



PRESIDENT'S NOTES

Rabia Ahmed, AWRA-WA Section President



Hello everyone! Hope you are enjoying the warmer weather, sunshine, and growth in our great state. As the 2019 President of the Washington Section of AWRA, I am excited and thankful to work with a dedicated Board of professionals, our two Student Chapters, and our membership to continue our mission of providing the

quality water resources professional experience you have come to expect from this organization. During the December All Members Meeting, **we welcomed two new Board members, Jenna Mandell-Rice and Jessica Kuchan**, who bring their diverse legal expertise to the Board and the various committees on which they have volunteered to serve. Please review the AWRA-WA website to become familiar with their histories or meet them in-person at one of our Dinner Meetings and at the Annual Conference. With heavy hearts, **we also said good-bye and conveyed our gratitude to two retiring Board Members, Steve Nelson and Terry Smith**, who served long tenures on the AWRA-WA Board and developed the culture of our organization. **I would especially like to thank the 2018 Section President, Jason McCormick**, for his work and for staying with us as president emeritus to guide and advise us this year.

Under the leadership of Tom FitzHugh and Jenna Mandell-Rice, our Conference Planning Committee hit the ground running late last year, when they began busily planning the **2019 Annual State Conference**. The conference will take place October 1 at the Mountaineers Seattle Program Center. This year's theme, **"Water Resources Planning and Implementation: Challenges, Complexity, and Uncertainty,"** reflects the most current water resource issues in Washington after input we received from participants of last year's conference. The conference will highlight the role of water resource planning efforts in Washington to address competing needs and sources of future uncertainty, such as climate change. **We welcome all AWRA-WA members to join the weekly conference calls to help plan and organize the conference**, and contribute your experience, connections, and insights. Contact the conference co-chairs or myself if you want to join.

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Thanks to the continued efforts of the Dinner Committee Co-chairs Patrick Vandenberg and Felix Kristanovich, we have **an exciting lineup of Dinner Meetings and events in partnership with our Student Chapters**. To kick-off the process, the **University of Washington-AWRA (UW-AWRA) held a winter mixer on March 5, 2019** at the UW Waterfront Activity Center. In addition to networking and dinner, Dr. Nick Bond, a member of the UW faculty and Washington State Climatologist, gave a presentation on "Climate Change and its Impacts on Water Resources and Extreme Events in Washington State." Our next event was the **AWRA-WA Ellensburg Dinner Meeting and Central Washington University (CWU) Student Networking Mixer on April 11**. Urban Eberhart, Manager of Kittitas Reclamation District; and Richard Visser, Project Manager at United States Bureau of Reclamation spoke on Yakima Basin Integrated Plan Updates and Cle Elum Dam Fish Passage Project. Watch your emails and the [AWRA-WA Dinner Meetings web page](#) for information on upcoming Dinner Meetings.

Our two Student Chapters at the UW, led by Tyler Oshiro, and at CWU, led by Silas Sleeper (previously led by Brandon Kautzman), continue to plan exciting opportunities for students in their regions. In addition to the traditional student-professional mixers, speed networking events, and field trips, you will notice exciting new Student Chapter activities in the coming months, including lunch-n-learns, more informal happy hours, and additional field trips. We are also reaching out and collaborating with other campuses, such as being involved with Cascadia College and UW Bothell in their Earth Week event on April 24. Meanwhile, our mentoring program continues to grow

in the capable hands of Tom FitzHugh as it integrates more fully with the Student Chapters and young graduates and professionals.

We are excited to announce the **winners of the 2019-20 AWRA-WA Graduate Student Fellowship!** AWRA-WA has awarded two Fellowships to graduate students attending a Washington school studying a water resources related topic each year since 1998. Stan Miller and the rest of the Awards Committee reviewed the applications in February ... and the winners are ... **Joseph Weirich from Eastern Washington University and Silas Sleeper from the CWU Student Chapter..**

Joseph's area of study is "beaver moderated fire resiliency in the north Cascades," while Silas is studying "the use of isotope hydrology and major ion geochemistry to assess potential Aquifer Storage and Recovery sites." The usual fellowship amount is \$2500 per student. However, thanks to the generous **\$500 donation of 2018 Outstanding Water Resources Professional winner Guy Gregory to the WA-AWRA Fellowship Fund**, this year the students will receive \$2,750 each.

