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https://PugetSoundEstuarium.org

**Puget Sound Estuarium**

**Five-Year Strategic Plan 2021-2025**

The South Sound Estuarium Association, DBA Puget Sound Estuarium (the Estuarium), is a non-profit environmental organization dedicated to increasing knowledge and awareness of South Puget Sound’s special ecosystem. The Estuarium is dedicated to encouraging personal behavioral changes to help protect Puget Sound.

The Estuarium is approaching its 14th year of existence, and the Board of Directors has engaged in a strategic planning process to build the organization and its programs over the next five years. The first strategic planning process began in April 2015, and stakeholders were involved both in person and through online surveys. As a result, the Board identified four major goal areas: organizational development, educational programs, community engagement, and a marine/estuary interpretive center.

“*When we learn to appreciate the estuary environment of South Puget Sound, we connect with the dazzling variety of life−fragile, yet incredibly vibrant−that is our unique legacy.”*

Lynn Schneider, former Estuarium Board President

**Vision**

**Our vision is to create an educated community that is engaged and inspired to promote the health, conservation, and restoration of Puget Sound.**

**Mission**

**The mission of the Puget Sound Estuarium is to foster learning opportunities that inspire people of all ages to connect with, protect, and enjoy the unique estuary environment of the South Puget Sound.**

We achieve this educational endeavor through public meetings, the media, science, marine art activities, and education in the classroom, field, virtually, and on-the-water settings.

**Values**

Our organization and educational development goals, strategies, and program activities emerge from a set of values and basic operating principles. We believe that:

* Providing information about South Puget Sound Estuaries using a variety of methods enhances our community life
* The environmental seeds we plant in our youth inspire a greater sense of need for stewardship of the South Puget Sound
* Providing knowledge about and promoting interaction with the marine and estuary environments will inspire the community to make changes to improve its health
* Estuarine and marine education are critical to protecting the Salish Sea
* Promoting a strong organization and high-quality programs will lead to innovative ways to achieve our mission
* We need to evaluate what we do, balance priorities of growth and available resources, and focus on activities that advance our mission
* Enhancing access to and knowledge of partner organizations and the programs and services they provide will strengthen our organization
* People of all ethnicities, cultures, sexualities, genders and socio-economic groups offer invaluable perspectives that contribute to a complete understanding of the ethical and sustainable relationships of humans to the estuarine and marine environment
* Inclusivity is important and that we will strive to reflect that value in all our programming
* Educating the public about the effects of climate change on the South Sound ecosystem, including the impacts to ecosystem functions and ecosystem services, are vital to our local communities
* Educating the public about environmental justice issues, like the effects of climate change on the health and security of the communities most impacted and vulnerable to climate change that have caused disasters across the Salish Sea region is important
* Many stewards have cared for the Salish Sea, beginning with the Coast Salish Tribes, and that the Estuarium's efforts are a small piece of this greater story
* Honoring local tribal history and knowledge of this estuarine ecosystem is an important part of estuary education and restoration efforts

Our four strategic goals, together with a number of specific strategies and measures for success, are identified as key priorities. Each of these goals is important; the Board is committed to pursuing each during the life of this plan. The first goal focuses on our organization, while the remaining goals deal with enhancement and expansion of our programs. Many strategies could be utilized in more than one goal area. However, these cross-cutting strategies have been placed within a particular goal for clarity of purpose.

**Goal 1: Strengthen and Develop the Puget Sound Estuarium’s Organizational Effectiveness**

Two dedicated individuals created the kernel of the idea for developing an organization devoted to promoting estuary awareness in 2007. Initially, all programs were delivered by Board members and volunteers. During the last five years, several part-time staff were added to respond to steady program growth. Currently, our need is to increase staff hours and benefits to respond to the growing scope of our programs as well as increase the number of members and volunteers.

**Strategy 1.1. Secure financial support for the next five years**

The Estuarium currently finds itself in a moment of critical transition. Having enjoyed the expert leadership of its part-time paid Executive Director and program staff, the organization is faced with the challenges of growth. While the challenges are substantial, the opportunity exists to configure a revenue plan that supports future growth in staffing and programming.

