

Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan



Land



Water



People

Nisqually River Council

Acknowledgements

This stewardship plan continues more than 20 years of work contributed by many in our community who have been dedicated to the health of the Nisqually watershed. It will need the help of many more to continue this work. It would be impossible to list everyone who has had a part in this effort, however, we would like to acknowledge the following individuals and organizations:

- ◆ **Governor Dan Evans**, who helped focus attention on the Nisqually watershed during his administration in the 1970's; this project has its roots in that effort.
 - ◆ **State Representative Jennifer Belcher**, who introduced the legislation that created the Nisqually River Council.
 - ◆ **Karen Fraser** and all of the visionary members of the **Nisqually River Task Force** who created the Nisqually River Management Plan, which this document now expands.
 - ◆ Members of the **Nisqually River Council** and **Citizens' Advisory Committee**, past and present, for their continuing work and dedication to the Nisqually watershed.
 - ◆ **Stewardship Partners** and the **National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program**, for their technical assistance in drafting this plan.
 - ◆ The **Nisqually Indian Tribe** and its **Natural Resources Department**, for their leadership and continued support of the Nisqually River Council and its programs.
 - ◆ The Nisqually Indian Tribe's **Geographic Information Systems** program for providing the maps in this document.
 - ◆ The funders who generously supported this plan, including: the **Washington State Legislature** through the **Department of Ecology (Grant # 0500222)**; **Stewardship Partners**; the **Nisqually Indian Tribe**; the **Russell Family Foundation**; the **Apex Foundation**; the **Forest Foundation**; the **Thurston Foundation**; the **Mountaineers Foundation**; the **Norman Archibald Foundation**; the **National Fish and Wildlife Foundation**; and the **NPS Rivers & Trails Conservation Assistance Program**.
 - ◆ **AHBL**, for its work on developing the Architectural Guidelines and Low Impact Development standards for the watershed.
 - ◆ And lastly, **MAKERS architecture and urban design** for their efforts to bring this plan to print.
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The following GIS data sources were used for the maps in this document:

◆ **Basedata:**

Transportation – WA Department of Transportation (WA DOT)
Hydrography and Watershed Boundary – WA Department of Ecology (WA DOE)
Hillshade – USGS 10m Digital Elevation Model

◆ **Ecoregions:**

WA Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) GAP Analysis Project 1991 Land Cover, reclassified into fewer categories by the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission's (NWIFC) Cooperative Monitoring, Evaluation and Research (CMER) staff.

◆ **Land Ownership/Management:**

Pierce, Thurston and Lewis Counties, US Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge, US Army Fort Lewis, WA Parks and Recreation Commission, WA Department of Natural Resources (WA DNR), Gifford Pinchot National Forest, Mount Rainier National Park (MORA)

Note: Forest and Agricultural Land Ownership depicted on the map is based on current land use from county parcel databases.

◆ **Salmon and Steelhead Distribution:**

Distribution from the WA Conservation Commission's (WCC) 1999 Salmon and Steelhead Habitat Limiting Factors Analysis report for the Nisqually Watershed, updated by NWIFC in June 2003.

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Executive Summary

Since 1987, the Nisqually River Council has been a locally-based management partnership of state and local governments, business, and individuals working to protect the health of the Nisqually River. During that time, we have helped to resolve watershed planning issues surrounding salmon restoration and timber harvesting. We have also established education and stewardship programs aimed at raising awareness of its unique qualities, both for the local communities and those who visit. In 2005, our Council was honored by the US Department of the Interior, calling our work a “blueprint for cooperative conservation projects” of the future.

This document is a roadmap to the next 15 years of stewardship, and our vision for the next 50.

As a group, we now propose to expand the focus of our work from protecting the health of the Nisqually River itself, to the entire watershed – its people, its businesses, its economy, its tourism, its wildlife habitat, and its water sources.

We call this new step a focus on “sustainability.” This is because we recognize that the progress we have made so far to protect and enhance the watershed can be sustained only with the involvement of the people and businesses who make the Nisqually watershed their home and depend upon it for their livelihood.

The next 15-year Stewardship Plan will focus on:

- **An involved watershed community:** The Council will work to establish community forums that can respond to land, water, and development issues as they come up. We also will actively participate in local government planning, recruit community volunteers, and help watershed communities establish themselves as unique cultural identities. We believe all of these steps will promote sensible growth that will sustain the Nisqually area’s unique qualities into the future.
- **Biological diversity:** The Council will focus on three areas: aquatic, terrestrial plant/habitat and wildlife management. Some of our activities will include

mapping eco-regions, setting up an invasive species removal program and establishing more native plants in the upper watershed. Finally, we plan to establish a game management plan and increase hunting access on private lands to improve recreational opportunities.

- **Recreation/Access/Tourism:** Well-planned recreation and tourism opportunities will always increase the public's appreciation for, and interest in, protecting the Nisqually watershed. We plan to help establish a river float trail, an interpretive trail guide, a Glacier-to-Sound trail, community heritage education programs, and a volunteer trail maintenance program, among other things. We will work closely with landowners and planning bodies to help identify and preserve the scenic vistas so highly valued by both residents and visitors.
- **Sustainable Economy:** The Council's goal is to help support economic development in the watershed that can be sustained over time, without taking away from the qualities we value now. Our focus will be to support sustainable businesses such as agriculture, forestry, green businesses and industries, shellfish management and fisheries.
- **Water:** Protecting the quality of water in the Nisqually watershed will continue to be key to all of our other efforts. Our work in this area will include working with landowners and local governments on the problem of failing septic systems, promoting water conservation, developing a surface water monitoring program, and gathering data on adequate in-stream flows.

From its glacial origin to its delta in south Puget Sound, the Nisqually is the hearth of myth, eco-diversity, history, beauty, and fresh water. If the salmon are the Northwest's canary in the coal mine, then the Nisqually is the mine. It is in this watershed that so much is now able to coexist—volcanic steam and watermelon algae, ice worms and elk moss, lady finger ferns and hydroelectric dams, forests young and old, suburban development and feeding heron, soaring eagles and spawning salmon. It is in this confluence, where glacial melt simultaneously yields light to our homes, nutrition to riparian habitat, and fresh water to the delta, that we must define the depth of our commitment. Either our generation is truly committed to conserving such treasures or it is not. We cannot be so committed without preserving the Nisqually.

Background

Introduction

The Nisqually is the only watershed in the United States with its headwaters in a national park and its delta in a national wildlife refuge. It is located within an hour's drive of three metropolitan areas, yet remains one of the healthiest and least developed of the major Puget Sound rivers. Along its 78-mile course, the river traverses forested, mountainous terrain and rolling farmlands in three counties, several small towns, the Nisqually Indian Reservation and the Fort Lewis Military Reservation before it enters Puget Sound near the site of the region's first European settlement.

Recognized as a "River of Statewide Significance" under the 1972 Washington State Shorelands Management Act, the Nisqually supports extensive salmon runs, timber and agricultural resources, and hydropower generation. It is also home to several threatened and endangered species, offers many recreational opportunities, and provides more than half of the fresh water flow entering southern Puget Sound.

Preserving this beautiful river has long been a focus of the community along with tribal, state, and local governments. The original vision of the Nisqually River Task Force was to support a balanced stewardship of the area's economic, natural, and cultural resources. Its key issues included public access to the river, flood control and emergency warning systems, fish and wildlife protection and enhancement, local interest in maintaining the existing rural landscape and economy, and the balancing of local private property owner rights with the rights of all citizens. For eighteen years, the Nisqually River Management Plan guided the efforts of the Nisqually River Council and inspired its ground-breaking work in cooperative stewardship.

In 2003, the Nisqually River Council launched an effort to update the Nisqually River Management Plan. However, our result, this Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan, became more than an update. Instead, it became a new plan to ensure that the work of the past two decades to

preserve and restore the watershed could be sustained in the future. But we knew that it could not be done unless the plan integrated the needs of the community, the economy, and the environment.

As a result, this plan considers the Nisqually watershed an integrated whole. It is a community-based plan that will be voluntarily carried out by landowners, neighbors, and communities; cities and counties; state and federal government; and the Nisqually Indian Tribe.

We believe this plan will foster a vibrant watershed community that will connect those who live in Elbe and Ashford with those who live in Yelm and Eatonville in a way that helps them understand they are part of the same, integrated community that respects its traditions and heritage. This plan respects lands that are the foundation of the community—some that generate tax revenue, others that are critical to the corridor’s scenic beauty, and others that enhance the health of animal and plant life and the Nisqually’s water quality. This community plan respects and honors those who work the land, the forests, and the rivers. We are all stewards, but these are the people who must be stewards every day.

From its glacial origin to its delta in south Puget Sound, the Nisqually is the hearth of myth, eco-diversity, history, beauty, and fresh water. If the salmon are the Northwest’s canary in the coal mine, then the Nisqually is the mine. It is in this watershed that so much is now able to coexist -- volcanic steam and watermelon algae, ice worms and elk moss, lady finger ferns and hydroelectric dams, forests young and old, suburban development and feeding heron, soaring eagles and spawning salmon. It is in this confluence, where glacial melt simultaneously yields light to our homes, nutrition to riparian habitat, and fresh water to the delta, that we must define the depth of our commitment. Either our generation is truly committed to conserving such treasures or it is not. We cannot be so committed without preserving the Nisqually.

History

Washington's 1972 Shorelands Management Act designated the Nisqually a "River of Statewide Significance." Legislative efforts to protect the Nisqually began during Governor Daniel Evans' administration and culminated in 1985 with passage of SHB 323, which directed the Washington Department of Ecology to develop a Nisqually River Management Plan. The plan was to create a balanced stewardship of the basin's economic, cultural, and environmental resources.

The Department of Ecology subsequently established the Nisqually River Task Force to develop the plan – a group that was represented by timber, agriculture, and hydropower interests, conservation and environmental organizations, private landowners, resource management agencies, and the Nisqually Indian Tribe. Advice was provided by six technical committees, two citizen committees, and public testimony provided at each of the Task Force meetings. Key issues included public access to the river, flood control and emergency warning systems, fish and wildlife protection and enhancement, local public desires to maintain rural landscapes and economies, and balancing the rights of private landowners with statewide public interests.

The Nisqually River Management Plan was adopted by the Legislature in June of 1987. It focused on 13 elements in the watershed and two which set the boundaries of the plan and called for the creation of the Nisqually River Council. The 13 elements were Mineral Resources; Water Resources; Flood Damage Reduction; Fish Management; Wildlife Management; Special Species, Habitats and Features; Hydropower; Economic Enhancement; Local Land Use Planning; Agriculture and Forestry Land Base; Recreation; Education and Interpretation; and Land Acquisition and Protection. These elements have been carried forward into this plan

Since 1987, the Nisqually River Council (Council) has worked to implement the 160 specific actions called for in the Nisqually River Management Plan. Forty-four actions had no measurable criteria (i.e., they encourage an action). Of the remaining 116 actions, 70 have been completed and of the remaining 46 actions, a significant portion are either in progress (e.g., the development of the Nisqually-Mashel

State Park) or no longer a priority given the changes in the physical and political landscapes (e.g., the Powell Creek Bridge was put in, so access is no longer available).