On the administrative side, we are in the final stages of locking down our sponsors for 2019-2020. If you or your organization are interested in supporting AWRA-WA, please reach out to Dave Christensen or I at the earliest. The details of our various sponsorship levels are available at <https://www.waawra.org/Sponsorship>. We have also initiated our Long-Range Planning process this year under the leadership of John Chandler and our brand new Long-range Planning Committee. The overall objective is to modernize the Section, review and amend the bylaws, and review the financial structure. You will hear more about that in the coming months.

WE NEED YOU FOR NEWSLETTER ARTICLES. In addition to this Newsletter, we are planning additional issues for September and November. Please contact Greg McLaughlin, Jennifer Saltonstall, or I if you would like to contribute an article.

Finally, I would like to thank the Board members and general members who have volunteered to serve on multiple committees to organize and lead our efforts this year. Please do not hesitate to contact me (rahmed@greeneeconomics.com) or any other Board Member about questions you may have about our committees, activities, meetings, sponsorships, and vision for the organization. I am excited about the rest of 2019 and look forward to this journey with our community of water resource professionals, practitioners, and students!

2019 AWRA-WA BOARD

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2019 AWRA Washington Annual State Conference

**October 1, 2019
Seattle, WA**



**American
Water
Resources
Association
Washington Section**

**Water Resources Planning and Implementation:
Challenges, Complexity, and Uncertainty**



Details and Registration at: www.waawra.org

Photos by Tom Ring

2019 AWRA-WA ANNUAL CONFERENCE WATER RESOURCES PLANNING AND IMPLEMENTATION: CHALLENGES, COMPLEXITY, AND UNCERTAINTY

OCTOBER 1, 2019

**THE MOUNTAINEERS SEATTLE CONFERENCE ROOM
7700 SAND POINT WAY NE, SEATTLE, WA**

By Tom Fitzhugh, Water Resources Specialist, Stantec

AWRA-WA has been busy planning the next Annual Conference for Washington's water resource professionals, continuing a tradition that started in 1981. This year's theme will address water resources planning in Washington State, a timely topic due to the re-initiation of watershed planning in 2019.

The 2019 AWRA-WA State Conference is titled "Water Resources Planning and Implementation: Challenges, Complexity, and Uncertainty" and will occur on October 1, 2019 at The Mountaineers in Seattle, WA. The conference will highlight the role of water resource planning efforts in Washington in addressing competing needs and sources of future uncertainty such as climate change. Interdisciplinary perspectives will be presented on the challenges and success stories of past water resource planning efforts and effective plan implementation. The conference sessions will be as follows. First, Will Stelle from Washington Water Trust will kick off the conference with a keynote speech, sharing his insights into planning in Washington State. Session 1 will start with a historical perspective on planning in Washington, followed by presentations on lessons learned from Watershed Planning that are cross-cutting and relevant to multiple watersheds. Session 2 will focus on the Hirst decision and related planning activities and methodologies, such as Net Ecological Benefits. Session 3 will cover managing uncertainty in planning efforts, including climate change. Session 4 will cover significant planning efforts in Washington other than Watershed Planning, such as the Yakima Integrated Plan. Session 5 will be panel discussion with a view towards future planning and how to make it more effective.

AWRA-WA's annual conference has become *the* venue for timely, current, and relevant discussion that connects water resources professionals across the State.

REGISTRATION: Registration can be completed on our website.

Cancellation Policy: AWRA-WA will fully refund the registration fee if cancellation notice is received at least 14 days before the event (by Sept 17, 2019). Registration fees will not be refunded for registrations that are cancelled after September 17, 2019.

