

**Puyallup-White River LIO Quarterly Meeting: Fish Passage Barriers**  
**September 3, 12:00-1:30pm**  
**Virtual Zoom Meeting**

## Welcome, Purpose, & Agenda Review

Cindy Haverkamp, PWR LIO Chair kicked off the meeting by providing an overview of the agenda.

## I. Insights from Agriculture Viability Study

**Addie Candib, American Farmland Trust (AFT).** View Addie's presentation [here](#).

With support from a grant funded by the Habitat Strategic Initiative Lead, AFT conducted a survey in summer and fall of 2024 in response to an action to *support long-term viability of agricultural lands and working forests* from the 2022-2026 Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda. The survey was distributed to farmers across 12 Puget Sound counties, including Pierce County ([view Pierce County results here](#).) There were responses from 33 Pierce County farms of which 60% own their own land and 50% are peri-urban, 33% are rural, and 18% are urban farmers. Themes from Pierce County respondents include mention of the need for farmers to make a "living wage," a desire to pass their farm down to the next generation, and the importance of community and familial connections. A persistent challenge for Pierce County farmers is land access from an affordability standpoint as well as physical and mental stress and strain. Next steps for this effort will include assisting with Action Plan development centered around agriculture and farmland and convening the advisory committee to draft progress indicators for the 2026-2030 Action Agenda.

## II. Agriculture Best Management Practices

**René Skaggs and Ali Nichols, Pierce Conservation District (PCD).** View René and Ali's presentation [here](#).

René and Ali shared an overview of agriculture best management practices (BMPs) that improve farm productivity while simultaneously protecting natural resources. The Pierce Conservation District is a non-regulatory organization that seeks to provide resources to community members through technical assistance, education through workshops and one-on-one training, and an [equipment rental program](#). Some projects that PCD is currently working on to support and enhance agriculture BMPs includes a water catchment project at Early Bird Farm where a 15,000-gallon water catchment system was installed to collect outbuilding roof water runoff which will be used to germinate summer cover crops. Another project is a subsurface drip irrigation (SDI) project at Maris Farms where 120 acres of SDI was installed 6 inches underground to aid in 100% irrigation efficiency. Some of these projects are supported by funding from the [Natural Resources Conservation Service Regional Conservation Partnership Program \(RCPP\)](#). A recent presentation on the RCPP can be accessed [here](#).

## III. PWR LIO Updates

- PWR LIO Fall Field Trip – The PWR LIO is hosting a site visit at [Lower Wapato Creek Habitat Restoration Project Site](#) on October 30 from 10am to 11:30am with an optional birding walk at 9am that will be led by the Port of Tacoma and the Puyallup Tribe of Indians. This site visit will include an optional birding walk, an overview of the project, insights into the cultural

significance of the habitat site from the Puyallup Tribe, the role this project has played to benefit salmon enhancement, and a tour of the site.

- Puyallup River Watershed Council Watershed Symposium and PWR LIO Winter Quarterly Meeting – The Watershed Symposium hosted by the Puyallup River Watershed Council is on December 9 from 1-6pm. This will be a fantastic opportunity to learn about or share information about research, environmental justice, and other work occurring in the Puyallup River watershed. The Watershed Symposium will be combined with the PWR LIO winter quarterly meeting from 10am-12pm. [Register here](#) to attend this event.
  - Those doing work in the Puyallup River watershed are invited to submit an abstract for an oral presentation (15-20 min) or poster for the Symposium that targets one or more of the focus areas in the [Puyallup-White River Ecosystem Recovery Plan \(ERP\)](#). [Submit your abstract](#) by November 10, 2025.
- LIO Collective Action Plans (Healthy Shorelines) - The PWR LIO is currently in the process of developing a Healthy Shorelines Action Plan that will be delivered to the Puget Sound Partnership at the end of September. Using a simple table, LIO Action Plans highlight the connection between barriers and solutions and include a clear project action, estimated cost, and capacity needs. The next Action Plan will be focused on Floodplains and Estuaries.

## IV. Round Robin Updates

- PCD will be undertaking a culvert removal project at Clear Creek to improve agricultural drainage. The project will involve plugging the end of the existing channel, which became obstructed following the removal of nearby houses. A new channel will be constructed to the north to restore proper water flow.
- Pierce County hosted workshops on agricultural ditch maintenance. Materials and presentations can be accessed here: [Agriculture Drainage Support | Pierce County, WA - Official Website](#).
- The Department of Ecology has announced [Water Resources Drought Response Grants](#) for public entities affected by the drought emergency declaration that Ecology issued on April 8, 2025. There is up to \$4.5 million available, and the application is due on December 5, 2025.
- The [Washington State Department of Commerce Federal Funds Grant Writing Assistance Program \(FFGWAP\)](#) is designed to support Washington community-based organizations, local government agencies, ports, housing authorities, tribes, businesses, and others to prepare for and submit grant applications. This program also aims to help Washington meet its clean electricity and greenhouse gas reduction goals using approaches that enhance equity, innovation, economic growth and job creation.

## V. Next Meeting

The next quarterly PWR LIO meeting is scheduled for December 9, 2025, from 10am-12pm.

## List of Participants

<b>Name</b>	<b>Agency</b>
Addie Candib	American Farmland Trust
Ali Nichols	Pierce Conservation District
Cindy Haverkamp	Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department

Dan Calvert	JBLM - Sentinel Landscapes Program
Dean McCleary	Pierce County Planning and Public Works
Elizabeth McManus	AHSS LIO Coordinator
Emily McCartan	Department of Ecology
Hannah King	WA Department of Natural Resources
Ian Clunies-Ross	Meeting Attendee
Joan Wu	Washington State University
Kaitlan Harbaugh	Foss Waterway Seaport
Lindsay Tuttle	Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Matt Lurie	Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Monea Kerr	Puget Sound Partnership
Rene Skaggs	Pierce Conservation District
Tanya	Tacoma-Pierce County Health Department
Haley Morris	PWR LIO Assistant Coordinator
Kristen Durance	PWR LIO Coordinator