

# NEWS RELEASE

Released jointly by the City of Olympia, Port of Olympia, Thurston County, LOTT Alliance, and Washington State University Thurston County Extension

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## Local Agencies Consider Partnership for Budd Inlet Restoration

Olympia, WA. By mid-April, five agencies are expected to formalize an agreement to work as partners to develop an action plan for Budd Inlet restoration.

The agencies are: the City of Olympia, Port of Olympia, Thurston County, LOTT Alliance, and Washington State University Thurston County Extension.

The consortium grew from a joint meeting held in 2007 between the Olympia City Council and the Port of Olympia Commission.

“To our knowledge, we are the first consortium of Puget Sound local communities and agencies to step forward with an agreement to work together on action planning and implementation,” says Olympia City Manager Steve Hall. “We are in close contact with the Puget Sound Partnership appointed by Governor Gregoire and the State Department of Ecology.”

At business meetings during April, elected officials from the local government agencies are expected to consider an interlocal agreement establishing the partnership.

“The LOTT Alliance already treats wastewater to the highest level on Puget Sound,” said Mike Strub, LOTT’s Executive Director. “Helping to address other sources of pollution influencing the Inlet may be critical for ensuring LOTT can maintain its discharge capacity while we build our reclaimed water program.”

Unincorporated Thurston County is comprised of 406,000 acres with a current population in excess of 135,000. Thurston County Commissioner Bob Macleod says many of those residents travel to and from the cities to work, shop and take part in other activities.

“Couple that daily population movement with the fact that the drainage for the Deschutes River and many other creeks and streams crosses jurisdictional lines and you see that we all influence the health or illness of Budd Inlet. It just makes sense for county government to be closely involved in efforts to restore the inlet to its historic, pristine nature,” says Macleod. “Cooperative efforts like this are fundamental to the program development of the newly-established Puget Sound Partnership, created by Governor Christine Gregoire, charged with the task of directing the clean-up of Puget Sound.” Macleod represents Thurston County government on the Sound-wide Salmon Recovery Council, a division of the Puget Sound Partnership.

WSU Extension has agreed to serve as the coordinating agency on behalf of the partners. Once the interlocal agreement is approved by each group, WSU will apply to the State Department of Ecology (DOE/Ecology) for funding to develop the unified action plan for Budd Inlet cleanup and restoration.

“The health of Puget Sound is failing and will continue to get worse if action is not taken,” says Cliff Moore, Director of the WSU Thurston County Extension. “WSU is pleased to partner with Thurston County agencies to develop an action plan for the Budd Inlet portion of Puget Sound.”

If successful in obtaining an Ecology funding, WSU Thurston County Extension, on behalf of the consortium, intends to hire Linda Hoffman of LH Consulting along with

Ross & Associates Environmental Consulting Ltd to gather known data on the health of Budd Inlet and to assist the partners in creating the action plan. The first phase will include:

- an inventory/assessment of major current efforts related to Budd Inlet restoration;
- summary of partner interests, needs and goals relative to Budd Inlet;
- a community forum to solicit concerns and priorities;
- identification of potential opportunities to work together; and
- a project description and organizational frameworks for the next phase.

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## **Background Information:**

### **City of Olympia**

The City of Olympia maintains over 130 miles of underground pipe, 6,500 storm drains, and 40 stormwater ponds that carry stormwater runoff from roads and rooftops to local streams and Budd Inlet. There are nine major streams within Olympia's 24 square miles (seven of which flow to Budd Inlet), as well as four lakes, four large wetlands, and six miles of Budd Inlet shoreline. For over two decades, the City of Olympia, through its Storm and Surface Water Utility, has been a recognized leader in providing services that minimize flooding, maintain or improve water quality, and protect and enhance aquatic habitat.

### **Port of Olympia**

The Port operates a 60-acre international shipping terminal on the main channel of Budd Inlet and a 656-slip recreational marina, public launch ramp and boat haulout/repair facility on Olympia's East Bay. Preserving and restoring Budd Inlet is a priority for the Port. For example, over 400 creosote pilings have been replaced with pre-cast concrete pilings, changes have been made to the cargo yard to control and filter stormwater runoff, the Swantown Boatworks includes a state-of-the-art wastewater treatment system, and the 20-year remediation of the Cascade Pole brownfield site removed contaminated sediments from tidelands. Protecting the health of Budd Inlet is a key concern for the Port in redeveloping the East Bay district in downtown Olympia, developing other waterfront properties and maintaining the marine terminal.

### **LOTT Alliance**

The LOTT Alliance treats an average of 10 to 12 million gallons of wastewater per day at its Budd Inlet Treatment Plant in downtown Olympia. The water is treated to advanced secondary standards, which includes nitrogen removal and ultraviolet disinfection. LOTT has the only municipal treatment plant on Puget Sound that uses biological nutrient removal. Most of the treated water is released into Budd Inlet. The remainder,

up to 1.0 million gallons per day, goes to a reclaimed water filtration system for further treatment and use within the downtown Olympia area. To meet future wastewater treatment capacity needs, LOTT has built one satellite reclaimed water plant in Lacey and has purchased property to build a second one. These satellite plants clean wastewater to Class A Reclaimed Water standards so the water can be used within our communities for irrigation, commercial and industrial processes, and other beneficial purposes.

### **WSU Thurston County Extension**

WSU Thurston County Extension delivers a wide array of community development programs and educational offerings. Included in their portfolio is the Native Plant Salvage Project, water quality and watershed protection workshops, food safety training and nutrition education for low income populations, the Master Gardener/Master Composter program; team and trust building and group problem solving through Challenge activities, and the 4H Youth Development program. In addition, they have increased their interaction and service to under-represented groups by taking a key organizational role with the annual Latino Youth Summit and the year long Intertribal Leadership Academy. WSU Thurston County Extension has close to 800 trained volunteers who help expand program delivery capacity. In 2007, those volunteers contributed a total of 89,794 hours of service to the county. The total equals just over 43 Full Time Equivalent staff members. If you use the standard accepted value of volunteer hours, which in 2007 was \$18.77, the dollar value of the contribution our volunteers made was over \$1.6 million dollars.

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