**Measures of Success**

* Secure funds to support an annual operating budget of at least $200,000 in 2021
* Increase the annual budget by $25,000 to $50,000 with each subsequent year responding to program growth
* Develop corporate giving with two additional corporate donors per year
* Increase membership by 30 new members per year
* Send renewal notices to all current members as memberships are due to expire

**Strategy 1.2. Evaluate additional organizational needs**

Six part-time positions, Executive Director, Volunteer/Program Coordinator, Lead Interpreter, Aquarist, Education Coordinator, and Outreach Coordinator, support the Estuarium’s services and programs. The Board will review this staffing pattern.

**Measures of Success**

* Identify staffing needs to fulfill our mission
* Conduct a review of the level and type of staffing needs and propose needed changes
* Collect staffing model information from similar organizations
* Make the Executive Director and all coordination positions full time
* Shop for and procure a competitive health and vacation benefits package for all paid staff

**Strategy 1.3. Find sources of revenue enhancement**

The Estuarium depends on grants for more than half of its operating expenses. In addition to broadening its total base of income, the Estuarium needs to consider the best and most sustainable mix of income sources and methods.

**Measures of Success**

* Determine preferred and optimal income streams and percentages
	+ Achieve over 50% combined yearly income from a mix of individual donors, corporate donors, fee-based programs, and ticketed events
	+ Reduce grant dependance significantly
* Increase income from grants, memberships, charitable giving, individual donations, and fundraising
* Increase program-generated revenues
* Develop business sponsorships
* Research other avenues of funding

**Strategy 1.4. Increase the number and effectiveness of volunteers**

Volunteers are critical to the Estuarium’s programs and initiatives. The Estuarium’s overall effectiveness is critically dependent on efforts to increase the number of volunteers, as well as the impact of the volunteer work. In addition, the Estuarium needs to ensure that all volunteers are given the opportunity to gain new skills and knowledge, feel appreciated, and have a positive experience as they fulfill these important roles.

**Measures of Success**

* Recruit additional volunteers necessary to support all programs
* Provide clear job duties, expanded training, mentoring, and recognition to increase a positive experience for volunteers
* Offer regular volunteer orientation sessions to identify and recruit potential new volunteers
* Increase opportunities for youth volunteers
* Actively pursue and encourage diversity, equity, and inclusion in our volunteer participation and engagement

**Strategy 1.5. Increase effectiveness of the Board of Directors**

As the Estuarium grows its programs and sets of initiatives, the Board of Directors finds itself increasingly challenged by a plethora of demands placed upon its members in the areas of fundraising, long and short-term planning, special events management, visibility, public relations, and staffing. As a working Board, there needs to be careful consideration of the optimal size of its ranks, as well as a set of expectations for Board membership and involvement.

**Measures of Success**

* Increase Board diversity to add support for completing its activities
* Develop a list of Board roles and responsibilities and modify bylaws when warranted
* Establish an Executive Committee to facilitate the efficiency of the Board
* Consider the benefit of forming an Advisory Committee to provide input to the Board
* Maintain a Board fellow position (a college or high school student)
* Increase the diversity, equity, and inclusion of Board members

**Strategy 1.6. Improve communication and public relations with the public, members, and stakeholders**

The Estuarium is one of several South Puget Sound non-profit organizations involved in environmental education and stewardship. If we are to achieve our stated mission for an educated public, efforts to clarify our unique role and increase our visibility need to be maintained.

**Measures of Success**

* Develop consistent messages to the public, members, and stakeholders
* Broaden delivery of communications to additional groups using social and other media
* Effectively utilize a variety of communication tools to get messaging to the intended audience
* Increase our social media following
* Increase our YouTube subscribership to over 1,000, which will open opportunities to generate income from our livestream educational videos
* Continue to improve and expand upon our new website

**Strategy 1.7. Cultivate new and existing partnerships in the South Puget Sound**

It is critical that we continue to honor our existing partnerships and build new ones with other environmental education groups in the South Puget Sound. We are a piece of a larger puzzle in promoting environmental awareness. Although we do not lead hands-on stewardship projects, many of our partners do. We would like to do a better job of informing our supporters and members of these opportunities, and encourage their participation in partner activities.