Shortly after the plan's 15th anniversary, the Council began working with Stewardship Partners, a conservation-based, non-profit group, and the National Park Service's Rivers and Trails Conservation Assistance Program. In late 2003, we began an objective review of our progress so far.

One of our first conclusions was that the Council and its original plan had succeeded in the environmental arena. To continue that success, our next step would be to seek sustainability, defined as: "Meeting the needs of the present generation without compromising the ability of future generations to meet their own needs" (Brundtland Commission 1987). As a result, this new Stewardship Plan *seeks to develop a place where people can earn a living, be a part of a community, and enhance the environment.* This emphasis means we will widen the focus of the plan from the river itself, to the entire watershed.

Legislative funding through the Department of Ecology ended in 2000. For a period of time, the Council continued to meet without staffing or funding until Stewardship Partners and the Nisqually Indian Tribe secured grants to continue their work in 2003/2004. In 2004, the Legislature restored funding to the Council through the Department of Ecology. Future funding will be a mix of state, local, federal, and private grants as well as private donations.

A Guide to this Plan

The Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan calls for voluntary actions. To encourage those actions, we will seek to provide incentives and technical assistance. This document lays out the mission, vision, guiding principles and collaborative process we used to develop this plan. Detailed appendices are available from www.nisquallyriver.org.

As Figure 1 illustrates, Council members developed the mission statement, vision, and guiding principles, then translated them into overall goals. They created a “core process” to guide Council activities. Finally, they created an “adaptive management” procedure they will use to evaluate progress and modify on-going activities over time. The specific actions recommended in this stewardship plan are the first steps to achieve mid-term objectives and some aspects of the plan’s long-term vision. The **Programs** section of this report describes the actual current and planned activities that support many of the specific actions.

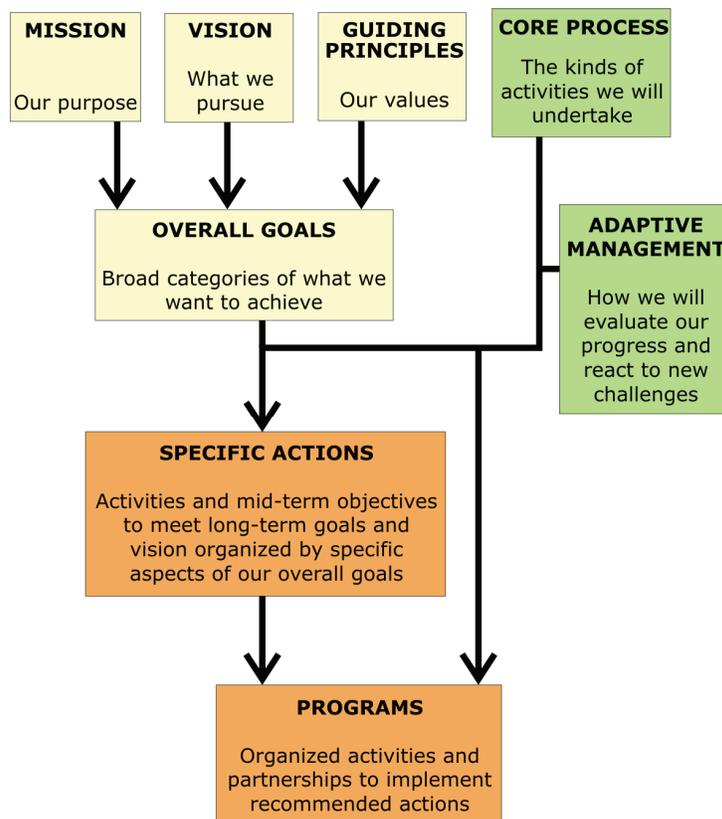


Figure 1. Plan process.

Management Area Boundaries

The original Nisqually River Management Plan was restricted to the lands closest to the Nisqually mainstem and its major tributaries. However, now we recognize that activities far from the river can still have an impact, and we have decided to expand the scope of the plan.

We consider the Nisqually River Management Area as the entire Nisqually watershed, as defined by the Washington State Department of Ecology as Water Resource Inventory Area 11. It is a single, complex system of human and natural sub-systems.

There is also an area that is directly affected by the Nisqually and affects Nisqually aquatic resources. This area will merit special attention similar to that of Water Resource Inventory Area 11.

We define this area as: the shoreline and nearshore areas bounded by Nisqually Head, northwest to Johnson Point, east to Devil's Head, north along the shore to Mahnckes Point, east to Hogan Point, south around McNeil Island to Hyde Point, southeast to Gordon Point, and southwest to the Nisqually Flats.

In addition, the Council will analyze issues and comment on proposals outside the Management Area which might have a significant impact upon the Management Area.



Finally, the Council recognizes that the Nisqually watershed is in many ways inseparable from the broader region. We are all affected by regional planning and activities. So while we have much to contribute to the land that surrounds us, we recognize that our own planning may export problems to others. This should be taken into account in our future decisions.

Figure 2. Location of the Nisqually watershed.

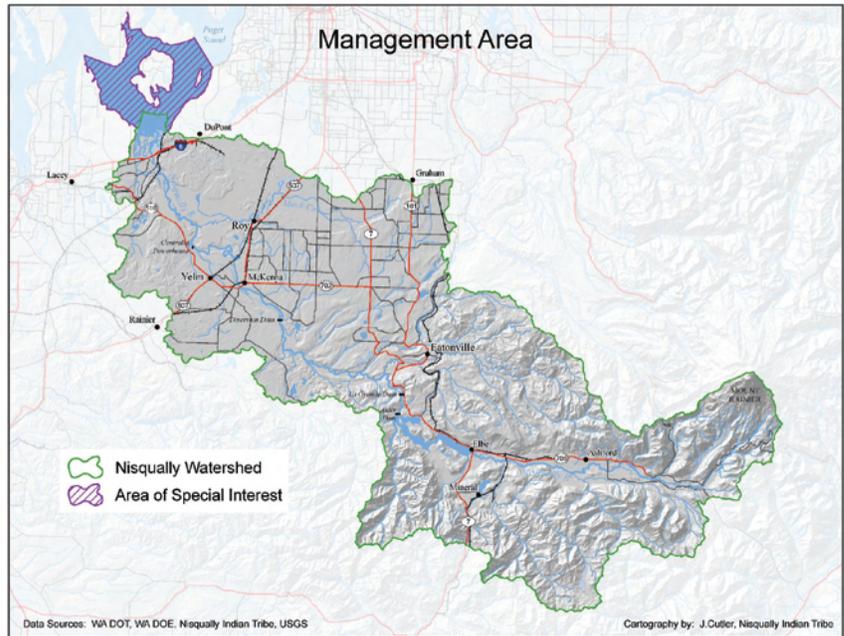


Figure 3. Management Area boundaries.

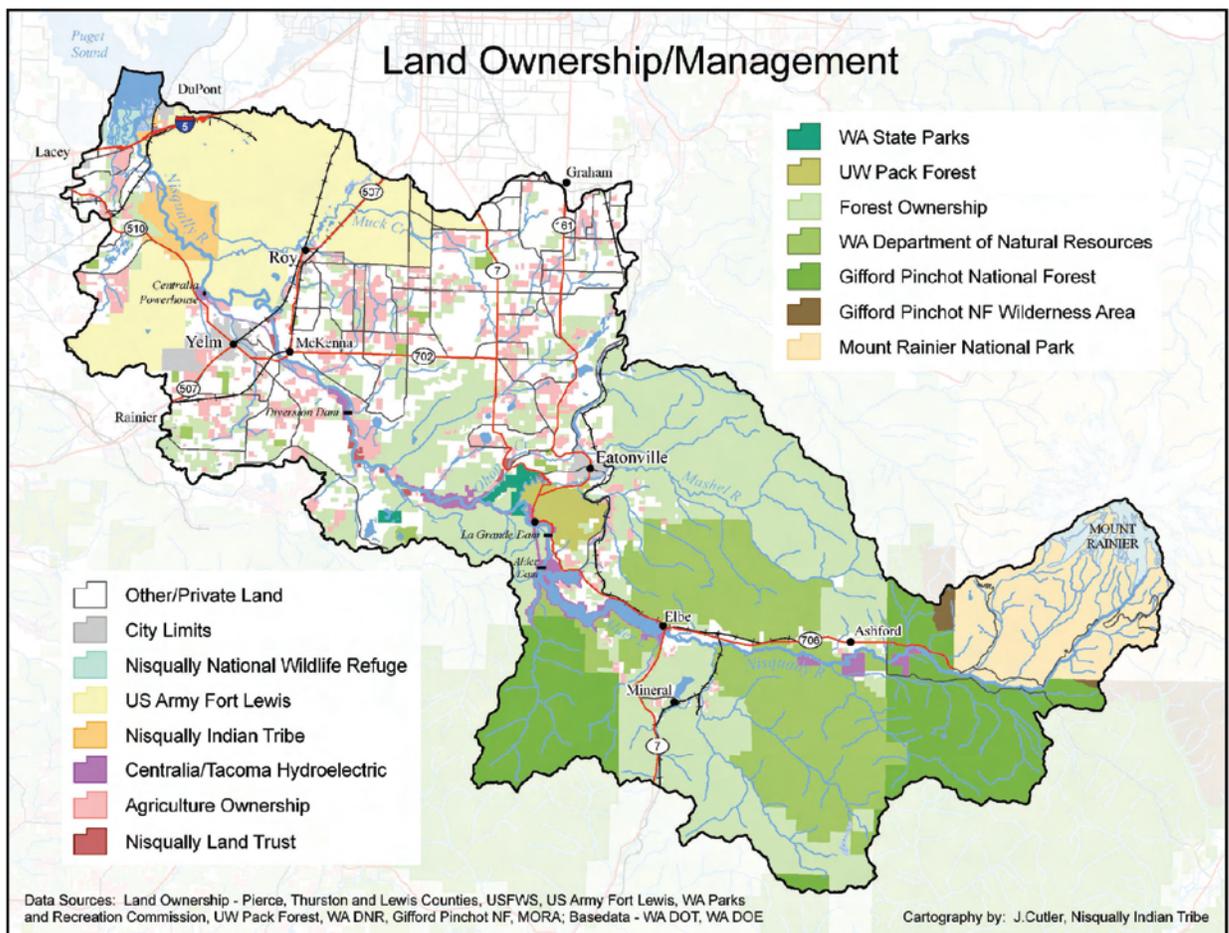


Figure 4. Land ownership in the Nisqually watershed.

Values that Guide the Plan

Our Mission

To encourage and support sustainability in the Nisqually watershed in order to steward the resources in perpetuity and build a model for harmonious living.

