



Agencies Accept EPA’s “Federal Green Challenge”

When senior executives from 19 Pacific Northwest federal agencies gathered in Seattle recently, their goal was ambitious—to reduce the federal government’s “carbon footprint” in Alaska and the Pacific Northwest by about 9 million pounds by next year (roughly equivalent to 450,000 gallons of gasoline saved). The program is also expected to save about \$1.8 million.



To meet its own challenge locally, EPA’s regional office has conducted an energy, water, transportation and waste management inventory and is challenging other federal agencies in Alaska, Idaho, Oregon and Washington to do the same. EPA is inviting those agencies to pledge to cut federal waste, reduce their “carbon footprints,” and save money. Together, partners are

exploring new ways to collaborate and accomplish measurable savings.

“The federal government is the country’s largest energy consumer and purchaser,” said EPA’s Regional Administrator Elin Miller. “We believe that the Federal Green Challenge will help agencies, offices and military bases reduce energy consumption, cut greenhouse gases, and save taxpayer dollars.”

To help, Region 10 is hosting a monthly series of 12 webinars on topics including: Sustainability, Environmental Management Systems, Energy, Transportation, Waste, Water and Green Meetings. Visit the website www.federalgreenchallenge.net for more information.

For details, contact **Vicky Salazar**, EPA, at **206-553-1066, 800-424-4372 x1066**, or salazar.vicky@epa.gov, or **Melanie Wood**, EPA, at **206-553-1107, 800-424-4372 x1107**, or wood.melanie@epa.gov.

EPA Shares 2008 Report on the Environment

The **EPA 2008 Report on the Environment** provides information about the trends in the conditions of the air, water, land, and human health of the United States. This report uses scientifically sound measures, called indicators, to address fundamental questions relevant to EPA’s mission to protect the environment and human health. To accomplish this mission, EPA must pay close attention to trends in environmental conditions. This information helps EPA prioritize its work and focus on human health and ecological activities that can lead to improvements in the conditions of the nation’s environment.

The report gives trends and analysis on many issues, including:

- Outdoor air quality and its effect on human health and the environment.
- Coastal waters and their effects on human health and the environment.
- The diversity and biological balance of our nation’s ecological systems.

To explore the interactive report, visit www.epa.gov/ncea/roe.

In This Issue...



EPA News to update you on agency activities, pages 1-3.



Tools to clue you in on resources, publications, opportunities, and services, pages 4-6.



Waterwords covering water related issues, page 7.



Spotlight to showcase success stories and environmental stars, page 8.



Ecosystem to provide news that goes beyond water topics, pages 9-10.



Calendar to highlight environmental events, page 11.



Stormwater Permitting Update

Stormwater pollution is a challenging water quality problem. In fact, stormwater runoff is our most common cause of water pollution. Rainwater and snowmelt run off streets, lawns, parking lots, and other surface areas. The water can pick up fertilizers, dirt, pesticides, oil and grease, and many other pollutants on the way to our rivers, lakes, and coastal waters. Runoff from some construction and industrial sites is regulated under the National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) wastewater permit program. Following are updates on EPA's permitting efforts for these sources.

EPA Re-Issues Permit for Construction Site Stormwater

EPA is re-issuing a **Stormwater Construction General Permit**, which expired July 1, 2008, for a two-year time period. The permit will apply only where EPA is the permitting authority. Here in the Northwest, that includes Idaho and Alaska and most Indian country lands. (In Oregon and Washington, the state environmental agencies have permitting authority.)

The permit regulates the discharge of stormwater from construction sites that disturb one acre or more of land, and from smaller sites that are part of a larger, common plan of development. The permit requires operators of the construction sites to use stormwater controls and develop stormwater pollution prevention plans to minimize the discharge of sediment and other pollutants.

Under the re-issued permit, new dischargers include new

construction sites that start construction on or after the effective date of this permit and those that have already started construction, but do not have coverage under the 2003 permit. Sites that have coverage under the 2003 permit must continue to comply with the provisions of that permit and do not need to apply for coverage under this new permit.

