

# Watertalk

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10 Bulletin - EPA 910/9-92-043

August 2008

## Agencies to Investigate Puget Sound Health with EPA Research Vessel

The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's Ocean Survey Vessel **Bold** will be plying the waters of Puget Sound in August as scientists look into oxygen levels and pollutants in local waters. The public is invited to tour the 224 foot ship and its wide range of monitoring and assessment equipment on August 19th in Seattle.

The water quality study of the oxygen levels in Puget Sound is a collaborative effort between EPA, Washington Department of Ecology, and the University of Washington. Low dissolved oxygen, or hypoxia, is a concern in the Sound and Hood Canal which can affect marine life.

In addition to the dissolved oxygen study, EPA is also interested in studying the concentrations of pollutants in the sediments of the Sound. Researchers will be sampling for contaminants such as dioxin and Polychlorinated Biphenyls (PCBs).

The public is welcome to see the ship while it is docked at Pier 66 in Seattle. EPA will be working with the Odyssey Maritime Discovery Center to offer 45 minute tours of the ship and learn about the rich maritime history of the area. Tours will be available from 10:00 am to 3:00 pm on August 19th. Several scientists and researchers will be on board during the public tours to demonstrate the scientific equipment and how they used it during their Puget Sound work.

### Advance Notice: EPA to Solicit Funding Proposals for Coastal Watersheds

Region 10's coastal watersheds stretch from Alaska to Oregon's southern boarder. They include watersheds draining directly to coastal and tidally influenced waters. In September 2008, EPA Region 10 will solicit project proposals to receive funding through its West Coast Estuaries Initiative Program.

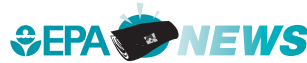
The initiative supports the protection and restoration of high value, coastal aquatic resources and the enhancement of local programs in areas threatened by growth pressures. Tribal and local governments and special purpose districts are uniquely positioned to address the impacts of population growth through their land use management authorities. EPA is looking for opportuni-

*continued on page 2*



*EPA's OSV Bold will be open to the public on August 19th, 2008. Don't miss this chance to see this exciting research vessel.*

### In This Issue...



**EPA News** to update you on agency activities, pages 1-2.



**Tools** to clue you in on resources, publications, opportunities, and services, pages 2-3.



**Waterwords** covering water related issues, pages 4-6.



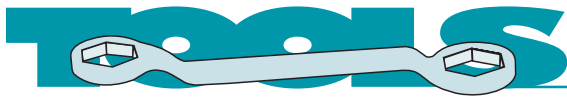
**Spotlight** to showcase success stories and environmental stars, pages 7-9.



**Ecosystem** to provide news that goes beyond water topics, page 10.



**Calendar** to highlight environmental events, page 11.



## WaterSense: Teaching and Learning

**Kids Have WaterSense, Too!** Curious kids who like fun and online adventure might want to know about the new kids-only pages on EPA's WaterSense website—complete with a cartoon hero named Flow. Flow gets their imaginations and water-efficiency awareness flowing with activities all about water. Flow teaches kids why it's important to save water and how to use less. Kids can play *Test Your WaterSense*, in which they dodge the villainous Water Wasters—like Sogosaurus, who doesn't care that she waters her lawn every day of the week, Drip Drip, who won't fix his leaky faucet, Swirly, who likes to flush his toilet all the time, and Drainiac, who runs her faucet when brushing her teeth. The little squirts will become WaterSense Heroes in no time! <http://www.epa.gov/watersense/kids/index.htm>.

**New WaterSense Materials for Kids, Teachers:** *A Day in the Life of a Drop* teaches students about the connections between the sources of the water they use and how that use affects human health and the environment. These fun learning materials, for grades 3-5, include a teachers' guide, two student worksheets, a spreadsheet to track water use at home, and a pledge for students and their families to 'filter out bad water habits.' The new curriculum can be found on EPA's website at [www.epa.gov/watersense/water/drop.htm](http://www.epa.gov/watersense/water/drop.htm).



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### EPA to Solicit Funding Proposals

ties to help these entities integrate land use programs with watershed management to protect and restore coastal watersheds.

Proposals should range from \$400,000 to \$600,000 for work over a 2-4 year period. With approximately \$2.8 million in funding, Region 10 anticipates funding 5 to 7 grants.