Our Vision for the Future

- We live in a watershed where vibrant communities, a healthy natural environment and a prosperous, innovative economy are valued.
- Our waters, from glacier to sound, run clean and clear, fish and wildlife thrive in our streams, forests and prairies.
- People are drawn to live, work, and play in our rural landscape.
- As stewards of our land and water, we value our working farms and forests which protect our natural, cultural, and scenic heritage.

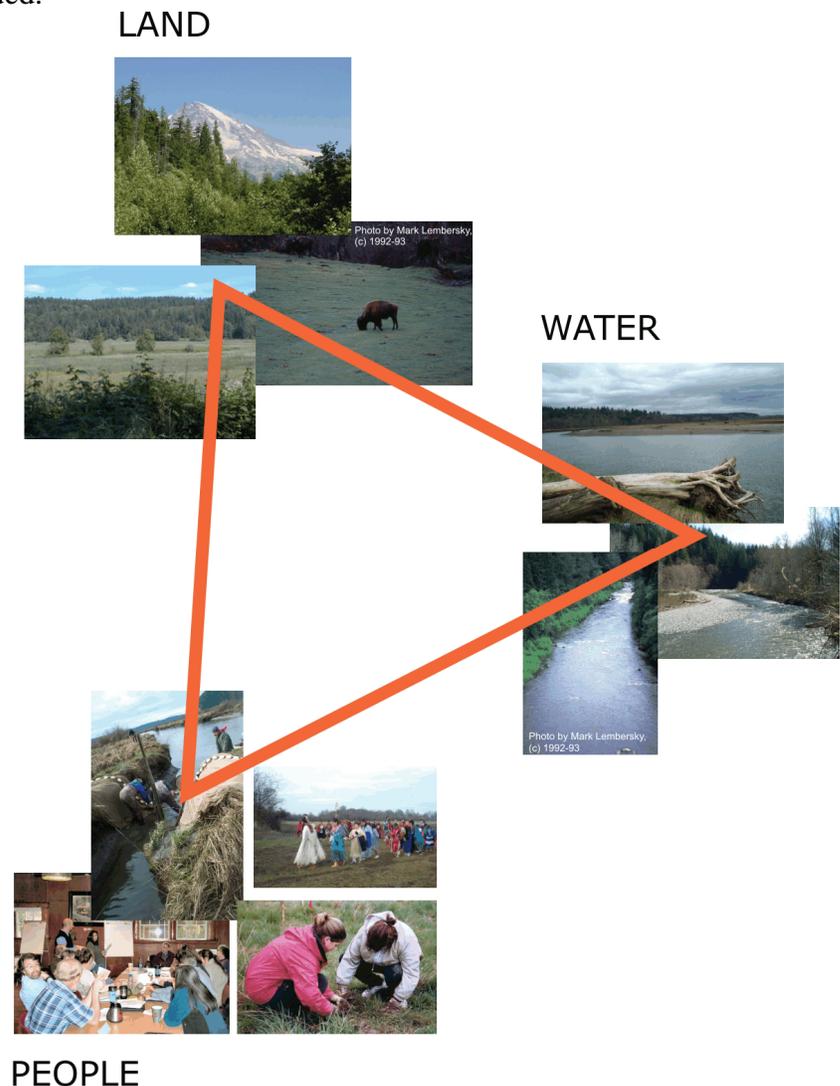


Figure 5. Nisqually River Council vision.

(Photos not by Mark Lembersky are by the Nisqually Indian Tribe Salmon Recovery Program.)

Guiding Principles

- We embrace the people who live in the Nisqually watershed, their sense of identity and responsibility that has existed for generations.
- We embrace a diverse landscape that can simultaneously support essential ecological functions, viable populations of all native species, economic prosperity, and social well-being.
- We value a vibrant local economy that benefits from and values the watershed's resources.
- We will use all available and practical tools to plan, measure, and evaluate our progress.

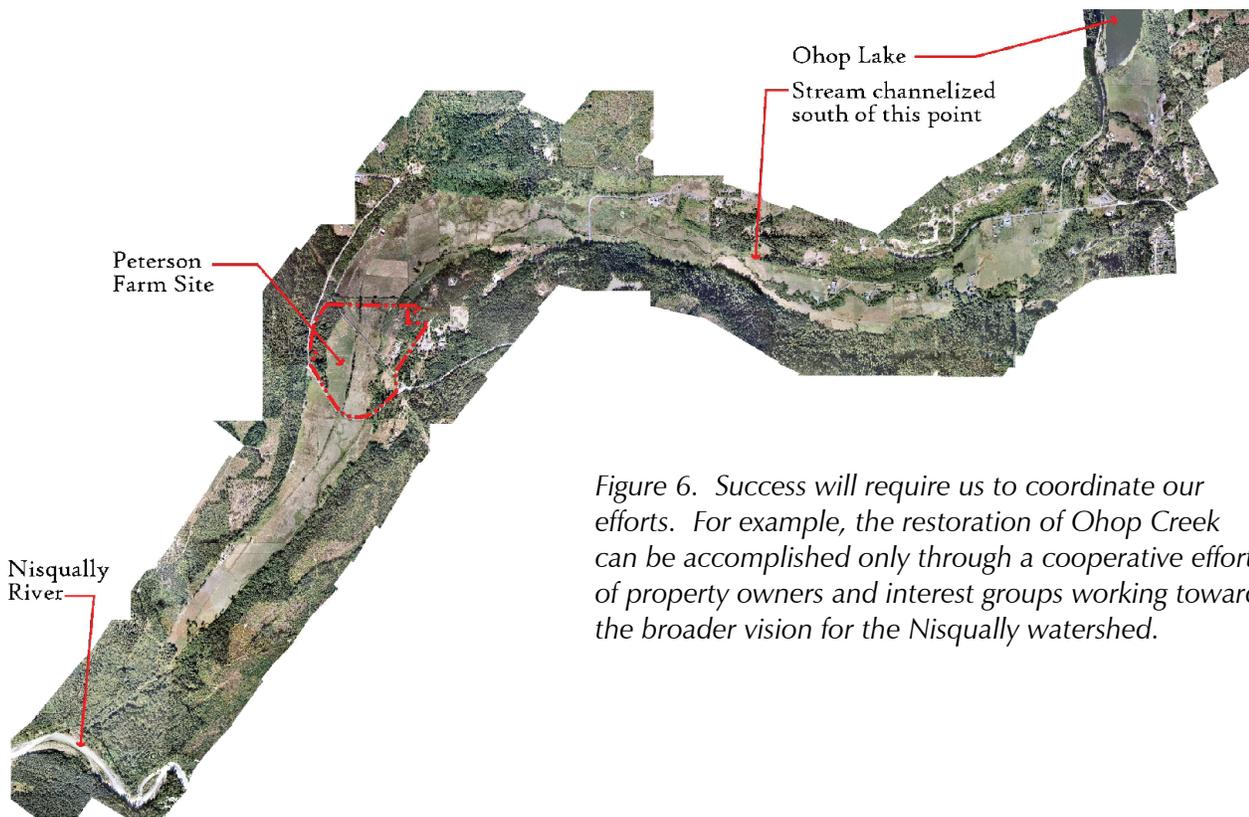


Figure 6. Success will require us to coordinate our efforts. For example, the restoration of Ohop Creek can be accomplished only through a cooperative effort of property owners and interest groups working toward the broader vision for the Nisqually watershed.

The Process We Will Use

To achieve our goals, we will use a *core process* to keep us focused on these five key elements:

1. Engage the Community

The Council will invite public participation in all events, meetings, and processes and use this input in all decision-making.

Also, the Council will nurture its relationship with the broader community by:

- Holding annual celebrations for the watershed community.
- Inviting public comment at all meetings.
- Providing updates through a quarterly newsletter.
- Fostering the creation of community groups around basins.

2. Appreciate the Environment

The Council will continue to promote environmental appreciation, both aesthetic and economic by supporting educational programs that show the link between ecosystems, the human world and the goods and services they create.

- Work to restore and maintain high-quality habitat.
- Understand the connection between the environment and the watershed's economy.
- Continue to educate citizens of all ages about their watershed.

3. Ignite the Economy

The Council will work with watershed businesses to identify, expand, and improve economic opportunities that support community well-being and consider environmental values. We look for new and efficient ways to help develop markets for ecosystem services.

- Promote sustainability certification programs that reward both environmental awareness and economic benefits.
- Work to incorporate Low Impact Development as the watershed community continues to grow.
- Help establish an upper watershed economy that uses its natural beauty to promote jobs, such as heritage tourism.



Figure 7. Educational trails, facilities, and programs are an important part of effective stewardship.

4. Advise the Government

The Council will encourage citizens to become a voice for the watershed by helping to forge strong partnerships between government agencies, leaders, and communities. The quality of our leadership depends more than ever on involved citizens.

- Continue to be the forum where citizens and agency leaders can interact.
- Provide leadership to local, state, and national government representatives.
- Be an example to other watersheds now beginning to plan for the future.

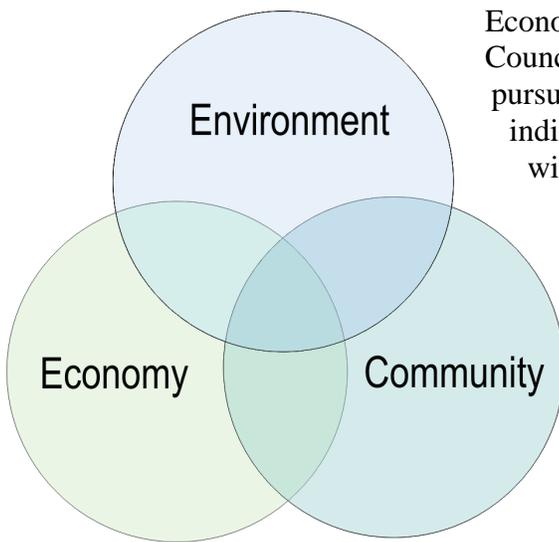
5. Celebrate the Progress

The Council will continue to celebrate life in the watershed, recognize the contributions of people and organizations, celebrate where we have been and where we intend to go.

- Hold an annual festival to celebrate the watershed community.
- Reward those who have taken action to improve the quality and sustainability of the watershed.
- Highlight efforts here and around the nation that can be used to inspire the efforts of the watershed's citizens.



These steps recognize the internationally accepted key elements of sustainability: Community, Environment, Economy, and Governance. Because the Nisqually River Council is a voluntary organization, these goals will be pursued by agencies, organizations, businesses, and individuals who choose to do so. We hope this process will give everyone the freedom to choose how they can be effective within the area of their expertise and passion.



Adaptive Management

We will regularly review our efforts to achieve the specific goals of this plan. We will build upon methods we've found to be successful and will review and revise approaches that did not succeed. We will regularly review the goals themselves to determine if they still are appropriate and attainable for the watershed. This will be our review schedule:

○ Annually – Retreat.