PRELIMINARY CONFERENCE SCHEDULE

Keynote Address:

- Will Stelle, Washington Water Trust

Session 1: Lessons Learned from Watershed Planning

- Tom Ring, Yakama Nation
- John Kounts, Washington PUD
- Sharon Haensly, Squaxin Island Tribe
- Mike Kaputa, Chelan County

Session 2: Hirst and Beyond

- Lisa Dally Wilson, Dally Environmental, and David Troutt, Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Bennett Weinstein, Department of Ecology
- Andy Hover, Okanogan County

Session 3: Uncertainty in Planning

- Abishek Singh, Intera
- Guillaume Mauger, University of Washington
- Carrie Sessions, Department of Ecology
- TBD

Session 4: Bookends of the Planning Process

- Urban Eberhardt, Kittitas Reclamation District
- Abby Hook, King County

Session 5: Panel Discussion

- Tom Ring, Yakama Nation
- Will Stelle, Washington Water Trust
- Other two participants TBD

REGISTRATION: Registration can be completed on our website.



Photo: AWRA-WA Chapter Members Networking at the 2018 AWRA-WA Conference Credit: Tom Ring (edited)

AWRA-WA CONTINUES MENTORING PROGRAM

SIGN UP AS A MENTOR OR MENTEE

By Tom FitzHugh, Water Resources Scientist, Stantec

AWRA-WA will launch year two of its mentorship program in 2019. The goal of the AWRA-WA mentorship program is to connect young professionals and students in the field of water resources with experienced professionals who share a similar specialty and are interested in building a mentoring relationship. Those

Those interested in being mentored ("mentees") can provide AWRA-WA with some basic information and we will connect you with an appropriate mentor! The program is relatively informal, and AWRA's main role is to connect mentors with mentees, usually within a couple of weeks. For those interested in being mentors, you can likewise provide information to AWRA-WA, and we will match you up with a mentee who has specific interest in your area of expertise.

Sign up as a mentor or mentee at: <https://www.waawra.org/Mentorship-Program>.

For any questions about the mentoring program, please contact Tom FitzHugh (thomas.fitzhugh@stantec.com)

WASHINGTON STREAMFLOW RESTORATION: FROM LAW INTO ACTION

By Amy Moosman, Community Outreach Specialist - Ecology, Department of Water Resources

Governor Jay Inslee signed the Streamflow Restoration law (ESSB 6091) on January 19, 2018. Washington State legislators wrote the legislation in response to a 2016 Washington State Supreme Court decision commonly called the “*Hirst* decision.” The law, which has since been codified as Chapter 90.94 RCW, set in motion a planning process for fifteen watersheds and provided significant new funding to implement projects that will enhance streamflows and increase water supplies. The Legislature committed \$300 million to support implementation of the law over the next fifteen years.

On January 28, 2019, Washington State Department of Ecology approved funding of about \$20 million for fifteen projects that will protect, restore, and enhance stream flows and instream resources. Ecology requested proposals for grant funding to implement the Streamflow Restoration law, receiving forty-six applications from across the State. Projects approved for funding benefit aquatic resources, including federally listed salmonids, by contributing to improved stream flows, groundwater supply, and habitat.