For details, see the fact sheet posted on EPA Region 10's website at <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/water.nsf/office+of+water/wei08rfp>. In September, look for the request for proposals online at [www.grants.gov](http://www.grants.gov) and on EPA Region 10's website. The closing date is anticipated to be December 1.

## Bright Ideas!



### Chat Us Up —

**Have a Greenversation:** EPA bloggers give a behind-the-scenes look at activities that are often not publicized but affect how the agency protects our environment. Plus, each week we ask you a question related to the environment and invite you to share your thoughts. Visit <http://blog.epa.gov/>.

**EPA's First Podcast—Green Streets:** EPA has posted its first audio program in a planned series about smart growth and green development entitled, *From Gray Funnels to Green Sponges*. The program features a discussion on how communities can better manage rainwater and snow melt where it falls. Green streets, rain gardens, and green roofs are helping many urban communities manage runoff and provide aesthetic benefits. Environmentally-friendly landscape designs also can help minimize urban heat island effects, reduce a community's carbon footprint, and cool the planet. Visit: <http://www.epa.gov/owow/podcasts>.

**See Earth Day Photo Contest Winners:** Hundreds of people submitted photos for EPA's contest. Entries show scenes from around the world, including the United States, Namibia, Malaysia and Antarctica. See the stunning winners at [www.epa.gov/earthday/photocontest/winners.html](http://www.epa.gov/earthday/photocontest/winners.html).

**Got Poetry?** Visit <http://riverofwords.org/> to read winning environmental poems written by today's youth and view creative and inspiring environmental artwork as well.

**Green your lawn and garden:** Get seasonal tips on landscape maintenance and environmentally friendly solutions for homeowners and large-scale landscapers. Visit [www.epa.gov/greenscapes/](http://www.epa.gov/greenscapes/).

**Ask EPA:** Discuss how to protect the environment with top EPA experts at [www.epa.gov/askepa/](http://www.epa.gov/askepa/).



## Sustainable Finance Training Online

EPA's Watershed Academy has added a new online training module on **Developing a Sustainable Finance Plan**. The training is designed to help watershed organizations develop and carry out sustainable funding plans. Case studies give real examples of finance strategies employed by nonprofit watershed organizations in the U.S. To view the module, visit [www.epa.gov/watertrain/sustainablefinance](http://www.epa.gov/watertrain/sustainablefinance). Fifty other training modules on a variety of watershed topics are also available at <http://www.epa.gov/watertrain>.

## Water Quality Standards Academy: New Online Course

EPA now offers a multi-media, web-based training course for state and tribal employees and the general public on key aspects of the water quality standards program and other Clean Water Act programs. This Internet-based training program is an abbreviated version of the week-long, in-class Water Quality Standards Academy course. It includes the following modules:

- (1) Introduction to EPA and the Clean Water Act,
- (2) Water Body Uses,
- (3) Water Quality Criteria,
- (4) Anti-degradation,
- (5) Standards Submittal and Approval, and
- (6) Variances, Use Attainability Analyses, Mixing Zones and Other Flexibility Options.

Learn more at:  
[www.epa.gov/waterscience/standards/academy/](http://www.epa.gov/waterscience/standards/academy/).

## Watershed Handbook Online



EPA has released an online document to help communities, watershed organizations, and environmental agencies develop watershed plans to meet water quality standards and protect water resources. The **Handbook for Developing Watershed Plans to Restore and Protect Our Waters** is designed to help with any watershed planning effort, but should be particularly useful to persons working with impaired waters. It contains in-depth guidance on quantifying existing pollutant loads, estimating the load reductions required to meet water quality standards, developing effective management measures, and tracking progress. The handbook includes ways to protect important elements of the landscape and aquatic habitats. Find it on the web at [www.epa.gov/owow/nps/watershed\\_handbook/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/watershed_handbook/).



### Get on Watertalk's E-List

Save trees and limit mailbox clutter! Sign up now for the **Watertalk List-Serv**. You'll get your Watertalk electronically every quarter. It's quick and easy to sign up. Just go to [www.epa.gov/region10](http://www.epa.gov/region10). Click on **A to Z Subject Index**, then **W for Watertalk**. There you will find an option to get on the **Region 10 Water Issues List-Serv**. Every quarter, an e-mail will tell you when the new Watertalk is ready, and link you to its website. Once in a while, you will get other water-related news from EPA. Remember to send an e-mail to [lindsay.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:lindsay.andrea@epa.gov) to be removed from the hard copy mailing list.

