to 6PPD-quinone from Tire Rubber](#) (WSDOT funding provided for combined DOTs and FHWA study)

The WSDOT Research Office is providing \$30,000 per year for four years along with matches from seven other state departments of transportation (DOTs). This research aims to equip DOTs with a targeted approach for effectively managing 6PPD-quinone in highway runoff. The Request for Information (RFI) for researchers to submit proposals is planned for release in late August/early September 2024 with a technical advisory panel to follow.

Stormwater features inventory

WSDOT's stormwater features inventory program maps and documents WSDOT's stormwater assets. This work is critical to support stormwater retrofit planning and implementation as well as to manage and maintain existing assets to ensure their locations are known and they are functioning as intended to both maximize the longevity of the transportation system and mitigate stormwater impacts.

The program focuses on identifying stormwater assets within the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System Municipal Stormwater Permit Phase I and II areas, which include the most populated cities and counties in Washington. There is a need to greatly increase this ongoing effort, expanding features inventory to all transportation infrastructure across the state. A complete inventory allows us to make better informed decisions for an equitable statewide approach.

WSDOT significantly added capacity to its stormwater features inventory program over the past year by hiring consultant teams, on top of existing WSDOT staff, to increase capability to prioritize and map remaining features. The successful ramp up of consultant crews over the past year is allowing the agency to take on more inventory miles as well as complex assessment areas. The increased collection effort that began in August 2023 is an anticipated ongoing effort to meet the planning, management, and maintenance needs of the state transportation system and Move Ahead Washington goals.

Green stormwater infrastructure workforce development

Over the coming decade and a half WSDOT will significantly increase green stormwater infrastructure (GSI) across the state, with the addition of \$515 million from MAW funding, which encourages GSI solutions. GSI, which plays an important role in mitigating the harmful effects of stormwater, only functions as designed when it is regularly maintained. With an increase in these environmental assets comes the need for dedicated and specialized maintenance and adaptive management to ensure intended functionality and performance expectations are met.

A team of WSDOT staff continues advancing a workforce development effort to support the growing number of GSI assets that will be added to WSDOT's system and is proposing adding a new GSI Maintenance and Adaptive Management Program (Table 2). The plan aligns with [WSDOT's strategic plan](#) values and goals including workforce development, diversity, equity, and inclusion, innovation, and sustainability. A proactive approach to meet this emerging need is warranted. WSDOT leadership is supportive of this effort but funding for the positions is yet to be secured.

Table 2. GSI workforce development accomplishments of the past year

GSI workforce development accomplishments of the past year	
Position Descriptions	Three position descriptions for a new GSI Maintenance and Adaptive Management Program were developed with the expertise of a multidisciplinary team including human resources, environmental, maintenance, landscape architecture, culture of belonging, and others. The positions include a supervisor, field lead, and one or more tech positions. The team is modeled after the successes of long standing WSDOT programs performing specialized maintenance and adaptive management on wetland mitigation sites and roadside vegetation (zone 3 right of way).
DOC & SPP Partnership	WSDOT continues its efforts on training and curriculum development for GSI to foster career pathways and workforce development including unique opportunities for people from marginalized communities, people who lack education, or face other employment barriers. WSDOT continues discussions with Washington State Department of Corrections (DOC) and the Sustainability in Prisons Project (SPP) to bring training opportunities to incarcerated people who are nearing their time of reentry, to help them prepare to compete for WSDOT jobs in GSI management.
Curriculum Development	WSDOT continues participating in the Green Stormwater Infrastructure Workforce Collaborative's GSI Curriculum Subcommittee which over the past year developed and completed a GSI Curriculum for core, introductory GSI skills and is being piloted by several entities. This curriculum will provide opportunities for skill development and create career pathways for people, while at the same time creating a talent pipeline to help fulfill WSDOT's need to add capacity to this part of the workforce over time. WSDOT is positioned to adapt the curriculum for WSDOT specific applications and implement the curriculum in prisons if funding were to become available to support the GSI Maintenance and Adaptive Management positions offering employment opportunities.

Removing barriers to employment, creating career pathways, and developing curriculum and training programs for marginalized people or people facing employment obstacles, while solving a need to expand the green stormwater infrastructure workforce sector is mutually beneficial and supports MAW, HEAL Act, and WSDOT goals.

Project delivery and funding

When funding is available, WSDOT is in position to move ahead on scoping and delivering projects to address locations on the ranked needs list which currently includes 41 scoping segments, spanning 282 highway miles, for potential stormwater retrofit locations. The ranked needs list will be annually updated as projects are built, using the web map and Survey123 information, to utilize all available MAW funding.