Council members will:

- Bring their organization’s strategic plans to the retreat
- Review and evaluate ongoing and completed projects
- Review the current year’s strategic plan
- Set a strategic plan for next calendar year (9 months ahead)
- Determine roles for council members in plan implementation

◆ Every other year

- Update five- year plan
- Revisit Goals

□ Every 5 Years

- Revisit Vision and Mission
- Update Goals

★ Every 10 Years

- Review entire management plan

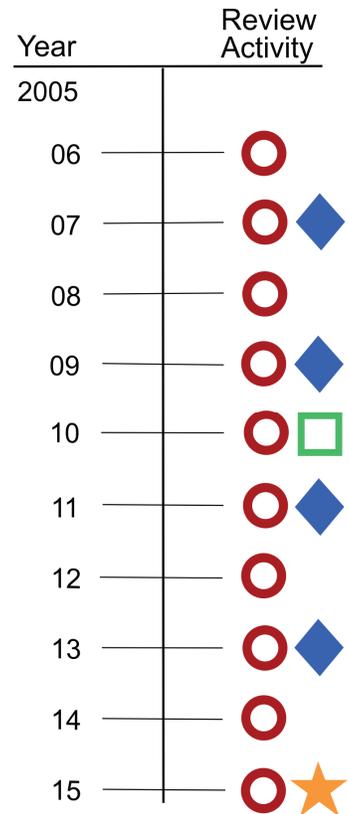


Figure 8. Nisqually River Council schedule.

The Path to a Sustainable Watershed

The specific actions in this section were developed in order to achieve our long-term vision. They are organized into five categories: Involved Community, Biological Diversity, Recreation/Public Access/Tourism, Sustainable Economy, and Water. The specific actions of each category contain elements that speak to the plan's overall goals stated below.

Overall Goals

The overall goals of the Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan draw from the council's mission, vision, and guiding principles. They represent the components of sustainability: environment, community, and economy.

A viable, healthy natural resource base

The natural resources of the Nisqually watershed -- the forests, the fish and wildlife, the water, and the agricultural lands -- co-exist with the community and economy it supports. The natural resources of the watershed are finite and can easily be spoiled. With the looming pressures of population growth, we must redouble our efforts to leave a legacy of one of the healthiest and unspoiled watersheds in the region.

A community that is healthy, wealthy, and wise

Communities in this watershed will choose how they will affect their economy and environment. We hope to play a role in keeping these communities healthy so that they can continue to make good decisions. Strong communities require access to good schools, health care, employment, the arts and a livable environment.

Increased economic productivity in a sustainable manner

A healthy local economy is an integral part of a sustainable Nisqually watershed. The focus of jobs in the Nisqually watershed, like many rural areas, is shifting from traditional resource extraction industries to a new economy. We want our watershed communities to thrive by moving toward industries that can be sustained over the long haul

The development of a stewardship ethic

Individual decisions, both big and little, will decide if we become a sustainable watershed. By helping to develop a stewardship ethic through education and incentives, we believe we can influence those decisions.

Involved Community

We believe communities that function well make decisions that positively affect its watershed's sustainability. We hope to create a watershed community that transcends the civic boundaries of towns, cities and counties into a single community from the glacier to the sound.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010



- Establish community forums based on the Ohop Forum model in one or two sub-basins and form connections to the Citizen's Advisory Committee.
- Participate in community planning. Begin a dialogue with existing local community planning groups to encourage consistency within watershed community plans.
- Provide community citizens with resources to nurture and apply their interests, talents, and skills in productive and rewarding efforts.
- Establish volunteer opportunity boards. Gather and disseminate information about community volunteer opportunities.
- Encourage community-created identities and infrastructure planning compatible with community values and sustainability goals.

2015 Objectives

- There are community forums based on the Ohop forum model in all sub-areas of the watershed.
- Participation in the Nisqually Watershed Festival has increased.

2030 Goals

- The Nisqually community has an established identity with full participation from all sub-areas.

2055 Vision

- Sense of watershed community which values the environment and embraces economic vitality.
- Many watershed residents actively participate in the volunteer stewardship of their watershed - “responsible stewardship.”



Biological Diversity

Often, the species of economic importance receive the most attention, whether it is the Geoduck or the Douglas fir or the salmon. However, they make up a relatively small portion of the total biota. It is imperative that the full complement of native communities and species also be maintained and restored. It is the diversity of life that reaches up from the sound through the prairies, towns, and forests through to the alpine meadows that makes this such a wonderful place.



Aquatic Management

Aquatic management addressed in this plan includes non-commercial species of fish and shellfish and aquatic plants and habitats (commercial management is covered in different elements). Our goal is to ensure high water quality (see water goal below) and restore natural watershed processes and functions that support healthy aquatic life.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Identify and map areas used by freshwater fish and shellfish species.
- Identify areas of concern due to invasive species, both wildlife and plants).

2015 Objectives

- A program to manage invasive species has been developed.

2055 Vision

- Healthy native populations of all aquatic species exist in the watershed.

Threatened and Endangered Species

Fish and Wildlife:

Aleutian Canada goose
Bald eagle
Common loon
Fisher
Grizzly bear
Marbled murrelet
Mardon skipper
Peregrine falcon
Spotted owl
Western gray squirrel
Western pond turtle

Plants:

Golden paintbrush
Hall's aster
Howellia
Large-awn sedge
Pacific pea
Pine-foot
Rose checker-mallow
Rush aster
Smoky mountain sedge
Torrey's peavine
Western wahoo
White meconella

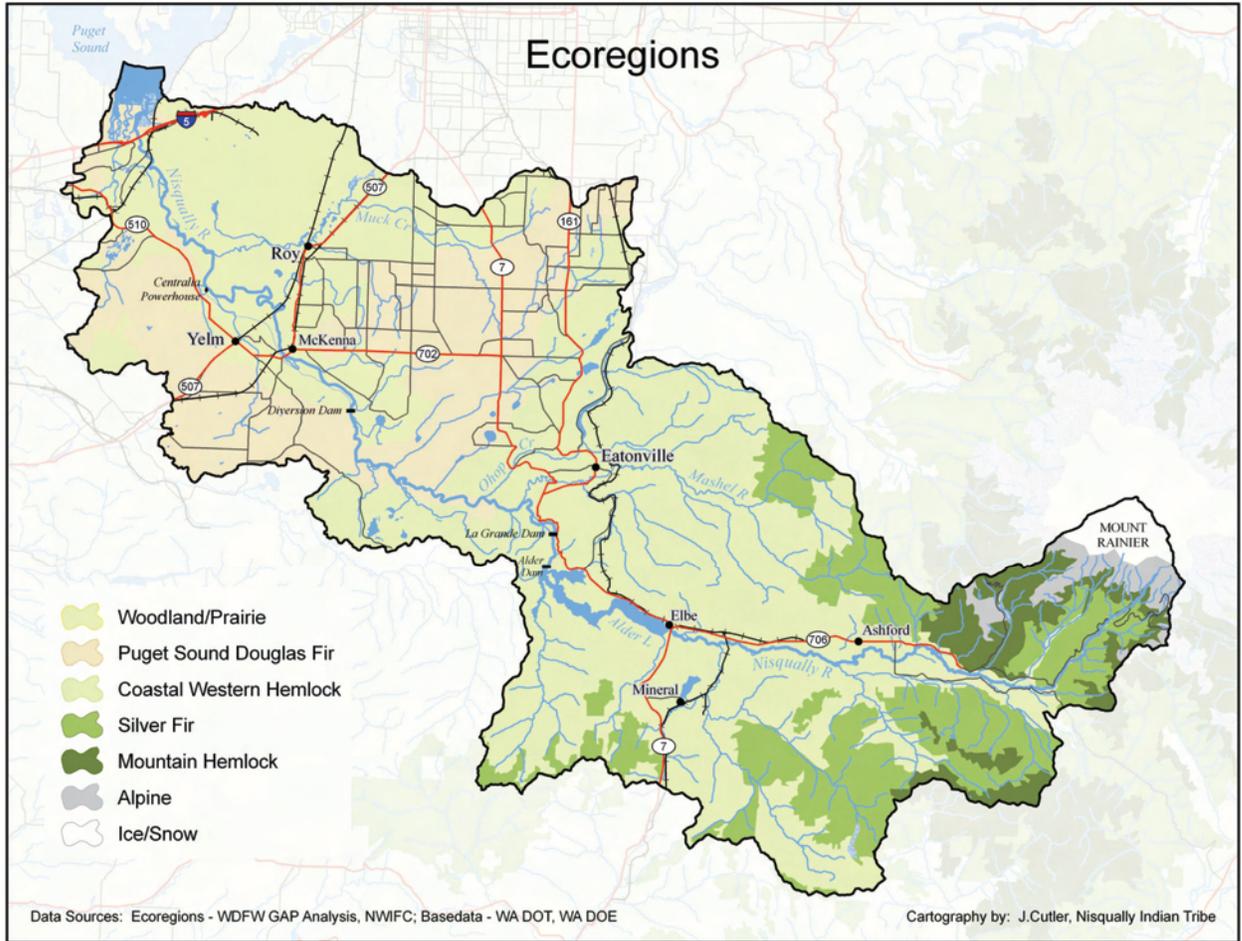


Figure 9. Ecoregions of the Nisqually watershed.

Terrestrial Plant/Habitat Management

Plants are everywhere; they fill every niche and quickly move into any disturbance in the soil. The Nisqually watershed has seven eco-regions ranging from the permanent ice and snow of Mt. Rainier to the Puget Sound Douglas Fir of the Puget Sound lowlands. Changes in the terrestrial habitats have put some plants in jeopardy and allowed other, non-native species to invade. By working to remove the invasive species and restore the threatened and endangered species, we will maintain the biodiversity of the watershed and the region.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010



- Develop an oak habitat protection program.
- Identify eco-regions, identify and map areas, and promote preservation.
- Establish an invasive species removal program.
- Establish additional native plants in the upper Nisqually watershed.

2015 Objectives

- Native habitat in the upper Nisqually watershed has been fully restored.

2030 Goals

- Native habitat in main-stem area of the Nisqually watershed has been fully restored.
- An invasive removal program is in place and additional native plants have been established in the lower Nisqually watershed.

2055 Vision

- There is a viable amount of each type of eco-region represented in the watershed. (Permanent Ice and Snow, Alpine, Mountain Hemlock, Silver Fir, Coastal Western Hemlock, Puget Sound Douglas Fir, Woodland Prairie Mix).
- All threatened and endangered plants in the watershed are fully restored.
- All invasive plants have been removed.



Wildlife Management

Healthy populations of diverse wildlife species are a key indicator of ecosystem health. Robust wildlife populations provide important recreational and economic opportunities in the watershed. Therefore, upland wildlife habitat management – both for hunting and wildlife observation must play a key role in managing the watershed.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Develop a watershed-specific game management plan, including prioritized actions.
- Negotiate access issues with private landowners for wildlife hunting and viewing.
- Identify and map elk range.
- Assess critical habitat for elk over-wintering and calving.
- Develop a Nisqually Elk Corridor Team.
- Identify and map areas important to populations of migratory waterfowl.
- Develop a Nisqually bird stewardship program.
- Identify non-game species and habitat needs in the watershed.
- Develop a non-game plan.