# WaterWords

## Fifteen Things You Can Do to Make a Difference in Your Watershed

### • Learn About Your Watershed

#### • Become Active in Your Watershed

#### • Help Increase Public Awareness in Your Watershed



- 1.** Learn about your watershed. Start by using the **Watershed Region Information** ([www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/region/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/region/)) to find your watershed address and learn about its environmental health. Other useful sites include: **Surf Your Watershed** (<http://cfpub.epa.gov/surf/locate/index.cfm>), **Envirofacts** ([www.epa.gov/enviro/index\\_java.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviro/index_java.html)) and **Enviromapper** (<http://map8.epa.gov/enviromapper/>). Also be sure to check out EPA's **Wetlands** ([www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/)) web page to learn about the importance of wetlands.
- 2.** Use EPA's **Nonpoint Source Program** ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/education.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/education.html)) web pages to learn about how nonpoint source pollution affects your watershed and your coastal watershed ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/coastnps.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/coastnps.html)). Identify ways you can help prevent polluted runoff from your home, ranch or farm. Check out **Give Water a Hand** ([www.uwex.edu/erc/gwah/](http://www.uwex.edu/erc/gwah/)) or the **National Farm\*A\*Syst/Home\*A\*Syst Voluntary Assessment Programs** ([www.uwex.edu/homeasyst/](http://www.uwex.edu/homeasyst/)) (for farmers and homeowners), and the U.S. Department of Agriculture's **Natural Resources Conservation Service's Programs and Activities** ([www.nrcs.usda.gov/](http://www.nrcs.usda.gov/)) to find out how you can be part of the solution, instead of part of the problem.
- 3.** Go on an **Estuary Walk, Lake Walk, Stream Walk** ([www.epa.gov/adopt/patch/html/streamwalk.html](http://www.epa.gov/adopt/patch/html/streamwalk.html)), or **River Walk** and make observations and assessments of water body conditions. If you see anything abnormal (such as dead fish, oil spills, leaking barrels, and other pollution) contact your city or county environmental department right away and report the nature and location of the problem.
- 4.** Find out about our precious coastal and marine resources by reading the **Coastal Watershed Fact Sheets** ([www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/factsheets/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/factsheets/)). Learn about pressure on ocean resources ([www.pewtrusts.org/our\\_work\\_detail.aspx?id=130](http://www.pewtrusts.org/our_work_detail.aspx?id=130)) and find out 25 things you can do to help save coral reefs (<http://www.yoto98.noaa.gov/books/reefs/reef1.htm>).
- 5.** Learn how land use and development decisions affect your water resources and how **watershed planning and the watershed approach** ([www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/approach.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/approach.html)) can help. Find out about model ordinances to protect water quality at EPA's **Model Ordinances to Protect Local Resources** ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/ordinance/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/ordinance/)) web pages and the **Center for Watershed Protection**, ([www.epa.gov/owow/nps/ordinance/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/nps/ordinance/)) Also learn about alternatives to current development patterns such as **low-impact development** (<http://lowimpactdevelopment.org/>) and **smart growth** ([www.smartgrowth.org/Default.asp?res=1024](http://www.smartgrowth.org/Default.asp?res=1024)).
- 6.** Find a watershed organization in your community and volunteer to help. If there are no active groups, consider starting your own. Use EPA's **Adopt Your Watershed's Catalog of Watershed Groups** ([www.epa.gov/adopt/network.html](http://www.epa.gov/adopt/network.html)) to locate groups in your community or visit the Watershed information website **How to Start a Watershed Team** page ([www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/start.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/start.html)).
- 7.** Become a **Volunteer Water Quality Monitor**. help collect water quality data and build stewardship for your local water body. Attend a training workshop to learn proper monitoring techniques and safety rules. Visit EPA's **Volunteer Monitoring Homepage** ([www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/monitoring/volunteer/)) and read *Starting Out in Volunteer Water Monitoring*. Consult the **National Estuary Program's Volunteer Monitoring page** ([www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries/monitor/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/estuaries/monitor/)) for guidance in coastal areas.