**Measures of Success**

* Participate in network meetings as staff time allows
* Stay abreast of our partners’ programs and post a monthly listing of activities with partner contact information at the Estuarium and on our website
* Continue to add and foster community partnerships that support our diversity, equity, and inclusion goals
* Broaden our reach by partnering, on projects of mutual benefit, with non-environmentally focused groups such as those with a history, arts, and literature focus

**Strategy 1.8. Expand our community outreach**

Community outreach opportunities are numerous, such as tabling at community events. Each time we staff a table at an event, we have the opportunity to inform more people about our organization and what we have to offer in environmental education opportunities.

**Measures of Success**

* Create a process for determining which community events are appropriate for us to participate in, secure volunteers to staff the table, and coordinate exhibits, handouts, and hands-on activities
* Increase the Estuarium’s exposure with trained volunteers in expanded outreach at community events where we have an informational table with and without partner organizations
* Begin translating outreach materials into Spanish

**Strategy 1.9. Expand our community outreach**

We have an outreach coordinator and are making progress increasing the Estuarium’s visibility.

**Measures of Success**

* Develop new and/or enhanced existing relationships with:
	+ Thurston County Chamber of Commerce
	+ Experience Olympia
	+ Olympia Downtown Association

**Goal 2: Develop and Expand Estuarine and Marine Educational Programs for Schools**

The Estuarium strives to inform the general public about South Puget Sound estuaries through various activities and events at the Estuarium as well as off-site locations. In addition, we provide fee-based virtual instructional opportunities for school-aged children. 

The Estuarium recognizes the importance of educating children about estuarine and marine ecosystems in efforts to fulfill our mission and to inspire the next generation of citizens to protect Puget Sound. There are a number of educational strategies that will focus on our curriculum, strengthen instruction, and broaden delivery to a wider audience of students.

**Strategy 2.1. Develop a comprehensive and effective curriculum**

The staff provides interactive field trips at the Estuarium and at our local public beaches on a variety of relevant topics. Estuarium educators have been aligning their lessons to state science curriculum standards. Curriculum development work is ongoing to address school district science instructional targets and to align our educational lessons with national environmental STEM and Next Generation Science Standards (NGSS) standards and current research.

**Measures of Success**

* Create a handout detailing the Estuarium’s educational offerings
* Revise lesson plans based on feedback and input from teachers, researchers, and scientists
* Develop a new curriculum considering history, local cultures, and art
* Align all curriculum units to national Common Core NGSS, STEM and NOAA Ocean Literacy standards
* Utilize instructional models that take into account traditional ecological and place-based knowledge and teaching practices
* Expand educational opportunities as funds are secured to support the activity
* Identify climate change mitigation strategies in the South Sound and educate the public about these strategies
* Educate students about the impacts of climate change on local communities in the South Sound

**Strategy 2.2. Seek out qualified, highly motivated educators to guide our education programs**

The Estuarium has provided field trip opportunities to our building for small groups over the past few years. Estuarium staff and a small contingent of on-call marine educators have delivered instruction to children as requested by organizations or individual teachers. The Estuarium has been able to meet most field trip requests, but there are limits to expanding our educational offerings without increasing our available staff.