2015 Objectives

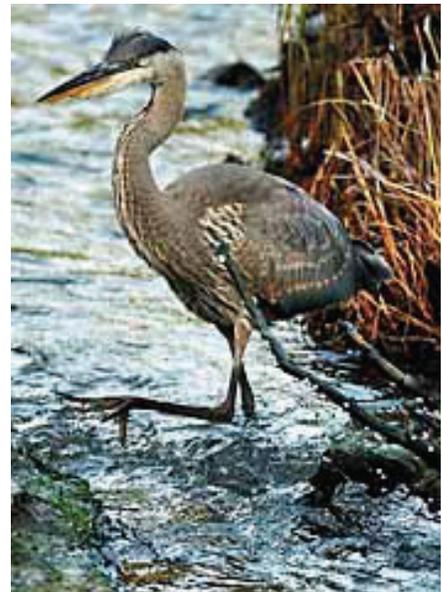
- Significant progress has been made on habitat needs.
- Priority actions for game and non-game species have been implemented.

2030 Goals

- Wildlife habitats have been protected and expanded.
- A game management plan is in place and working well.
- All actions for the non-game species plan have been implemented.

2055 Vision

- There are harvestable populations of all native Nisqually game animals and adequate access to hunting lands.
- There are healthy, viable populations of all native non-game species.
- All state and federal threatened and endangered species have been fully restored in the Nisqually watershed.



(Photo by Mark Lembersky (c) 1992-93)

Recreation/Public Access/Tourism

Recreation

Our personal experiences in the watershed create our appreciation and desire to protect the natural environment. The Nisqually watershed has long been a place where people come to recreate. Anchored by Mt. Rainier at the headwaters and the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge at the mouth, recreational opportunities abound. We want to provide access to a full range of recreational opportunities, from primitive hiking to horse packing, to car and trailer camping. However, access to some of these areas is still very limited, and by increasing public access, we increase personal engagement with the watershed, though we recognize that different types of access must be monitored for impact and compatibility. In addition, we believe that recreation can be more than being in the wilderness; it is also learning from the experience, and that requires access to naturalists and interpreters. Tourism, particularly related to Mt. Rainier, has long attracted visitors to the watershed. As we move into the future, we recognize that tourism will continue to be a major part of the watershed economy. It will be our opportunity to raise knowledge of and appreciation for the Nisqually watershed.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Establish the River Float Trail from the Mashel confluence to the mouth, including bathrooms, overnight stops, and put-in/take-out points.
- Educate the business community and public on the concept of heritage tourism.
- Establish a volunteer program to maintain trails in the watershed.
- Inventory recreation opportunities. Develop an interpretive trail guide for the watershed that covers the watershed's cultural history, recreational opportunities, and environmental diversity.
- Construct two gateways, similar to the entrance to Mt. Rainier National Park, at major access points to the watershed.
- Open the Elbe rest area.
- Plan for the Glacier-to-Sound trail.



- Introduce rural heritage preservation concepts to schools, civic groups, and local governments.
- Define obstacles to retaining and developing small, locally owned, visitor-dependant businesses.

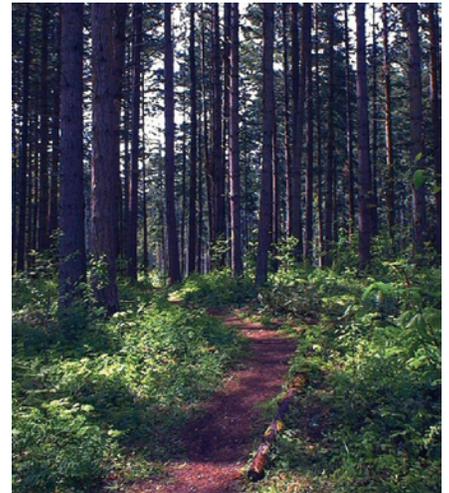
2015 Objectives

- Nisqually Mashel State Park is open.
- A coordinated recreation plan, including visitor management, economic development, and marketing, is in effect throughout the basin. Visitors have a place to get directions and recreation advice.
- There are five, signed gateways into the watershed; all other roads have smaller signs.
- Ten percent of the Glacier-to-Sound trail is open.
- A vital agriculture tourism industry exists.



2030 Goals

- Fifty percent of the Glacier-to-Sound trail is open.
- Twenty percent of the visitors to the watershed come for heritage tourism, to learn about the area’s history.



2055 Vision

- A Cultural Heritage Tourism model is in place, providing year-round activities based on cultural and natural resources of the region.
- There is a Glacier-to-Sound, “Nisqually River” trail system, with voluntary participation by land owners; that recreates the historic tribal trading route.
- Public access opportunities in the watershed have been increased across a variety of land ownerships.
- An integrated system of recreational opportunities is in place that protects the resource in areas which can sustain impact and preserves more sensitive areas.

Scenic Vistas

Many people experience the Nisqually watershed from their car as they travel down I-5 or up to Mt. Rainier. It is important to maintain the scenic vistas that make this such a beautiful watershed to travel through – and not lose them to inappropriate development. A well-thought-out scenic plan can enhance the economic value of the watershed. Therefore, we need to identify our scenic vistas, determine where they are threatened and seek voluntary protections. Also we will seek to keep these areas litter-free through community education and clean-up agreement. The experience of going to the mountain or the estuary is as much about the journey as the destination.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- List all the areas deemed important for scenic quality; specify the characteristics of each view that need to be conserved. Look at the foreground, middle ground, and background.
- Prioritize the scenic views.
- Specifically delineate the boundary of each view. Contact those landowners who own property within this “viewshed” and invite them into the process.
- The River Council and Land Trust should work to develop a stewardship plan to preserve the views and provide landowners with some voluntary options, such as conservation easements.
- Develop a memorandum of understanding between agencies and tribes that outlines guidelines and procedures for picking up garbage.
- Promote educational programs to reduce litter, such as free appliance and tire dump days and recycling programs.



(Courtesy of David Burger, Stewardship Partners)

2015 Objectives

- All priority views are under protection.

2030 Goals

- All of the identified viewpoints in the watershed are under some form of protection that ensures that they will be enjoyed by all, adding to the aesthetics of the watershed.

2055 Vision

- The watershed looks like it did in 2005, free of billboards, with scenic viewpoints protected, and a feeling of continuity as the traveler moves through the watershed communities.



Sustainable Economy

An economy that is built on sustainable industries is critical to the success of this plan and the Nisqually watershed as a whole. We have listed our goals for the areas' traditional natural resource-based industries separately. We want to encourage other new and sustainable economic opportunities along with the tourism industry that is becoming well established. Some of these are detailed directly below.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Implement the basin-wide economic development plan.
- Promote a heritage tourism industry.
- Encourage and enable small to mid-sized, locally based and owned businesses and develop a “newcomer” investment strategy for planned growth.
- Define the value-based products created within the basin, such as agriculture, forestry, manufacturing, tourism and services for locals. Define obstructions to the above.



(Courtesy of David Burger, Stewardship Partners)

2015 Objectives

- There is a strong, local business infrastructure and economic development investment opportunities.
- The visitor economy has been stabilized by creating year-round, extended seasons.
- Community identities that attract business have been established compatible with the 50-year vision.

2030 Goals

- There are diversified economic opportunities consistent with the basin-wide community identity.

2055 Vision

- There is a healthy, vibrant economy that values the qualities that make the Nisqually watershed a wonderful place to live.
- A sustainability land value system has been established.

Agriculture

Along with forestry, agriculture also has a long and vital history in the Nisqually watershed. Increasingly, agriculture is threatened by development and market pressures. Maintaining working agricultural land is an important component in our habitat protection efforts.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Provide technical assistance to farmers for sustainable agriculture.
- Promote the local farming economy with farmers markets and community-supported agriculture (CSA) programs.
- Achieve a balance between incentives and regulations in the agriculture sector.
- Develop a pamphlet for new small farmers (landowners with five acres or less).
- Promote the connection between the urban and rural community (e.g., tours promoting understanding of farming and farmers' issues).



2015 Objectives

- Conservation (farm) plans for all commercial farms in the watershed *have been developed*.
- Incentives that promote purchase of development rights and/or conservation easements have been created.
- There are conservation plans for all small farms requested by landowners.

2030 Goals

- Previously developed conservation (farm) plans are fully implemented.

2055 Vision

- There is no net loss of farmlands from 2005 productivity levels.
- A balance has been achieved between incentives and regulations; they work together to promote sustainability and economic viability.
- The connection between urban and rural has been strengthened by our improved understanding knowledge of local farming and its needs.

Forestry

Forestry has been heart of the watershed's economy for many years, and it still plays a vital role. We believe it will be important to maintain lands in forestry. The sustainable use of both timber and non-timber products remains an important part of the watershed economy.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010



(Photo by Mark Lembersky(c), 1992-93)



- Support development of incentive packages for timber production.
- Support local use of the timber.
- Support and expand small landowner assistance programs in the watershed, including United States Department of Agriculture, Washington State University, Washington State Department of Natural Resources, and UW Pack Forest.
- Promote sustainable harvest practices and marketing of non-timber products, such as salal and mushrooms. Bring together resources, regulations, and contracts for non-timber products.
- Develop programs to assist in sustainable harvest and marketing of timber and non-timber products. Support local use of local timber.

2015 Objectives

- There is a viable and sustainable timber economy. Infrastructure is in place so that people can sell their products.

2030 Goals

- Viable working forest landscape exists.

2055 Vision

- There is a productive forest land base that is at the current (2005) size or larger.
- There is a regulated, enforced program of sustainable harvest of timber and non-timber products.
- There is a sustainable, locally supported industry for harvest of non-timber products.
- Ninety-nine percent of the lands are in a certification program.

Green Business/Industry

The key to creating a sustainable economy in the Nisqually watershed will be attracting green business and industry to serve as the economic drivers. Sustainable business concepts include energy efficiency, waste reduction, local manufacture and use, reduced packaging, and reusable materials.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Adequately define and set up a mechanism for attracting green business.

2015 Objectives

- A mechanism for attracting green business is in place, emphasizing partnerships and networking.

2030 Goals

- Existing industries meet or exceed their current industry standards to enhance the sustainability of the watershed.

2055 Vision

- All new industries enhance the sustainability of the watershed.

Shellfish Management

The primary threat to shellfish harvest—tribal, recreational and commercial—is degradation of water quality. Therefore, the water goal is closely linked to this goal, and improving and maintaining water quality will serve to meet both goals. Also important to shellfish harvest is access for recreational harvesters and vital markets for commercial growers and commercial and tribal harvesters.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Identify and map those areas important to shellfish and identify the areas that need to be preserved or restored.
- Adopt a commercial and recreational shellfish plan.

2015 Objectives

- Recreational access to shellfish has been enhanced.

2030 Goals

- Healthy shellfish beds have been restored.