The permit uses most of the same terms and conditions as EPA's 2003 permit. EPA is coordinating the permit with an effort to set national clean water standards, known as an effluent limitation guideline, for the construction and development industry. When the guideline is final, EPA plans to include its provisions in a new five-year construction general permit to be reissued no later than 2010. For information, contact **Misha Vakoc**, EPA, at **206-553-6650**, **800-424-4372 x6650**, or **vakoc.misha@epa.gov**.

EPA Issuing Stormwater Permit for Industries

EPA is issuing a new Stormwater **Multi-Sector General Permit** (MSGP). The permit will regulate stormwater discharges from an estimated 4,100 industrial facilities that require NPDES permit coverage. The permit applies to facilities in states and territories not authorized to implement the NPDES permit program, including Alaska, Idaho, and most Indian country lands.

Facilities are required to install control measures that meet established technology- and water quality-based effluent limits. They must also develop stormwater pollution prevention plans. The new permit offers several

improvements from the previous MSGP, including easy-to-understand discharge requirements; electronic filing of Notices of Intent and monitoring reports; and several new web-based tools.

Under the Clean Water Act, all facilities that discharge pollutants into waters of the United States must obtain a National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System permit. The new permit replaces the MSGP issued in 2000.

More information: **www.epa.gov/npdes/stormwater/msgp**.

Federal Agencies Plan to Reduce Marine Debris



EPA, NOAA, and nine other federal agencies recently completed a report that will help the agencies and the Interagency Marine Debris Coordinating Committee (IMDCC) prevent and reduce marine debris. The report helps guide agency strategies and discusses marine debris efforts, recent progress, and innovative ways to reduce the problem.

Marine debris — which includes plastic grocery bags, bottles, ropes, tires, soda rings and lost fishing gear — is found in the ocean and along coasts around the world. Marine debris threatens public safety, hurts the

economy with costly cleanups and deterred tourism, and harms and kills marine life such as seals, sea turtles, sea birds and coral reefs.

The report's recommendations focus on prevention, response to debris already in the environment, research and development, and coordination. The report was written by IMDCC at the request of Congress. See the report at www.ocean.ceq.gov/about/docs/SIMOR_IMDCC.pdf. Learn more about EPA's Marine Debris Program at www.epa.gov/owow/oceans/debris/index.html.



Get Watertalk Electronically

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. 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 to be removed from the hard copy mailing list.



School projects to help the environment are eligible for awards.

Youth Award Applications Due December 31

The deadline for the **President's Environmental Youth Awards (PEYA)** applications has been extended to December 31, 2008.

Since 1971, EPA has sponsored the President's Environmental Youth Awards. The program recognizes young people across America for projects which demonstrate their commitment to the environment.

Projects submitted in the past have covered a wide range of subject areas. These include recycling programs in schools and communities; construction of nature preserves; major tree planting programs; videos, skits, and newsletters created by students that focused on environmental issues; and environmental science projects.

To be eligible to compete, a student or students, sponsored by an adult, must submit to their local EPA regional office evidence of a completed project as well as a completed application. More information can be found at www.epa.gov/enviroed/peya/index.html. Or, contact **Sally Hanft**, EPA, at 206-553-1207, 800-424-4372 x1207, or hanft.sally@epa.gov.

Bright Ideas!



Recycle your old cell phone.

"Plug-In To eCycling" is a voluntary partnership between EPA and electronics manufacturers, retailers, and service providers to offer consumers more opportunities to donate or recycle their used electronics. http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2008-7-8_cell_phones

Look for the SmartWay label on new and used vehicles when shopping. SmartWay-certified vehicles are the best environmental performers, and roughly 20 percent of all vehicles qualify as SmartWay-certified. http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2008-7-3_SmartWay

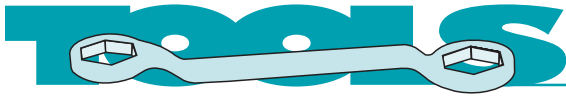
Dispose of trash properly and help keep the oceans clean. When trash is not properly thrown away or recycled, it can wash down storm drains or blow into streams, rivers, and the ocean. Never dump anything down a storm drain. http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2008-7-1_beaches