**Measures of Success**

* Recruit potential educators with various areas of marine or biology expertise
* Utilize the expertise of science researchers, school district staff, and college professors for Estuarium educator recommendations
* Connect with retired science teachers and local college graduates
* Recruit for Education Internship positions as needed and as funding becomes available

**Strategy 2.3. Deliver high-quality lessons using interactive materials and monitor student learning**

The Estuarium has developed lessons for the study of the estuary ecosystem using its saltwater tanks, a touch tank, a quarantine tank, and a freshwater tank stocked with several species of live animals. The Estuarium also has posters, preserved specimens, interactive exhibits, videos, and lab equipment for students to use to enhance their learning. While these are effective teaching tools, we understand that viewing marine life and conducting water quality tests is most effective when done in natural settings. In addition, it is important to evaluate lesson success and measure student learning to improve our field trip experiences.

**Measures of Success**

* Expand field trip opportunities to include additional marine, estuarine, nearshore, and other new locations and habitats
* Develop a variety of feedback instruments and student assessments to evaluate lesson effectiveness
* Continue to maintain and expand our online education offerings
* Adapt online education programs for in-person implementation

**Strategy 2.4. Strengthen and broaden partnerships with local school districts, partners, and other higher education service providers**

The Estuarium has partnered with local environmental education entities to provide field trips on estuarine and marine topics that other organizations do not cover. In addition, individual teachers have heard about the Estuarium and contacted us to provide field trip opportunities for their classes. The Estuarium recognizes the need to set up firm connections with local school districts to deliver coordinated lessons to multiple groups of students.

**Measures of Success**

* Strengthen current partnerships and extend collaborations to deliver lessons with other environmental organizations
* Expand educational partnerships to additional school districts, especially in Mason County
* Broaden our virtual, interactive, and fee-based program offerings
* Expand current offerings to more students and conduct additional pilot programs
* Continue to develop our fee-based virtual field trips and video series as resources for school groups that want to learn about estuarine ecology from their classrooms

**Strategy 2.5. Refine key messages for our Meet the Beach program to help involve more school groups**

The Beach Naturalists offer school field trips to the beach in collaboration with South Sound Green. Our emphasis is to increase awareness of the estuarine environment, encourage youth to conserve and protect the South Sound ecosystem, and make their own communities more resilient to the effects of climate change.

**Measures of Success**

* Beach Naturalists will meet with the Education Committee to develop key messages that not only inspire students but also support state science curriculum standards
* Apply for grants from foundations that support environmental education so that we can expand this program to involve more students
* Seek out additional partners to help grow this program with more school groups

**Goal 3: Strengthen and Broaden Our Community Programs**

It is critical to share information about Puget Sound estuaries with our local citizens to help them know the facts about Puget Sound and its health. An unaware community will not have the information they need to make informed decisions. 

The Estuarium has implemented several programs for the general public, clubs, groups, families, and children. By connecting people to the South Sound through innovative hands-on education and recreational opportunities, we encourage everyone to help conserve and protect our marine and estuary environments.

**Strategy 3.1. Establish metrics for program evaluation**

The Estuarium has developed several programs, including Meet the Beach, the Discovery Speaker Series, and Pier Peer, all aimed at providing information on the wonderful estuary ecosystem. We want to continue to provide quality programs through ongoing evaluation.

**Measures of Success**

* Develop internal evaluation tools of each program to capture participants’ feedback
* Implement a decision model to identify programs that warrant increased support, revision, expansion, or discontinuance

**Strategy 3.2. Improve on the successes of our Meet the Beach naturalist program**

The Estuarium’s Meet the Beach naturalist program just completed its tenth year of recruiting, training, and empowering Beach Naturalists to meet the public at local beaches. The public is invited to join the Beach Naturalists during low-tide days from June through August. Beach Naturalist volunteers help people explore the creatures that live in the intertidal zone, connect with this ever-changing environment, answer questions, and inspire people to continue to expand their relationship with South Puget Sound environs.

**Measures of Success**

* Develop and improve key messages about how we can protect Puget Sound
* Increase the number of people who can participate by offering Beach Days during weekend low-tides

**Strategy 3.3. Develop and improve the virtual Discovery Speaker Series**

The Estuarium has sponsored the Discovery Speaker Series for several years. Attendance at the most recent series decreased significantly. A decision was made to discontinue and reformat the program. We have since established a virtual format for the Discovery Speaker Series, and we would like to maintain and improve this format.