2055 Vision

- There are healthy and abundant shellfish stocks that are safe to eat. No shellfish beds are restricted.

Fisheries

Fisheries are an integral part of the history and culture of the Nisqually watershed. They also serve as an indicator of its overall health. Salmon and steelhead in particular play a vital role in the watershed life cycle. This plan hopes to bolster the extensive ongoing efforts to restore the long-term health of these species. Also important are the warm-water species that provide recreational opportunities in the lakes throughout the watershed. Our goal is to restore the natural watershed processes and functions that support healthy fisheries.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010

- Identify and map those areas critical to salmon and steelhead and the areas that need to be preserved or restored.
- Update the stream catalog to include descriptions of additional areas.
- Identify and map areas used by warm-water species.
- Complete a multi-species salmon and trout plan.

2015 Objectives

- The Chinook habitat action plan has been fully implemented.
- Local markets for fisheries products have been developed and expanded.
- A warm-water fisheries plan is in place.
- An upper watershed fisheries plan has been developed.

2030 Goals

- All natural populations are self-sustaining.
- Fully implement the multi-species salmon and trout plan.

2055 Vision

- All natural salmon and trout populations have been restored to levels that support an abundant harvest.
- Warm-water fisheries compatible with healthy populations of native fish have been established.

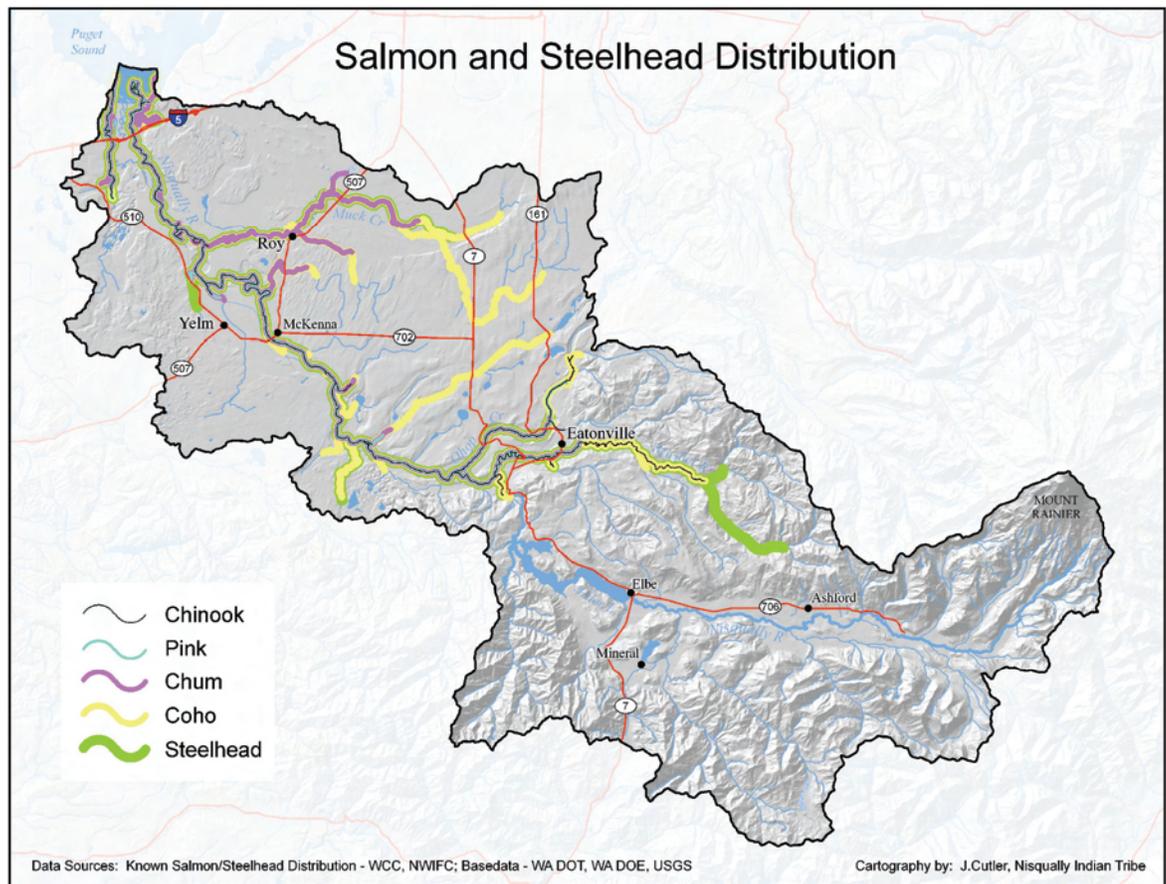


Figure 10. Critical habitats for steelhead in the Nisqually watershed.

Water

Water is the sustainer and purifier of the Nisqually, whether it is supporting fisheries, wildlife, development, or the health of our communities. We must protect and maintain both water quality and quantity. Local use of local water is the best way to handle the future water needs of the basin's residents. Also important is the presence of three hydropower facilities within the watershed. The hydropower operators have become vital partners in the efforts to maintain and restore the watershed.

Actions to Accomplish by 2010



- Promote water conservation.
- Plan for failing septic systems.
- Implement the Nisqually Watershed Management Plan (2514).
- Have a new entity (e.g., County, PUD) own and operate all new septic systems and charge maintenance fees.
- Ensure that all new septic systems are properly installed and located.
- Promote and help with the complete implementation plan for achieving compliance with Total Maximum Daily Loads.
- Gather data and plan for adequate in-stream flow.
- Develop and fund a complete surface water monitoring program.
- Ensure that new construction and development do not degrade water quality.
- Ensure that all municipal waste water treatment facilities in the watershed begin feasibility studies for reuse or tertiary treatment.

2015 Objectives

- A water conservation program for the watershed has been established.
- All Total Maximum Daily Load (TMDL) implementation plan reductions have been completed.
- All municipal wastewater treatment facilities will have completed feasibility studies on reuse or tertiary treatment.
- A plan for correcting failing septic systems has been implemented.

2030 Goals

- There is adequate in-stream flow for ecosystem functions.

2055 Vision

- Water is clean and available and supports the needs of the population without harming habitat.
- There is adequate potable water for communities in keeping with reasonable growth.
- There are no impaired (polluted) water bodies.
- The 2514 plan has been fully implemented.
- There is maximum reuse or re-infiltration of water in the basin.
- The continued operations of the hydropower facilities in the watershed are supported in a way that best protects ecosystem function while also meeting the power needs of the communities.

Programs

In most cases, the goals of this plan will be reached through the coordinated efforts of partner agencies and organizations. However, the Nisqually River Council is also developing programs that will help us reach specific goals. As the Council gets further into the implementation of the Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan, we expect this list of programs will grow.

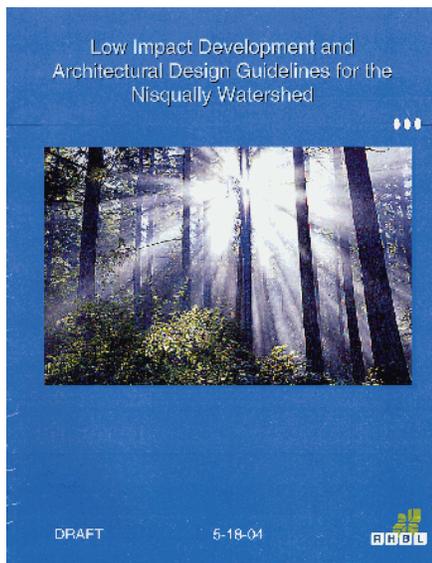
Low-Impact Development and Architectural Guidelines

Goals: Sustainable economy, green business industry, community involvement, water

The Council, working with members of the community, local government, and the tribe, has written low-impact development guidelines for the watershed. We also are working with the counties to create ordinances for the streamlined permitting of low-impact developments. The Council also plans several outreach efforts to increase awareness and acceptance of low-impact development. The efforts include:

1. **Developing a Good Neighbor Handbook:** A joint effort of the Nisqually Land Trust and all watershed-area realtors. It will be mailed to all new landowners in the watershed.
2. **Nisqually Watershed Building Guide:** An annual newsprint insert, developed by the Nisqually Land Trust, the River Council, and the Master Builders Association, and largely supported financially by advertising from architects, builders, and sewer system/fencing, excavating, and interior design companies. It includes success stories of model projects, dos and don'ts, and advertisements for workshops where landowners can learn how to follow building and architectural standards on their property.
3. **County, City, Architects and Contractor Project:** Seminars twice each year, co-sponsored by the Nisqually Land Trust and the River Council, on siting new buildings and selecting building materials.

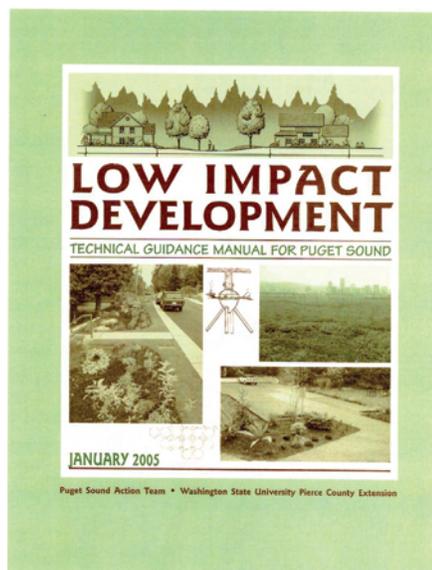
4. Identifying the best areas for commercial and residential development and the use of identified areas suitable for commercial and housing development.
5. A program to contact every watershed landowner to explain standards and incentives for following low-impact development standards. The program also will seek to give incentives to businesses and developers who follow the voluntary guidelines. Finally, the program will try to provide technical assistance to residents and landowners on how they can make their own living more sustainable.



When visitors enter the Nisqually watershed community, we want them to see that they are in a different place, and we want those of us who live here to be reminded that, from the Park to the Refuge, we are a single community.

The purpose of the architectural design guidelines is to promote this sense of place.

This sense of place can be communicated through architecture and building materials. Another way is to preserve the views from major corridor paths. However, any guidelines established should allow for creativity and flexibility. We hope that eventually all new construction and remodels will fit within the broad watershed design guidelines and that all municipalities and counties will adopt design guidelines consistent with the overall vision of the watershed. To accomplish this, the Nisqually River Council will help underwrite the design guidelines with advice from community groups, builders, and developers.



When buildings are “green,” new homes and businesses have as close to a neutral impact on their surrounding environment as possible. This includes elements such as living roofs, pervious pavement, reduced waste during construction, appropriate material use (healthy and sustainable, energy-efficient, design-efficient), and a variety of other options. Low-impact development addresses how the entire development is installed and works to eliminate storm water while reducing the impact of the development on the site. Our vision is to eventually have 100 percent green construction in the watershed, with a process for converting existing buildings and low-impact developments in urban areas when possible. We will continue to evaluate and update green building standards

and help overcome market obstacles by making it more valuable to build green than not. We will make this possible through education and outreach, research, pilot projects, and promotion of existing programs.