Get public service safety messages, which can help during natural disaster preparation or recovery. Topics include asbestos, protecting children from floodwater, mold, drinking water wells, and more. Free for re-use and broadcast. Listen in English or Spanish. <http://epa.gov/naturalevents/psa.htm>

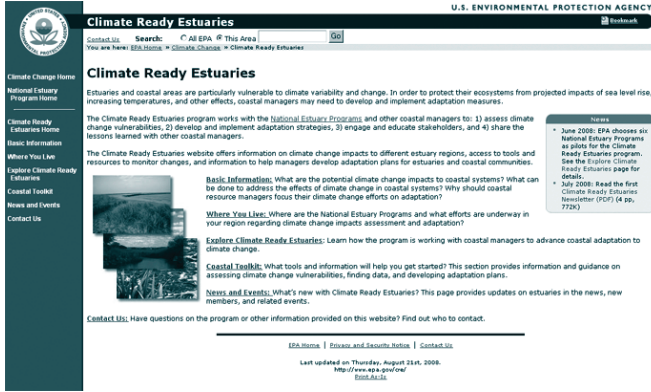
Kids! Find the healthiest fish to eat using stories and games you can play. http://yosemite.epa.gov/opa/admpress.nsf/names/hq_2008-8-1_fish

Reduce your carbon footprint. Use public transportation, carpool, walk, or bike whenever possible to avoid using your car. Learn about greenhouse gas emissions on the road. www.epa.gov/climatechange/wycd/road.html

Have a Greenversation. Ever wanted to tell EPA what you thought about an environmental topic? Each week, you have your chance in the EPA blog, Greenversations. Each question is an open-ended blog entry. Share your comments and see what others have to say. <http://blog.epa.gov>



Website: Climate Ready Estuaries

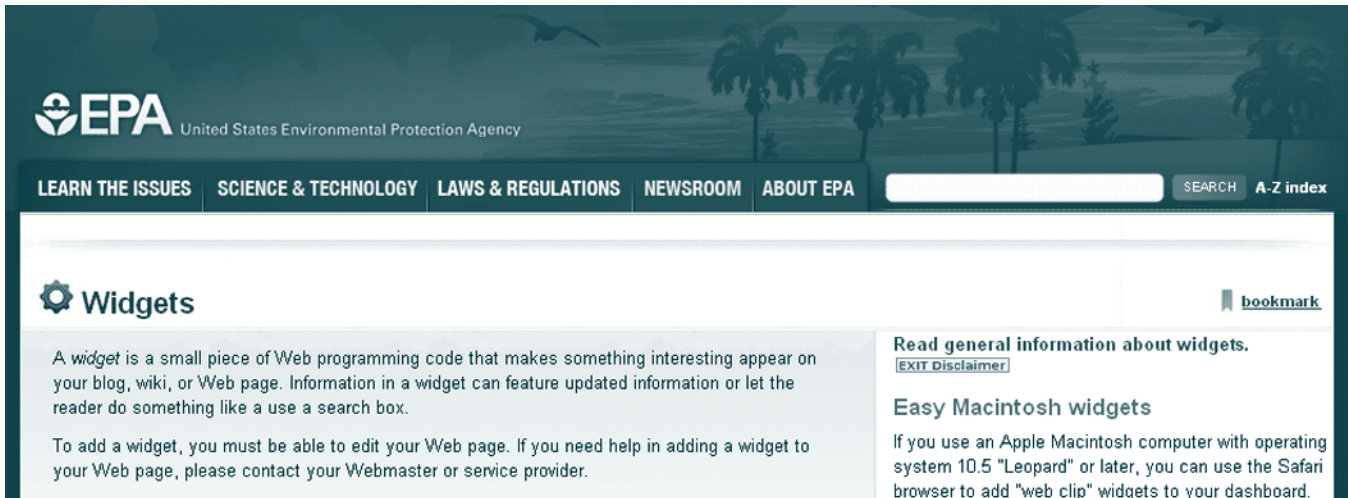


users with information about the importance of coastal adaptation to climate change and provides a toolkit for adaptation. The online toolkit features resources related to coastal vulnerability, adaptation planning, smart growth, data and monitoring, and sustainable financing, serving a range of needs - from community members to coastal managers.