# WaterWords

- 8.** Organize or join in the cleanup of a beach, stream, estuary, or wetland. For example, participate in the **National River Cleanup Week** ([www.americanrivers.org/site/PageServer?pagename=AR7\\_NationalRiverCleanup](http://www.americanrivers.org/site/PageServer?pagename=AR7_NationalRiverCleanup)) sponsored by American Outdoors, or the **International Coastal Cleanup** ([www.oceanconservancy.org/site/PageServer?pagename=press\\_icc&JServSessionIdr009=pgv34dzhj5.app45b](http://www.oceanconservancy.org/site/PageServer?pagename=press_icc&JServSessionIdr009=pgv34dzhj5.app45b)) sponsored by the Ocean Conservancy on the third Saturday of every September. For information on coastal debris ([www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/debris/index.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/debris/index.html)), read *Turning the Tide on Trash* ([www.epa.gov/owow/ocpd/Marine/contents.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/ocpd/Marine/contents.html)). Be sure to follow safety guidelines for any cleanup activity!
- 9.** Create a **Wildlife Habitat in your Backyard, Workplace or Schoolyard**. Certify your backyard or schoolyard as part of the National Wildlife Federation's **Backyard Wildlife Habitat Program** ([www.nwf.org/backyard/](http://www.nwf.org/backyard/)) or **Schoolyard Habitat Program** ([www.nwf.org/schoolyard/](http://www.nwf.org/schoolyard/)).
- 10.** Participate in or help coordinate a special wetlands activity during the month of May to celebrate **American Wetlands Month**. Visit EPA's wetlands web site ([www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/awm/](http://www.epa.gov/owow/wetlands/awm/)) for ideas for special wetland activities. Also, celebrate **International Migratory Bird Day** ([www.birdday.org/](http://www.birdday.org/)) by joining in an event to raise awareness about the importance of birds, biological diversity, and wetlands.
- 11.** Do your part to protect drinking water sources. Individuals, citizen groups, and local communities can participate in many activities that help to protect their drinking water sources. Get information about drinking water and how it can be protected at the **EPA Source Water Protection Web site** (<http://cfpub.epa.gov/safewater/sourcewater/sourcewater.cfm?action=Involvement&view=general>). Find out more about how your drinking water is tested, treated and protected by reading your utility's yearly water quality report ([www.epa.gov/safewater/ccr/basicinformation.html](http://www.epa.gov/safewater/ccr/basicinformation.html)). Check out the **National Source Water Collaborative** ([www.protectdrinkingwater.org/](http://www.protectdrinkingwater.org/)) - a coalition of 19 national organizations with a shared recognition of the importance of protecting drinking water sources.
- 12.** Prepare a presentation about your watershed for a school or civic organization. Explain what a watershed is: ([www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/what.html](http://www.epa.gov/owow/watershed/what.html)). Discuss water quality threats, including polluted runoff and habitat loss. Highlight things people can do to protect water quality, including limiting fertilizer use and eliminating herbicides and pesticides. Be sure to provide case studies from other watersheds and to highlight success stories. Research your presentation using a variety of water education materials ([water.usgs.gov/education.html](http://water.usgs.gov/education.html)).
- 13.** Organize a **Storm Drain Marking Project** in your neighborhood. Produce and distribute a flyer or door hanger for households to remind residents that storm drains dump directly into your local water body. Click here for guidelines on how to conduct a project (<http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/menuofbmps/index.cfm?action=browse&Rbutton=detail&bmp=15>). Visit EPA's **Stormwater Website** (<http://cfpub.epa.gov/npdes/stormwatermonth.cfm>) for door hangers, videos and publications that can be downloaded or ordered for free.
- 14.** Sponsor a **World Water Monitoring Day Event or Watershed Festival** in your community to raise awareness about the importance of watershed protection. Organize the event around a water body in your watershed (e.g., estuary, lake, river, etc.), an issue (protecting drinking water sources), or a national event. Find out how to get involved in or start planning your own monitoring event using the **Water Environment Federation's World Wide Monitoring Day Web site** ([www.worldwatermonitoringday.org/](http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org/)). The Groundwater Foundation's "*Making Waves: How to Put on a Water Festival*" and "*Making More Waves: Ideas from Across the US and Canada for Organizing Your Water Festival*" ([www.groundwater.org/pe/pe.html](http://www.groundwater.org/pe/pe.html)) guidebooks can help you organize a festival in your community.
- 15.** Learn how to fund your watershed outreach and public education efforts. Use the following EPA resources to get started: the *Catalog of Federal Funding Sources for Watershed Protection, Environmental Finance Program* (<http://cfpub.epa.gov/fedfund/>), and the **Clean Water State Revolving Fund Program** ([www.epa.gov/OW-OWM.html/cwfinance/cwsrf/](http://www.epa.gov/OW-OWM.html/cwfinance/cwsrf/)).