2019 GRANT AWARDS UNDER THE STREAMFLOW RESTORATION LAW

Requesting Organization	Project Name
Clallam County Community Development	Dungeness Flow Restoration and Aquifer Recharge Off-Channel Reservoir
Kittitas County - Public Health Department	Yakima River Floodplain Acquisition – Surface Water Rights
Kittitas Reclamation District	Tributary Supplementation through Water Conservation--KRD South Branch
Nisqually Land Trust	Nisqually Watershed Riparian and Floodplain Habitat Protection
Nisqually Land Trust	Nisqually Watershed Busy Wild Creek Protection
Snohomish Conservation District	Community-based water storage restoration in the Snohomish River watershed
Snoqualmie Valley Watershed Improvement District	Snoqualmie Natural Storage Enhancement and Comprehensive Storage Study
Spokane County Utilities - Water Resources Section	WRIA 55 Water Right Acquisition
Squaxin Island Tribe	Goldsborough Streamflow Restoration Project
Stevens County - Land Services Department	WRIA 59 Water Right Acquisition and Mitigation Source Substitution
Stillaguamish Tribe of Indians	North Fork Stillaguamish River Floodplain and Water Right Acquisition
Sumner City of	White River Regional Reserved Water Right Acquisition
Sumner City of	White River Tailrace Water Acquisition
Thurston County - Resource Stewardship Dept.	Albany Street Stormwater Pond
Whatcom County Public Utility District 1	California Creek Domestic Well Use Offset & Streamflow Restoration Project

WATER RESOURCE PLANNING

The law established different planning processes and deadlines for completion in different basins. The first two plans, in the Nisqually and Nooksack basins, were due on February 1, 2019. Each planning process started quickly, and participants worked tirelessly to complete a plan by the statutory deadline.

The Nisqually planning group has a long history of working together. On February 1, 2019, they submitted a plan amendment to Ecology. After a careful review, it was determined that the plan met the interim guidance and satisfied the requirements of the law. Maia Bellon, Director of Ecology, signed the adoption order on February 5, 2019.

The Nooksack planning group reconvened and worked diligently towards a plan. Ultimately, the deadline of February 1, 2019 passed with no plan approved by the planning group. As a result, Ecology is now going through a rule-making process to meet the statutory requirements of Chapter 90.94 RCW for that basin.

WHAT'S NEXT?

Ecology began a rulemaking process in 2018 to establish permanent criteria for ranking and approving funding applications. The new rule, to be adopted under Chapter 173-566 WAC, will ensure clarity and fairness for future streamflow restoration and habitat enhancement project funding decisions. In addition, we will publish new funding guidelines based on the priorities set in the new rule for future grant funding rounds. We anticipate adopting the rule in the summer of 2019.

Concurrently, Ecology is also developing a final guidance document that describes how planning groups can determine Net Ecological Benefit, or NEB. Determining NEB is a legal requirement for adopted plans. Ecology published Interim Guidance for Determining Net Ecological Benefit in 2018, and since then worked in collaboration with a research team from Washington State University to improve the guidance for use in evaluating plans for adoption.¹

Two of the fifteen watersheds have completed their planning efforts. The remaining thirteen watersheds have formed or reformed planning groups and are actively planning. Groups are currently working to determine twenty years of new rural growth, project consumptive water use associated with the growth, and identify projects and actions to offset water use. Ecology will consider the identified projects as priorities for funding in future grant rounds.

On or before February 1, 2021, five watersheds must submit approved plans to Ecology—WRIAs 22 (Lower Chehalis), 23 (Upper Chehalis), 49 (Okanogan), 55 (Little Spokane), and 59 (Colville). The remaining eight watersheds—WRIAs 7 (Snohomish), 8 (Cedar-Sammamish), 9 (Duwamish-Green), 10 (Puyallup-White), 12 (Chambers-Clover), 13 (Deschutes), 14 (Kennedy-Goldsborough), and 15 (Kitsap)—have until June 30, 2021. If any watershed does not meet their respective deadline, Ecology is required to begin rulemaking.

It is an exciting and busy time for Streamflow Restoration! Keep an eye open for future announcements regarding planning progress, final guidance, rulemaking, and the next grant-funding round.

Gov. Inslee Declares Drought in Okanogan, Methow, & Upper Yakima Watersheds for 2019

By Greg McLaughlin, AWRA Newsletter Editor

On April 4, Washington State Governor Jay Inslee issued a drought declaration for three watersheds in Eastern Washington. At the time, the Washington Department of Ecology forecasted that the projected water supplies in the Okanogan, Methow, and Upper Yakima watersheds had dropped, respectively, to 58%, 72%, and 74% of normal. These areas provide agricultural value to local communities and the Washington State economy as a whole, while also being home to several salmon and steelhead populations listed as threatened or endangered under the Endangered Species Act.