The Climate Ready Estuaries program is a partnership between EPA and the National Estuary Programs (NEPs). It addresses climate change in coastal areas. This effort brings together EPA's Oceans and Coastal Protection Division and Climate Change Division to build additional capacity in the NEPs and other coastal communities as they prepare to adapt to the effects of climate change.

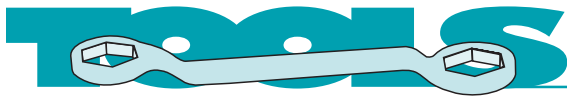
EPA's **Climate Ready Estuaries** announces its new website at www.epa.gov/cre. The website provides

New Widget Helps “Find Your Watershed”



A new **Find Your Watershed widget** connects to EPA's **Surf Your Watershed** database. Now, anyone with a website, including their own blog, can post the widget on their own site. The widget, found at <http://epa.gov/widgets/#watershed>, supports watershed education and outreach.

With this widget, partners can help direct users to EPA's Surf Your Watershed database. The database helps people find their watershed, learn about its health, and connects them with organizations at work in their watershed. EPA's first widget, the “environmental tip of the day,” released last spring, was seen 363,000 times in June after it was posted, which is more than any single page on EPA's website other than the home page.

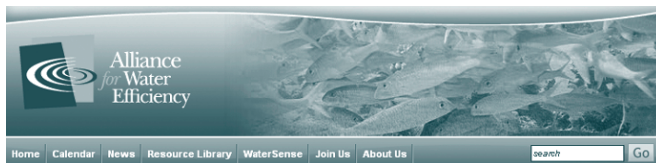


EPA's National Home Page Worth a Visit

Check out EPA's national internet Home Page, which recently got an overhaul. The changes allow visitors to find information on the website more easily and quickly. The Home Page now includes tips on how to help protect the environment and gives information on environmental issues in your own zip code. It offers ways to get involved, resources for research, and a

section for youth. The latest video and audio features are easy to access. Environmental dialogue is a key feature of the new Home Page. You can even share your personal views on environmental issues with EPA's "Question of the Week" and blog "Greenversations." Explore the new Home Page at www.epa.gov.

Website on Water Efficiency Launched



The Alliance for Water Efficiency, a non-profit organization that promotes the efficient and sustainable use of water, has announced the launch of a web-based **Water Efficiency Resource Library**. EPA is a program partner and funder. The Resource Library is intended as a one-stop shop for water efficient product and program information.

Library sections cover residential plumbing and appliances, toilet testing, landscape and irrigation, commercial and industrial water conservation, water rates and rate structures, water loss control, codes and standards, drought planning, and more. Research reports, published documents, and case studies are included. Features being added to the site include state summaries and a discussion forum. See the Resource Library online at www.allianceforwaterefficiency.org.

Environmental Ed Resources: Gems Online

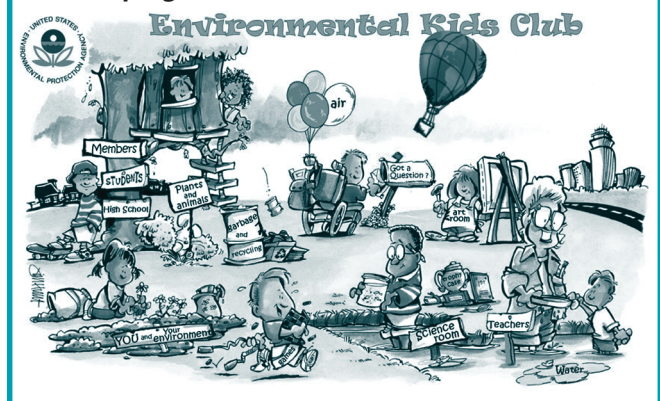
Educators, parents, youth leaders, and students can find many environmental education resources on EPA's web pages. Here are just a few of the many gems for teaching and learning:

Office of Environmental Education:
www.epa.gov/enviroed

Teaching Center:
www.epa.gov/teachers

Student Center:
www.epa.gov/students

Environmental Kids Club:
www.epa.gov/kids



Visit Watertalk online at www.e

Shoshone-Bannock Tribes Approved for “Treatment in a Similar Manner as a State”

EPA Region 10 recently approved the Shoshone-Bannock Tribes’ application for treatment in a similar manner as a State (“TAS”) under the Federal Clean Water Act. The approval gives the Shoshone Bannock Tribes greater authority and responsibility for protecting water quality on the Fort Hall Reservation. The TAS approval covers all of the water bodies within the exterior boundaries of the Fort Hall Indian Reservation.