## Drinking Water vs. Bottled Water? EPA Bloggers Respond

By Kevin Bernadt

Recently, there has been much talk about bottled water versus tap water. Most Americans have safe tap water, and drink it fresh from the kitchen faucet. Others choose to buy more expensive bottled water. But bottling and transporting water can carry environmental costs and use energy and resources.

EPA's public blog, *Geenversations* (<http://blog.epa.gov/blog>) had this topic in mind when it posed the question of the week in July: "Why do you drink bottled water or tap water?"

Over 575 bloggers responded. Most stated they drank tap water more frequently than bottled water if given the choice. The most common reason for drinking tap water was the confidence that it is clean and comes from a verifiable source. Many respondents noted their concerns about energy use, solid waste, and other environmental issues associated with bottled water. Cost, and concern about possible health impacts from the plastics, were also factors.

By far, the biggest reason bottled water fans gave for that selection was taste. Many cited a chlorine tap water taste or a local saltier tap water taste due to mineral content. Another cited reason for bottled water was convenience. Some respondents declared that tap water safety was a concern for them due to health reasons, personal observations, or municipal source water quality suspicions.

EPA regulates drinking water from municipal sources under the Safe Drinking Water Act. Municipally treated water must meet established standards. EPA regulates the production, distribution, and quality of drinking water. It also regulates source water protection, operation of drinking water systems, and contaminant levels.

Bottled water is consumer product regulated as a food by the Food and Drug Administration (FDA). The water in the bottles can come from the same drinking water sources as tap water. Bottled water must meet FDA standards for physical, chemical, microbial, and

### What's in Your Bottle?

It's easy to take for granted the fact that we have easy access to safe water in our homes - something that more than 1 billion people in the world can't rely on. Every day, committed professionals who work for more than 52,000 community water systems provide water to 286 million consumers throughout the country. And during this time of escalating prices of everything from milk to gasoline, we should remember that tap water is a great value.



The U.S. Conference of Mayors just released a study showing that, on a cost per ounce basis, municipal water is 1,000 to 4,000 times more affordable than bottled water. So, this week, fill your own bottle (or other container) with safe, affordable water from your tap. Also, learn more about your water system, including how you can help to protect your drinking water source from contamination. Visit EPA's web site at [www.epa.gov/safewater](http://www.epa.gov/safewater) for information about the national drinking water program.

radiological contaminants. When EPA sets a new standard for a contaminant in tap water, FDA must establish a new standard for the same contaminant in bottled water or find that EPA's new standard is not applicable to bottled water.

## Wanted: Water Efficiency Leaders

EPA is now accepting nominations for the 2008 Water Efficiency Leader Awards. The awards recognize organizations and individuals who demonstrate outstanding leadership and innovation in water efficiency. Winners will be chosen by a panel of national water experts, based on three criteria: leadership, innovation, and water saved. Nominations are due by August 29, 2008. More information on the awards is at [www.epa.gov/water/wel](http://www.epa.gov/water/wel).

## Colville Tribes Protect Water with Nonpoint Source Projects

by David Carcia

The Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation have shown that well-implemented, smaller-scale projects can add up to real environmental results.

Located in North Central Washington, the Confederated Tribes are a sovereign nation of twelve bands of First Americans. The 2,100 square miles of tribal land includes widely diverse habitats. Various fish species, deer, elk, bald eagles, peregrine falcons, and the endangered sharp-tailed grouse also grace this Tribal land.

To protect such biodiversity and beauty while meeting transportation and economic needs, the Tribes' Environmental Trust Program controls nonpoint source pollution. Particular attention is paid to forest roads, which can impede fish passage, destabilize soil, reduce shade, and load streams with sediment.

Through the Clean Water Act (CWA) Section 319, a voluntary nonpoint source program, EPA budgets about \$2.5 million per year nationally for tribes with treatment-in-a-similar manner as-a-state status. The Colville Tribes were first to gain this status in 1991. Since then, the Tribes have successfully implemented 319 projects of up to \$200,000 per year.

The Tribes use a GPS/GIS system (funded by a CWA 106 water quality monitoring grant) to prioritize, implement, and track their Tribal 319 projects. With 3,033 (out of 7,000) miles of roadway and 1,901 stream crossings inventoried to date, this GPS/GIS tool helps to cluster projects for maximum watershed benefit, according to Todd Thorn, Forest Practices Administrator for the Environmental Trust Department.