Project delivery 2023/2025

The 2023 transportation budget provided \$6 million under the stormwater retrofit proviso for the 2023/2025 biennium, dedicated solely to the Urban Stormwater Partnership - I-5 Ship-Canal Bridge Pilot in Seattle (see Table 1 for project updates). The 2024 Supplemental Transportation Budget added \$9 million from Model Toxics Control Act funds to WSDOT for stormwater retrofit projects in the second half of the 2023/2025 biennium for fiscal year 2025. Projects are underway with the funding available this biennium for stormwater retrofits. As necessary, WSDOT will seek reappropriation in the event that all funds cannot be spent in the remainder of the 23-25 biennium. These funds will advance work to add stormwater treatment in strategic locations across the state that will improve water quality and habitat.

Anticipated funding needs

Historically WSDOT has had about \$7 million per biennium for stormwater retrofits prior to MAW. The 2023 transportation budget provided \$6 million under the stormwater retrofit proviso for the 2023/2025 biennium, dedicated solely to the Urban Stormwater Partnership - I-5 Ship-Canal Bridge Pilot (Seattle), with the 2024 supplemental transportation budget adding \$9 million from Model Toxics Control Act funding for a total of \$15 million in the first biennium of the MAW stormwater retrofit program.

No funds are allotted from the 2025/2027 through 2027/2029 biennia, with the majority of funding provided in the last two biennia. This plan does not allow WSDOT to ramp up and deliver on stormwater retrofit projects for these four years, when there is a strong need for timely delivery on stormwater retrofit projects to help recover Washington’s iconic salmon species and orca, improve water quality and ecosystem health, and address 6PPD-quinone and other pollutants. It also places impractical stressors on large project delivery years at the end of the 16 year program, instead of evenly distributing funds in a way that sets project delivery up for success, including staffing levels to support planning and project delivery.

It is important to begin funding MAW stormwater retrofits early in the program. A ramp up in funding over the first two biennia, followed by sustained higher levels of funding is necessary, over current funding, to achieve the MAW goals within the 16 year period (Figure 5).

\$515M OVER 16 YEARS								
BIENNIUM	23/25	25/27	27/29	29/31	31/33	33/35	35/37	37/39
Current Funding	\$15M*	\$0	\$0	\$50M	\$64M	\$70M	\$100M	\$216M
Optimal Delivery**	\$15M	\$50M	\$75M	\$75M	\$75M	\$75M	\$75M	\$75M

* 23/25 biennium: \$6M I-5 Ship Canal Bridge, \$9M Model Toxics Control Act funds for other retrofit projects.

** Optimal delivery is only conceptual to illustrate desired ramp up followed by need for sustained funding. Specific funding per biennium yet to be determined.

Figure 5. Current funding versus optimal delivery.

Benefits of immediate funding

There is an undeniable connection between water quality and salmon recovery. If WSDOT is to make progress and achieve the MAW goals for the stormwater retrofit program, we must have appropriate levels of funding to meet the urgent need for action (Figure 5). Benefits of this funding proposal are outlined on page 11 of the [year one 2023 Legislative Report](#).

Funding for stormwater features inventory and maintenance

To be the best stewards of MAW stormwater retrofit investments, there will be an ongoing funding need for stormwater features inventory and maintenance. WSDOT’s stormwater infrastructure system will ultimately only be as good as the asset management and maintenance program allows.

Conclusion

Over the past year WSDOT has finalized a [Stormwater Retrofit Prioritization Web Map](#), with significant input and collaboration from external partners, to strategically invest in stormwater retrofit projects across the state that accomplish the Move Ahead Washington goals including benefits to salmon recovery and ecosystem health, reducing pollution, addressing health disparities, and cost-effectiveness. Use of the web map positions WSDOT, as funding becomes available, to deliver these important projects which are key in salmon and orca recovery, water quality improvements, habitat and human health benefits, environmental justice and HEAL Act implementation, tribal treaty rights, and central to Puget Sound and Columbia River recovery goals.

Nine million dollars has recently become available for fiscal year 2025. WSDOT is working to advance stormwater retrofit projects with this funding. Once constructed, these projects will result in environmental and human health benefits and contribute to addressing the collective regional stormwater issue.

Through outreach, WSDOT has identified strong interest for partnerships on WSDOT stormwater retrofit projects. Pursuing partnerships has myriad benefits. WSDOT is continuing to work through the contractual and logistical challenges of implementing partnerships and seeks flexibility in funding and legal support of partnerships that maximize benefits and leverage investments.

WSDOT recognizes and appreciates the significance of the Legislature's investment in stormwater retrofits through Move Ahead Washington. The optimal delivery plan for funding (Figure 5) is provided to illustrate the funding level necessary to address the urgency of the problem and increase WSDOT's ability to implement stormwater retrofits at scale to most effectively mitigate the harmful impacts of stormwater pollution.