According to Elin Miller, EPA regional administrator in Seattle, the TAS decision reflects real progress in fulfilling one of the Agency’s top priorities.

“Building tribal expertise and increased capacity for environmental protection is a top priority for EPA,” said EPA’s Miller. “Our action today not only acknowledges the Tribes’ demonstrated commitment to protecting water quality, but also reflects how seriously we take our tribal trust responsibilities in the pursuit of environmental protection for all.”

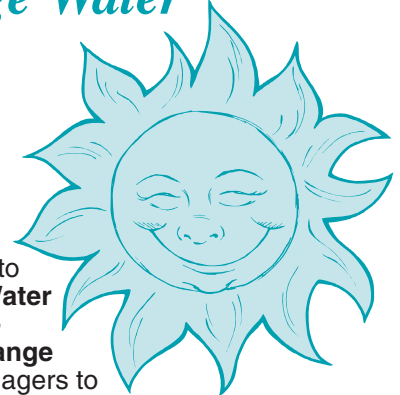
EPA’s action means that the Tribes can now develop their own water quality standards under the Clean Water Act. They also can issue water quality certifications for National Pollutant Discharge Elimination System (NPDES) wastewater discharge permits and any other federal permit or license where there is a discharge to Reservation waters.

The Tribes have been working with EPA and the Idaho Department of Environmental Quality as the Tribes develop their water quality standards. The standards will set goals for how clean the reservation waters within the Fort Hall Indian Reservation should be.

For more information, contact **Rich McAllister**, EPA, at **206-553-8203, 800-424-4372 x8203**, or **mcallister.rich@epa.gov**. Or visit <http://yosemite.epa.gov/r10/water.nsf/Water+Quality+Standards/SBT-TAS>

Climate Change Strategy to Help Manage Water Resources

To help respond to potential effects of climate change, a new strategy focuses on 40 specific actions for the national water program to take. EPA’s **National Water Program Strategy: Response to Climate Change** describes steps for managers to adapt their clean water, drinking water, and ocean protection programs.



The water strategy identifies specific response actions in five areas:

- Mitigation of greenhouse gases
- Adaptation to climate change
- Research related to water and climate change
- Education on climate change
- Water program management of climate change

Potential impacts of climate change on water resources reviewed in the strategy include increases in certain water pollution problems, changes in availability of drinking water supplies, and collective impacts on coastal areas.

EPA water programs are already taking action related to climate change. These actions include the WaterSense water efficiency program, green infrastructure for wet weather management, Climate Ready Estuaries, and the proposed national rule for the injection of carbon dioxide underground.

EPA is working with other federal agencies to coordinate work on climate change and water. Recently, EPA issued a joint memorandum with the U.S. Departments of Agriculture, Commerce, Defense, and Interior to describe cooperative efforts on climate change and water issues.

For more information, visit www.epa.gov/water/climatechange.

epa.gov/r10earth/watertalk.htm

Local Citizen Honored for Puget Sound Work



Drayton Harbor, near Blaine, Washington

EPA recently presented **Geoffrey William Menzies** with the **President's Volunteer Service Award**. Menzies is being recognized with this national honor for devoting many hours of community service to cleaning up and protecting Drayton Harbor and the greater Puget Sound.

Menzies has been volunteering to clean up Drayton Harbor for more than 18 years. He was a member of the Drayton Harbor Watershed Management Committee from 1991 through 1995, when this group completed their Watershed Action Plan to control nonpoint sources of pollution that threatened Drayton Harbor.

He currently volunteers as Chairman of the Drayton Harbor Shellfish Protection District's Citizen Advisory Committee, which has been working to restore water quality and shellfish resources in Drayton Harbor. Congratulations and thank you for your important work, Mr. Menzies.