In just three seasons, the Colville Tribes achieved many short-term and mid-term results. They removed fifteen failing or unnecessary stream-crossings, restored eight fish passages, installed 160 cross-drain treatments, and decommissioned 8.5 miles of road. Longer-term results include enhanced riparian conditions, improved water quality, and increased capacity as Tribal road-building contractors developed "...a higher standard for stream crossings, and tribal mem-



*Colville has already decommissioned 8.5 miles of road.*

bers were pleased to apply their skills and some new techniques in improving resource conditions for their Tribal lands and waters," according to Mr. Thorn.

Looking forward, the Tribes will redouble water monitoring to assess nonpoint source treatment efficacy. This year Colville Tribes are creating a GPS/GIS sediment baseline which will improve future nonpoint source treatment assessments.

Many factors contributed to the efficient and sometimes synergistic use of smaller-scale EPA grants. GPS/GIS technology brought an unwieldy road network into sharp relief. Tribal government provided a multi-disciplinary perspective. And, community involvement shaped the final project selections. Section 319 funds enable the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation to gauge their success and sustain their spectacular natural resources for future generations. To learn more, contact David Carcia, EPA, at 206-553-0890 or 800-424-4372 x0890, or [carcia.david@epa.gov](mailto:carcia.david@epa.gov).

## NW Companies Join EPA's Performance Track

Five Region 10 companies are the newest members of EPA's Performance Track program. These facilities join more than 500 nationwide in their commitment to environmental stewardship. The five new Northwest members are:

- Elmendorf Air Force Base, Fairbanks, Alaska – our first member from Alaska
- Portland VA Medical Center, Portland, Oregon
- Stanley Hydraulic Tools, Milwaukie, Oregon
- US Postal Service, Tacoma Mail Processing Center, Tacoma, Washington
- US Postal Service, Spokane Processing and Distribution Center, Spokane, Washington

Only facilities with a record of sustained environmental compliance are eligible to participate in this program. Performance Track rewards facilities that voluntarily:

- exceed regulatory requirements
- implement systems for improving environmental management
- work with their communities, and
- set three-year goals for improvements in environmental performance.

Since its inception in 2000, members have collectively reduced greenhouse gas emissions by 309,780 metric tons of carbon dioxide equivalent, increased their use of recycled materials for production processes by 559,991 tons, and reduced water consumption by 5.2 billion gallons.

One of the greatest rewards for these companies is recognition for being a good environmental neighbor in their local communities. EPA and states are developing additional, specific benefits that will reduce some routine transaction costs of regulation and allow these facilities to focus more on environmental results. At the same time, members are expected to provide more information on their overall environmental performance and management to EPA, states and the public.

For details, visit [www.epa.gov/performance-track](http://www.epa.gov/performance-track) or call 1-888-339-PTRK. Or, contact Bill Glasser, EPA, at 206-553-7215 or [glasser.william@epa.gov](mailto:glasser.william@epa.gov); or Marcia Colvin, EPA, at 206-553-6907 or [colvin.marcia@epa.gov](mailto:colvin.marcia@epa.gov). For a list of all Performance Track facilities in the Northwest, visit: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/R10/OI.NSF/webpage/Performance+Track>.