Sustainability Certification

Goals: Sustainable economy, agriculture, forestry, community involvement

The Council will encourage independent certification organizations and programs to certify sustainable practices and businesses in the watershed. For example, these organizations might include the Forest Stewardship Council (FSC), Salmon-Safe, and the US Green Building Council’s LEED program. In addition, the Council will develop a Nisqually label brand as a recognized local and regional marketing tool to label Nisqually-produced products with a Nisqually Sustainable logo. We hope this will help build consumer-to-producer connections, promote natural resource-based industries, encourage sustainable practices, and promote the Nisqually watershed to consumers, tourists, and others throughout the region. Our goal is to help all industries achieve certification through these types of third-party programs.



Watershed Characterization

Goals: All

Every five years the Council will produce a status report on the health of the watershed by looking at the following categories: Habitat, Scenic, Developable, Protected, Working Agriculture/Forest, and Rural General.

□ Habitat

Properties are designated as important for habitat if data suggests that at certain times of the year they support elk, salmon/steelhead, waterfowl, Garry oaks, native prairie, or other selected species or priority habitats. For the first five years of this program, we will emphasize projects that preserve or restore the habitat of these five indicator species/habitats. In year four, we will evaluate the success of these projects, and establish priority projects for the second five-year period. We will alert landowners (public and private) to the presence of these important habitat areas in or around their property. In addition, we will encourage them to participate in voluntary stewardship activities, consider offering their properties for donation or purchase of conservation easements or fee-simple acquisition by private non-profit conservation organizations, such as the Nisqually Land Trust. This is a willing sellers program only.

□ Scenic

We consider the spectacular views of natural beauty in our watershed to be a key part of our quality of life. We highly value the scenic “viewshed” experience each day from our homes, business developments, and travel routes. It is an important reason why people choose to live and work here.

Our “viewshed” includes the physical views of the rivers, wetlands, mountains, forests, and pastoral scenery. To sustain these views, we must complete a scenic resource inventory every four years. Scenic vistas or natural backdrops important to our communities and visitors will be identified and evaluated for preservation and protection options. At least for the first five years, all emphasis will be on preserving the wooded corridors and landscape views from state highways.

❑ **Developable**

These are areas that cities and counties have determined are suitable for development. This encourages development in the right areas.

❑ **Working Farms and Forests**

Piecemeal degradation of working farms and forests would erode the integrity and quality of the watershed's resources and beauty. We need to identify these farms and private timber lands, then provide incentives to landowners so they may keep these farms and forests working.

❑ **Special Areas**

- **Areas Already Protected:** These public properties and land trust properties should be identified and distinctions made between their different uses and management plans.
- **Intersections:** If a piece of property is listed as having two categories of special value, then its use deserves immediate review. For example, if a working forest is also listed as an area important for habitat, then that forest will have a higher priority for being retained as a working forest than a piece of forest land that has not been identified as important to elk, salmon, waterfowl, or oaks.

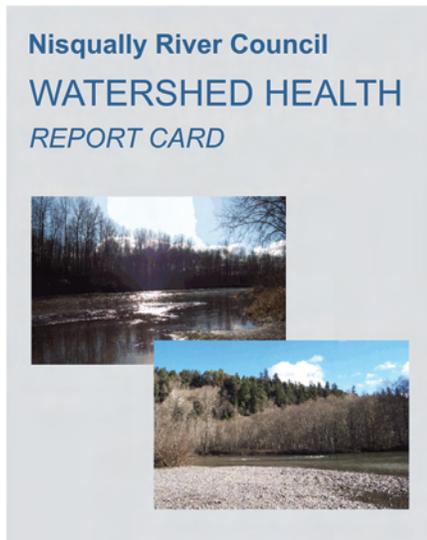
Similarly, if an area listed as having important scenic qualities is also an area suitable for development, then the Council needs to work with those likely to develop the area so that it can occur in a way that does not degrade the public view.

After the properties have been categorized and prioritized, the Council and appropriate affiliated organizations should meet with landowners to discuss how everyone's objectives can be met. We hope this will develop a series of voluntary, property-specific plans that, when taken as a whole, meet the watershed community's objectives.

The Council also will include a stream catalog, describing each sub-basin.

“I believe in the sun and the stars, the water, the tides, the floods, the owls, the hawks flying, the river running, the wind talking. They’re measurements. They tell us how healthy things are. How healthy we are.”

–Billy Frank Jr.



Watershed Health Report Card

Goals: All

Every three years, the Council plans to produce a snapshot of the watershed and a measure of its health.

The watershed health “report card” will:

- Include information about current land use, with GIS data on forest *versus* agriculture and urban *versus* rural uses and examine local zoning ordinances.
- Identify land ownership patterns and the major landowners in the watershed, including an analysis of the land that is privately owned *versus* publicly owned and their general differences in size, urban *versus* rural, and agriculture *versus* forested character.
- Identify the pressures and changes occurring in the watershed, such as changes in land-ownership patterns, land use, and the state of nature over the last ten years.
- Identify the issues the community should be aware of.
- Consider using satellite imagery to compare land cover and development rates.
- Report on changes in population, average income, and industry.
- Report on water quality (including 303d list status), air quality, fish run numbers, wildlife populations, and other environmental indicators.

The report card will show the key indicators of watershed health on a continuing basis.

Education/Interpretation

Goals: Community involvement, recreation/public access/tourism

Education and interpretation have been a major component of the Nisqually River Council's efforts and will continue to be in the future. Now we want to focus, in particular, on integrating the concept of sustainability into our education efforts.

These efforts will foster watershed stewardship by giving people more access to the land and interpretation of its resources. We want to give people the tools and information that will enable them to be better stewards. Partners in this effort will include the Nisqually River Education Program, the Nisqually Stream Stewards, Pioneer Farm, Mt. Rainier, UW Pack Forest, Northwest Trek, the Peterson Farm, the Tacoma Power, the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and the Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. Our vision is to develop an interpretation program that addresses the history, culture, environment, and economy of the watershed.

To accomplish this, we hope to send every student in the watershed through a watershed-based education program and include the watershed's history in middle and secondary school curricula. We also hope to foster interpretation opportunities for specific communities. Among the goals are developing a Mt. Rainier Institute based on the North Cascades Institute, redeveloping the existing watershed curricula and making them available by website, fully integrating interpretation resources of the basin in an educational outreach program, encouraging schools to teach the concept of sustainability, and creating an internationally renowned outdoor classroom—a living lab, a hands-on classroom from glacier to delta.

Nisqually Pledge

Goal: Community involvement

As we work towards encouraging a stewardship ethic for those who live in and visit the watershed, we will create a Nisqually Pledge. Modeled on the Shellfish Stewardship Pledge, the Nisqually Pledge will be a way for individuals to volunteer to examine and make changes in their activities and actions, giving them the opportunity to move towards individual sustainability. In return, the program provides incentives that reward them for their actions.

Established Programs

❑ Nisqually Stream Stewards

The Nisqually Stream Stewards program has successfully enlisted watershed residents to help protect and restore streams and tributaries that feed into the Nisqually River. The program teaches volunteers and landowners how to assess stream health, evaluate salmon habitat potential, gather data about their local creeks, and identify places in the watershed where projects could improve the river system.



❑ Nisqually Land Trust

The Nisqually Land Trust protects and restores critical wildlife habitat in the Nisqually River Basin by acquiring title, easements, and other property rights. We buy only from willing sellers and work closely with landowners, businesspeople, and government agencies.

An important part of our mission is to help preserve working farms, ranches, and forests. We are also committed to building appreciation of the Nisqually basin through educational programs and public participation in Land Trust activities, such as our volunteer stewardship program.

Formed in 1989, the Land Trust is a non-profit membership organization with a volunteer board and three part-time staff. We believe that the magnificent natural areas of the Nisqually basin are a resource we all share, and that with careful planning and a commitment to conservation, we can be sure that our children's children will share it, too.

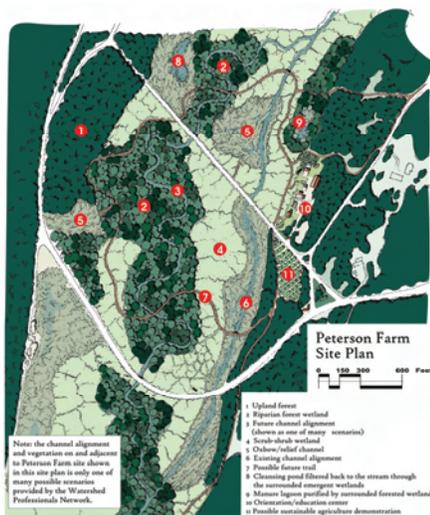


Figure 11. The Nisqually Land Trust is working on the eco-regional restoration of the Peterson Farm on Ohop Creek.

❑ **Nisqually River Education Program**

The Nisqually River Education Project’s mission is to give local residents the knowledge, skills and motivation to protect and enhance the Nisqually River watershed, including its water quality and salmon habitat. The goals of the project include: giving local students in-the-field environmental science education opportunities. We hope to continue to include several districts and the Wa He Lute Indian School. We want to motivate and train local science teachers to focus on local environmental investigation and action, creating students who will become stewards of the Nisqually River watershed.



(Photo by Mark Lembersky(c), 1992-93)

❑ **Nisqually River Interpretive Center Foundation**

The planned Nisqually River Interpretive Center is an initiative of the Nisqually River Council and is overseen and managed by the Nisqually River Interpretive Center Foundation. The mission of the interpretive facility is to foster a stewardship ethic by providing interpretive and educational opportunities that emphasize the system of natural, cultural, historic, and economic resources of the Nisqually River Basin.

The intent of the interpretive center is to tell the story of the Nisqually from “mountain to sea” to children and adults locally, around the state and region, and even internationally. The message will emphasize the highly successful Nisqually watershed management model that could be replicated anywhere on the planet.



❑ **Nisqually Shellfish District – Shellfish Stewardship Pledge**

This program asks landowners to take a pledge to reduce their negative impact on water quality in areas that affect shellfish health. It includes sections on animal waste, septic, run-off, storm water ponds, impervious surfaces, and lawns and watering.

Governance

The Nisqually River Council will implement the Nisqually Stewardship Plan. The Council, which represents both government and non-governmental interests, is a coordination organization with no independent authority. The Nisqually River Council will also have advisory committees to ensure citizens are represented, as well as business, community, and environmental interests.

Nisqually River Council Organizational Structure

The Nisqually River Council coordinates and analyzes policy issues relating to the implementation of the Nisqually Watershed Stewardship Plan. It also acts as a clearinghouse and coordinating unit for Nisqually River interests. It has limited powers, with no independent regulatory or land acquisition authority. It elects its own officers and establishes subcommittees as necessary. It is required to hold public meetings at least annually.

The membership of the Nisqually River Council includes the following entities. Each organization designates a representative to the Council. An alternate representative may also be designated.