The President's Volunteer Service Award was created by the President's Council on Service and Civic Participation. The Award is available to youth ages 14 and under who have completed 50 or more hours of volunteer service; to individuals 15 and older who have completed 100 or more hours; and to families or groups who have completed 200 or more hours. For details, visit www.presidentialserviceawards.gov.

Challenge:

Change the World, Start with Energy Star



October marked the fourth annual **Energy Star "Change a Light" Day**. So far, more than 1.8 million Americans have pledged to change at least one light at home to an Energy Star qualified light. These pledges will save \$220 million in energy bills and prevent the release of more than 3 billion pounds of greenhouse gases. Lighting is one of the easiest things we can change in our homes and is the first step in the new pledge to "Change the World, Start with Energy Star." EPA is challenging Americans to take the newly expanded pledge to make saving energy a bigger part of their lives.

Building on the success of last year's campaign, the new Energy Star pledge has advice on other ways to save at home and at work. Pledge to change one light in your home to a more energy efficient one, seal and insulate your home, power-down computers when they're not in use, program your thermostat to save energy when no one is home, and choose Energy Star qualified products. If every American household took the pledge, we would

save more than 110 billion kilowatt hours of electricity and \$18 billion in annual energy costs, while preventing greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to more than 18 million cars annually.

Energy Star was introduced by EPA in 1992 as a voluntary, market-based partnership to reduce greenhouse gas emissions through energy efficiency. Today, the Energy Star label can be found on more than 50 different kinds of products as well as buildings and new homes. Products that have earned the Energy Star prevent greenhouse gas emissions by meeting strict energy-efficiency specifications set by the government. In 2007 alone, Americans, with the help of Energy Star, saved \$16 billion on their energy bills while reducing greenhouse gas emissions equivalent to those from 27 million vehicles.

Take the pledge or get more information at www.energystar.gov/changetheworld.

Conserving Migratory Bird Habitat



The **Migratory Bird Conservation Commission**—made up of agency representatives, including EPA, and Members of Congress—recently approved more than \$26 million in federal funding. The funding aims to protect, restore, enhance, and manage more than 135,000 acres of wetlands and associated wildlife habitats across the U.S. under the North American Wetlands Conservation Act. (www.fws.gov/birdhabitat/grants/NAWCA/) The Commission also approved funding to secure more than 4,400 wetland acres for seven national wildlife refuges through the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund.

Ninety-eight percent of the revenue from the sale of **Federal Duck Stamps** goes directly into the Migratory Bird Conservation Fund. Since 1934, the sale of Federal Duck Stamps has raised more than \$700 million to purchase more than 5.2 million acres of habitat. This year, the Fish and Wildlife Service issued the 75th Anniversary Federal Duck Stamp (www.fws.gov/duckstamps/) and also expended the one billionth dollar from the conservation fund through the Service's Small Wetlands Program, which celebrates its 50th anniversary this year. (www.fws.gov/refuges/smallwetlands/)

Beneficial Landscaping **EPA GreenScapes Offers Tools, Resources for Landscapers Great and Small**



The **GreenScapes** program, started by EPA's Office of Solid Waste, was first set up to address the waste stream generated from large scale landscapers. It has evolved to become a diverse, inclusive information resource for large-scale landscapers and homeowners who want to "green" their landscaping practices and save money. Founded on the waste-busting concepts of Reduce, Re-use, Recycle, and Re-buy, the GreenScapes program forms partnerships private and public to encourage the use of green landscaping practices. Now in essence, Beneficial Landscaping and GreenScaping are synonymous.

The GreenScapes website is "fertile" ground for learning about the what, why, where, and how's of

beneficial landscaping practices. It provides useful tools, such as the GreenScapes Seasonal Planner for homeowners, and cost calculating tools for large landscapers on landscape waste, resource conserving irrigation, erosion control, decking, and more. There is even a climate change tool for assessing waste reduction and energy benefits through recycling. Why wait? Go to www.epa.gov/greenscapes and learn more!

For more information on this and other topics in **Beneficial Landscaping**, contact **Elaine Somers** at 206-553-2966, or at somers.elaine@epa.gov, or visit our website at www.epa.gov/r10earth/bl.htm.