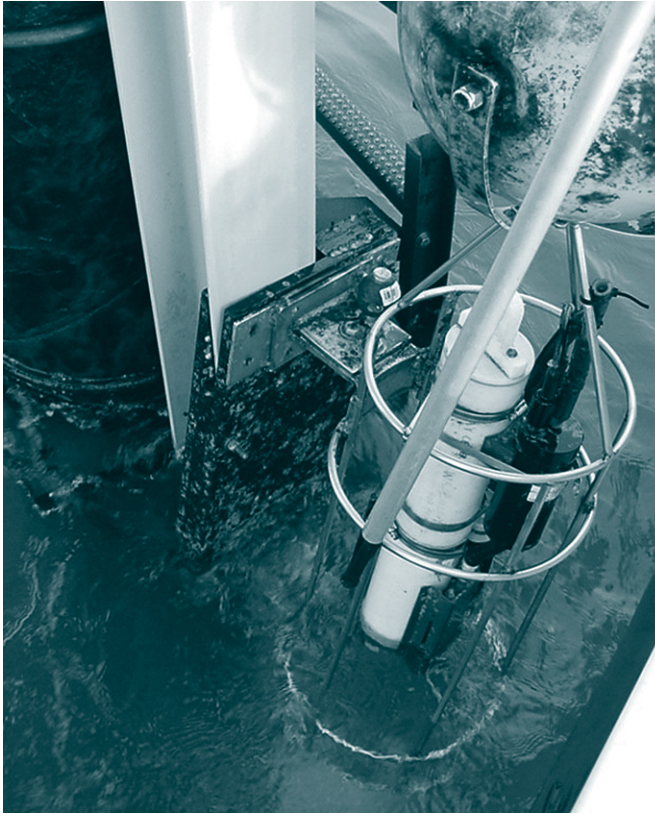


*Elmendorf Air Force Base, Fairbanks, Alaska – the first Performance Track member from Alaska*

**Visit WaterTalk online at [www.epa.gov/r10earth/watertalk.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/watertalk.htm)**



## EPA Divers Help with Coastal Estuary Monitoring



Data station with a floatation buoy at the top.

EPA Region 10's Dive Team has been working hand in hand with the Washington Department of Ecology to maintain estuary monitoring stations over the past year. Coastal estuaries play a vital role in our oceans' overall health and are home to a variety of birds, mammals, fish, and other wildlife.

Ecology has conducted long-term monitoring of marine water quality since 1973 to support many scientific and regulatory activities. The core of the monitoring program consists of monthly floatplane sampling at about 40 stations in Puget Sound, Willapa Bay, and Grays Harbor.

An initiative is underway to further characterize coastal estuaries, using Willapa Bay as a case study. One part of the work included installing four surface-floating moorings in the bay to get more data on temperature, salinity, and chlorophyll. Assessing the physical environment is essential for understanding chemistry variation and biological communities. This information helps determine how effectively current regulatory tools are protecting the estuary and how changes in the estuary environment are related.

Dives using tethered SCUBA were conducted in 2007 and 2008 using the Ecology vessel *Skookum*. Having line-tended divers allowed constant surface-to-diver communication, as well as diving outside of slack current times. This maximized the amount of work performed on each dive in collecting and placing scientific instruments. Photos can be found at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/OEA.NSF/Investigations/Dive+BOS#coastalest>.

## Supporting Environmental Education

EPA 910-K-06-001



United States Environmental Protection Agency Region 10 1200 Sixth Avenue Seattle WA 98101

### U.S. EPA's Environmental Education Grants Program



The goal of the Environmental Education program is to support projects that enhance the public's awareness, knowledge, and skills to make informed and responsible decisions that affect environmental quality.

EPA Region 10 has awarded nine grants totaling about \$189,000 for environmental education programs in the Northwest. The funding is part of the ongoing effort to enhance environmental education in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington. The funding helps promote and advance environmental literacy and sustainable practices.

"These grants support projects that allow students, teachers, and citizens to learn more about ecosystems, climate change, health and food, ocean health, and fisheries management," said EPA's Sally Hanft. "We are impressed year

after year with how much the recipients are able to accomplish with these grants."

These grants are awarded annually to local organizations, not-for-profit organizations, government agencies, schools and universities whose projects strive to increase people's knowledge and awareness about the environment and its associated challenges. Information about the grant recipients, projects and funding amounts can be found online at: <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/homepage.nsf/webpage/education+resources> (scroll down to Funding).

For questions, contact Sally Hanft at 206-553-1207, 800-424-4372, or [hanft.sally@epa.gov](mailto:hanft.sally@epa.gov). Currently, EPA does not have an environmental education grant solicitation issued. Check our national website for up-to-date information at [www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html](http://www.epa.gov/enviroed/grants.html).

## Beneficial Landscaping:

# A “Green” Lawn Could Save Salmon, Protect Children and Pets



'Tis the season for lawn mowing, so here are a few thoughts to consider while you're pushing (or riding) "la machine." A perfect, weed-free lawn usually means a not-so-perfect environment both on and off site. This is because:

- **Most weed killers are poisons.** Consider whether your treated lawn is the best play area for your children and pets!
- **Toxic surface water runoff causes salmon “pre-spawn mortality.”** Runoff from the first fall rains carry high concentrations of herbicides, pesticides, oil, grease, anti-freeze, and other pollutants. This poisoned water can kill returning salmon before they

are able to spawn. Habitat restoration efforts are frustrated by pre-spawn mortality, which research shows is caused mainly by pesticides that landowners apply to urban and suburban lawns.