In a press release, Ecology described a \$2 million special budget for 2019 drought alleviation activities in these areas to “fund projects like installing emergency facilities; providing water leasing; and supporting operational changes to move water through tributaries and support salmon survival.”

As we ponder the potential scale and impacts of climate change on Washington State’s shared water resources, Washington’s rivers and streams are beginning to tell an increasingly-common story of low late-summer flows. If the Ecology forecast comes to pass, 2019 could be the third year of the past five water years where eastern Washington streams experience low flow conditions normally associated with 25+-year drought events.

Many of us in the water resources world will always remember 2015 as the hottest and driest water year on record for much of Washington State. 2019 will tell us a lot about whether 2015 and 2016 were anomalies or the new normal. In any case, it is increasingly clear that practitioners of sustainable water resources management will be more important than ever in determining Washington State’s shared future of fish, farms, and communities.



¹ Editor’s Note: According to Ecology’s Interim Guidance for Determining Net Ecological Benefit, “a Net Ecological Benefit determination means anticipated benefits to instream resources from actions designed to restore streamflow will offset and exceed the projected impacts to instream resources from new water use.”

MORE THAN 750 GATHER FOR SALMON RECOVERY CONFERENCE IN TACOMA

By Susan Zemek, Communications Manager – Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office

Scientists, salmon recovery experts and citizens from Washington and across the nation gathered in Tacoma this week for the seventh biennial Salmon Recovery Conference, marking the 20th anniversary of the Salmon Recovery Act.

The 2-day conference at the Greater Tacoma Convention Center featured a host of speakers talking about their experience implementing salmon recovery projects. Presentations will be posted to the conference Web page later this month.

The conference opened April 8 with a session focusing on the past, present, and future of salmon recovery in Washington State. Governor Gary Locke, who signed the Salmon Recovery Act into law in 1999, opened the session. Locke noted that the near extinction of the southern resident killer whales has created a laser focus on salmon recovery.

"We cannot fail," Locke said. "Extinction is not an option."

Locke was followed by a tribal panel discussion of treaty rights and a second panel featuring a conversation between orca task force co-chairs Les Purce and Stephanie Solien. The morning ended with Cecilia Gobin, a member of the Tulalip Tribes giving an inspiring message reminding audience members to



Representatives from Conference Co-Host WDFW Discuss Orca Recovery and Fish Screens with Conference Attendees



Conference-goers Attend the Opening Session at the Tacoma Convention Center Main Hall

remember their passion for salmon recovery.

The second day featured speakers with different geographic scales: the local Puyallup Watershed, statewide with the Salmon Recovery Network, and globally, through the lens of the International Year of the Salmon.

"By bringing together our state's field biologists, engineers and policymakers, we're providing a forum for information sharing and networking that's critical to finding solutions to some of the big problems facing salmon recovery," said Kaleen Cottingham, director of the Recreation and Conservation Office, home to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, one of the conference's three co-hosts. "It's going to take innovation and collaboration to build up salmon to sustainable levels so they can support our environment, our economy and those who rely on them, including our beloved southern resident orca whales."

The conference is co-hosted by the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Washington Department of Ecology and its Office of the Chehalis Basin and Office of Columbia River, and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife.

American Water Resources Association, Washington Section
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(Change service requested.)

Special Thanks to Washington Water Trust for word processing support on this newsletter.

2019 MEMBERSHIP / CHANGE OF ADDRESS FORM

(⌂ please circle, as appropriate ↗)

Annual membership in the State Chapter costs \$35.

Name _____ Position _____ Affiliation _____

Street Address _____ City _____ State _____ Zip _____

Phone (_____) _____ Fax (_____) _____ E-mail _____ @ _____

☐

Please check this box to indicate if you prefer to receive your newsletter electronically.

2019 Membership Dues: \$35.00.

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For checks: please make payable to AWRA Washington Section.

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