CALENDAR



November

November 16-19:

National Low Impact Development Conference, Seattle, WA, Environmental and Water Resources Institute of ASCE, <http://content.asce.org/conferences/lid08/>

November 18-19:

Idaho Environmental Summit, Boise, Idaho, 208-882-1444, www.idahosummit.org

December

December 2:

PaperCuts Green Office Fair, Seattle, WA, Pacific Northwest Pollution Prevention Resource Center, www.pprc.org/greenofficefair

December 8-9:

Northwest Environmental Conference & Trade Show, Portland, OR, www.nwec.org/

December 10-11:

2008 WORC Annual Conference: Building Better Soils, Yakima, WA, Washington Organic Recycling Council, www.CompostWashington.org

December 15-16:

Growth Management Act Conference, Law Seminars International, Seattle, WA, 800-854-8009, www.lawseminars.com

January

January 6-8:

Water Quality Workshop: Monitoring, Assessment, and Management, Boise, ID, Linda Smith, Idaho Dept. of Environmental Quality, 208-373-0423, www.deq.idaho.gov/water/assist_business/workshops/nps_workshop_09.cfm

January 15:

Deadline for contributions to the February issue of Watertalk, Andrea Lindsay, Editor, 206-553-1896, 800-424-4372, lindsay.andrea@epa.gov

January 27-28:

Endangered Species Act Seminar, The Seminar Group, Seattle, WA, 800-574-4852, www.theseminargroup.net

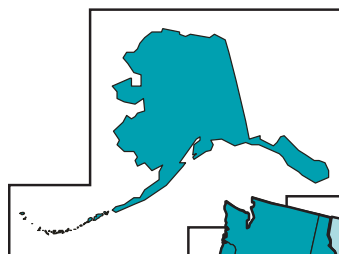
February

February 2-5:

Annual Stream Restoration Design Symposium, River Restoration Northwest, Stevenson, WA, 541-753-3350, www.rrnw.org/stevenson2009

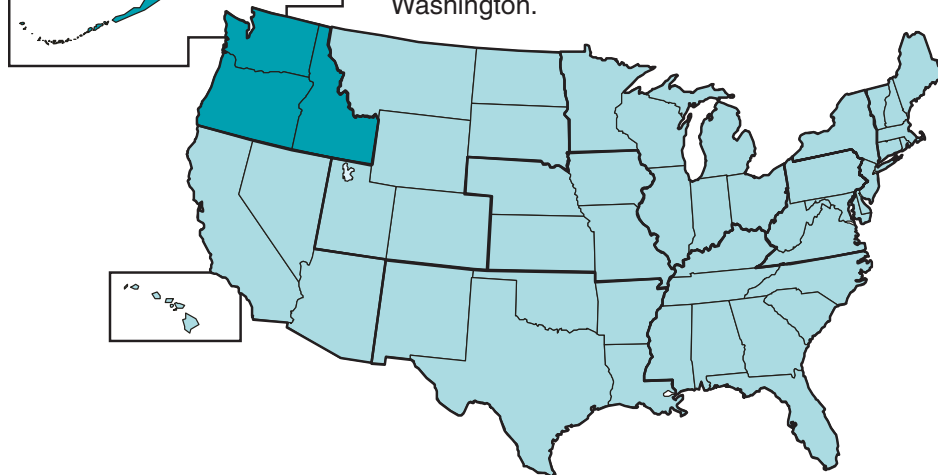
February 8-11:

Puget Sound Georgia Basin Ecosystem Conference, The Future of the Salish Sea: A Call to Action, Seattle, WA, <http://depts.washington.edu/uwconf/psgb/>



EPA Region 10: Who Are We?

The mission of the Environmental Protection Agency is to protect human health and the environment. Since 1970, EPA has been working for a cleaner, healthier environment for the American people. The agency is divided into ten geographical regions. EPA Region 10 serves Alaska, Idaho, Oregon, and Washington.





Watertalk

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Watertalk
November 2008



Watertalk is published quarterly by the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, Region 10. *Watertalk* seeks to be a useful tool for those who protect water resources and ecosystems in communities of the Greater Pacific Northwest, by providing practical resources and relevant agency news.

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.

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