“Perfect” weed and insect free lawns and gardens that are achieved through chemicals are not fish, wildlife, or even people friendly – particularly for young children. Why not kick the habit?

For more information on this or other topics in Beneficial Landscaping, contact Elaine Somers at 206-553-2966, [somers.elaine@epa.gov](mailto:somers.elaine@epa.gov), or visit our website at [www.epa.gov/r10earth/bl.htm](http://www.epa.gov/r10earth/bl.htm).



# CALENDAR



## August

**August 19:**  
Tours of the EPA Ocean Survey Vessel **Bold**,  
Pier 66, Seattle, WA, 10 am to 3pm

## September

**September 4:**  
Climate Change and Water Infrastructure  
Forum: Collaborating on Adaptation  
Challenges, Seattle, WA, Paula VanHaagen,  
EPA, 206-553-6977 or 800-424-4372

**September 15-19:**  
Wetlands 2008: Wetlands and Global Climate  
Change, Portland, OR, [www.aswm.org/  
calendar/wetlands2008/index.htm](http://www.aswm.org/calendar/wetlands2008/index.htm)

**September 18:**  
World Water Monitoring Day,  
[www.worldwatermonitoringday.org](http://www.worldwatermonitoringday.org)

**September 18-19:**  
Energy Management for Drinking Water and  
Wastewater Utilities, Worley, ID, EPA and  
Idaho Rural Water Association, 208-343-7001 or  
800-962-3257, [www.idahoruralwater.com](http://www.idahoruralwater.com)

**September 20:**  
International Coastal Cleanup Day,  
[www.oceanconservancy.org/icc](http://www.oceanconservancy.org/icc)

**September 27:**  
National Estuaries Day, [www.estuaries.gov](http://www.estuaries.gov)



## October

**Children's Health Month**  
[http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/  
content/homepage.htm](http://yosemite.epa.gov/ochp/ochpweb.nsf/content/homepage.htm)

**October 13-14:**  
National Groundwater Association International  
Conference on Nonrenewable Ground Water:  
Sociotechnological Aspects of  
Nonrenewable Ground Water Resources,  
Portland, OR, [www.ngwa.org/  
DEVELOPMENT/conferences/details/  
0810135055.aspx](http://www.ngwa.org/DEVELOPMENT/conferences/details/0810135055.aspx)

**October 15:**  
Deadline for contributions to the November  
issue of *Watertalk*, Andrea Lindsay, Editor,  
206-553-1896, 800-424-4372,  
[lindsay.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:lindsay.andrea@epa.gov)

**October 17-19:**  
Seattle Bioneers Conference, NW  
Environmental Education Council, Seattle, WA,  
<http://nweec.org/seattlebioneers>

**October 18:**  
38<sup>th</sup> Birthday of Clean Water Act,  
Carkeek Park, Seattle, WA, Nancy Malmgren,  
206-363-4116

## November

**November 5-7:**  
Working for Healthy Watersheds: Climate  
Change and Watershed Resilience, Oregon  
Watershed Enhancement Board, Eugene, OR,  
[http://oregon.gov/OWEB/  
biennialconference\\_08.shtml](http://oregon.gov/OWEB/biennialconference_08.shtml)

**November 15:**  
America Recycles Day, [http://nrc-recycle.org/  
americanrecycles.aspx](http://nrc-recycle.org/americanrecycles.aspx)

**November 16-19:**  
National Low Impact Development  
Conference, Seattle, WA, Environmental and  
Water Resources Institute of ASCE, [http://  
content.asce.org/conferences/lid08/](http://content.asce.org/conferences/lid08/)



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**Watertalk**  
*August 2008*



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You are invited to contribute items for publication. Submittal deadline is the 15th day of the month before publication.

**Watertalk** articles can be used in other publications. Please give credit to **Watertalk**.

For mailing list changes, or to contact the editor, call Andrea Lindsay at (206) 553-1896 or 1-800-424-4EPA x1896, or e-mail [lindsay.andrea@epa.gov](mailto:lindsay.andrea@epa.gov).

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Watershed**

**What's In Your Bottle?**

**Greenversations,  
Green Streets, Green  
Lawns**

**Event Calendar**

***And More . . .***