- Cities of Roy, Yelm, and Town of Eatonville (1 shared seat)
- Citizens Advisory Committee (3 seats)
- Community Advisory Committee
- Economy Advisory Committee
- Environment Advisory Committee
- Lewis County Board of Commissioners
- National Park Service, Mount Rainier National Park
- Nisqually Indian Tribe
- Pierce County Council
- Tacoma Power
- Thurston County Board of Commissioners
- University of Washington, Pack Experimental Forest
- US Department of Defense, Fort Lewis

- US Fish and Wildlife Service, Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge
- US Forest Service, Gifford Pinchot National Forest
- The three conservation districts (1 shared seat)
 - Pierce Conservation District
 - Thurston Conservation District
 - Lewis County Conservation District
- Washington State Department of Agriculture
- Washington State Department of Ecology
- Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Department of Natural Resources
- Washington State Department of Transportation
- Washington State Office of Economic Development
- Washington State Parks and Recreation Commission
- Washington State Secretary of State



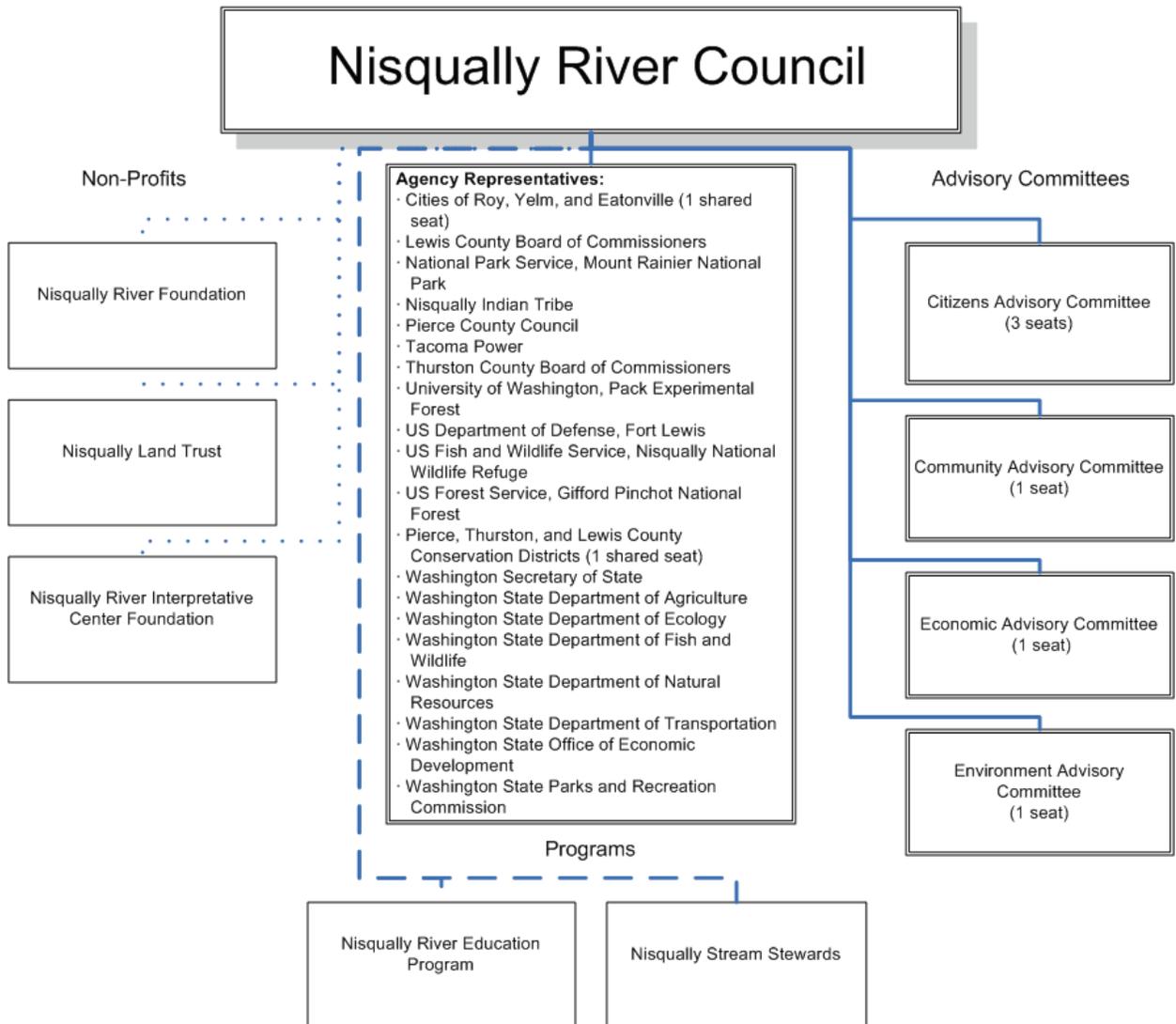


Figure 12. Nisqually River Council organizational structure.

The Council has a permanently established executive committee and four advisory committees. These committees are laid out as follows:

❑ **Executive Committee**

The Executive Committee may be called to meet when time is of the essence, and there is not time for the full Council to meet in regular session. In this capacity, the Executive Committee has the power to act for the full Council, although the full Council may subsequently override the actions of the Executive Committee.

The membership of the Executive Committee will include the chair and vice chair of the Council and the chair of the Citizen’s Advisory Committee.

❑ **Advisory Committees**

Originally, the Nisqually River Council was advised by a single advisory committee: the Citizen’s Advisory Committee. As the purview of the Council expands to encompass economic and community issues, additional advisory committees will be necessary. The current Citizen’s Advisory Committee will continue to have three seats at the Council. In addition, three new advisory committees will be formed under the three headings of sustainability: Environment, Community, and Economy. These advisory committees will be made up of representatives of organizations we invite to participate. The new advisory committees will develop their own operating guidelines, subject to approval by the Council. The Citizen’s Advisory Committee will also develop its own operating guidelines, subject to approval by the Council.

The Citizen Advisory Committee

Organizational Structure

❑ Purpose

The purpose of the Citizen’s Advisory Committee is to provide advice and information to the Nisqually River Council on issues that come to its attention and to report on activities throughout the watershed from the citizen’s perspective. The original purpose of the CAC was to ensure the citizens of the watershed were represented when the Nisqually River Management Plan was implemented and to give them a broad, open and independent meeting venue to discuss issues important to them. This still holds true.

The Citizen’s Advisory Committee is where interested individuals who want to help manage the watershed can participate in the Nisqually River Council. This provides a way for the watershed community to communicate with management agencies and helps us understand the subtle differences between residents of each area or river tributary. The Council and Citizen’s Advisory Committee work together by sharing manpower, experience, education, leadership and financial support.

❑ Membership

Candidates for membership in the Citizen’s Advisory Committee may be solicited or self-nominated.

Interested persons must apply for membership to the CAC, which will review the application and vote on sponsoring the applicant for the Council.

The Council will then review the application and vote on membership. The membership of the Citizen’s Advisory Committee should represent a variety of interests, skills, knowledge, and communities.

The Council has the right to limit the numbers of CAC members when, in the Council’s judgment, there is a need for such limitation.

Citizens may be removed from the Citizen’s Advisory Committee if requested by the Council or Citizen’s Advisory Committee. When such a request is made, the Citizen’s Advisory Committee will vote on removal

and forward the matter to the Council, which will take the Citizen's Advisory Committee's recommendation under advisement when it votes on removal.

❑ **Officers**

Members of the Citizen's Advisory Committee annually elect a Chair, a Vice-Chair, and other committee officers as needed. The Chair of the Citizen's Advisory Committee serves on the Executive Committee of the Council. In the absence of the Chair, the Vice Chair will conduct meetings and attend the appropriate Council meetings for the Chair. Three Citizen members will also be elected at the same time to take their seats as full Council members.

❑ **Council Participation**

Three seats on the Council are reserved for Citizen's Advisory Committee members. If any of the three elected CAC members is not present at the Council meeting, the Chair of the CAC or, in his or her absence, the Vice-Chair, will determine which members represent the Citizen's Advisory Committee in Council decisions. If neither the Chair nor Vice-Chair is present, representatives will be selected based upon level of involvement over the preceding year.

We encourage representatives to express personal opinions and make suggestions during Council deliberations, but we asked them to support any standing vote of the CAC in Council decisions.

❑ **Activities**

The Citizens and outgoing Chair will provide an annual report on the previous year's goals, and the new Chair will present a revised draft agenda for the upcoming year at the annual planning retreat. The draft will be finalized after we hear participant comments at the annual planning retreat.

The Economy, Community, and Environment Advisory Committees' Organizational Structure

❑ Purpose

There will be three additional advisory committees. The purpose of the Economy, Community, and Environment Committees will be to seek advisory committee representatives from watershed organizations, such as business, community service, and environmental groups.

❑ Appointment

Organizations will be solicited by the Council to provide a representative to the appropriate advisory committee. The Council will decide on the makeup and number of member organizations.

❑ Officers

Members of the advisory committees will annually elect a Chair, who will serve on the Council as a full member to represent the interests of the advisory committee.

❑ Council Participation

Each advisory committee will have one full seat at the Council.

Standing Committees, Work Teams, and Ad Hoc Committees

The work of the Nisqually River Council often requires work by groups on specific issues to provide it with information and recommendations. To that end, the Council may establish standing committees, work teams, and ad hoc committees to meet on various issues that come before the Council. Standing committees will meet regularly on broad topics, work teams will meet as needed on ongoing projects, and the ad hoc committees will meet as required to work on very specific issues.

Non-profits

Three 501(c)(3) non-profit organizations have also been created to assist the Council in implementation of the plan. The function of the non-profit organizations should be to:

- Accept gifts, grants, bequests, etc. (of money or land).
- Offer grants for exceptional performance within the management area.
- Enter into willing seller/willing buyer real property acquisition.
- Implement certain elements of the Nisqually River Management Plan, as identified by the Council, such as education and interpretation; recreation; agricultural enhancement; and land acquisition and preservation.

These non-profit organizations currently include the:

Nisqually River Foundation

The Nisqually River Foundation exists to provide the funding and staffing necessary to implement the programs of the Council.

Nisqually Land Trust

The Nisqually Land Trust's mission is to protect property in the watershed through direct purchase or conservation easements and through stewardship of those properties.

Nisqually River Interpretative Center Foundation

The Nisqually River Interpretative Center Foundation works to build the Nisqually River Interpretative Center as the hub for all interpretation programs in the watershed.

Appendices — Available Online at www.nisquallyriver.org

- A. Original Plan
- B. Assessment of the 1987 Plan and connections with the current plan
- C. Low Impact Development and Architectural Design Standards for the Nisqually Watershed
- D. 2514 Nisqually Watershed Plan
- E. Upper Nisqually Community Plan
- F. Yelm Community Plan
- G. Eatonville Community Plan
- H. Muck Creek Basin Plan
- I. Graham Community Plan
- J. Stream Catalog
- K. Chinook Recovery Plan
- L. Multi-species Recovery Plan