**Measures of Success**

* Broaden the scope of presentations beyond science-based research to include cultural and economic influences on the environment of the South Sound
* Develop a way to gather participant feedback, such as through the Padlet app, for comments and suggestions from viewers
* Target a more diverse audience
* Prioritize inviting underrepresented STEM and cultural professionals to speak

**Strategy 3.4. Enhance the Pier Peer experience to include a wider audience**

 Pier Peer is a nighttime underwater viewing event at the Boston Harbor Marina that the Estuarium took over in late 2012 from the People for Puget Sound. Guests are treated to an up-close inspection of the marine creatures that are drawn to the glow of underwater lights during the 1 ½ to 2 hour sessions. The event attracts repeat visitors with their extended families and local school groups, as well as organizations such as Boy and Girl Scout troops. We have expanded the program, as funds allow, to Mason County.

**Measures of Success**

* Increase the number of Pier Peer participants
* Host other pier events, such as private parties, adults-only gatherings, and fundraisers in partnership with Boston Harbor Marina
* Implement suggested improvements from our Pier Peer staff that will improve participants’ learning experiences
* Document participants’ feedback through a brief survey
* Continue to partner with the Mason Conservation District to offer Pier Peers, as funding allows
* Continue to offer live underwater remotely operated vehicle (ROV) footage of algae and marine animals on the sea floor during Pier Peer, as volunteers are available

**Goal 4: Provide an Exceptional Marine Estuary Interpretive Center in Olympia, Washington**



The Estuarium has operated an interpretive center since 2013. The first building was established on Washington Street NE in downtown Olympia. The Estuarium operated there until mid-summer 2014, when we moved to our current location at 309 State Avenue NE. The Estuarium is open to the public Saturdays and Sundays from 11 a.m. to 4 p.m. The Estuarium Board envisions improvements to our current facility and the eventual transition to a larger, more comprehensive interpretive center.

Docents are trained to guide families through the exhibits and initiate marine learning activities. In addition, Estuarium staff provide hands-on instruction for school and community groups such as the YMCA and Hands on Children’s Museum.

The Estuarium began hosting its annual Turn of the Tides event at the Estuarium in December 2015. Partner organizations are invited to set up booths and exhibits at the event and the public is encouraged to attend.

**Strategy 4.1. Support use of the existing Estuarium to maximize its available space**

In January 2016, we hosted a roundtable discussion at the Estuarium to solicit input on ways to enhance visitors’ experiences. Our Exhibits Team and aquarist continue to offer improvements. Over the years, we have continued to look for ways to best use the available space.

**Measures of Success**

* When possible, consult with museum experts and visit other aquariums to get ideas for both improving the structure and content of the Estuarium
* As we develop plans for a new facility, create a model of optimal flow of exhibits
* Maximize use of exhibits from other small marine centers

**Strategy 4.2. Develop new exhibits to reflect current Puget Sound issues and activities**

**Measures of Success**

* Update outdated posters and materials
* Add clear labels and identification charts of animals in the tanks
* Update labels whenever new animals are added to the tanks
* Prominently display Meet the Beach, Pier Peer, Sea Stroll, Bird Walks, and other Estuarium events and program schedules
* Enhance interpreter training and provide additional needed reference materials
* Offer activities to Estuarium visitors, especially those related to rotating exhibits
* Develop exhibits that highlight the consequences of climate change

**Strategy 4.3. Develop partnerships with The Evergreen State College, St. Martin’s University, and South Puget Sound Community College to support our efforts and offer internships**

Institutions of higher education in the South Sound may be a rich source of support for our mission.

**Measures of Success**

* Offer students opportunities to be educators, interns, team members, and interpreters
* Utilize higher education STEM faculty for training, exhibits, and the Discovery Speakers Series

**Strategy 4.4. Continue planning for a state-of-the-art marine life discovery center, in proximity to downtown Olympia, that is a major destination for visitors and is recognized as an educational center of importance for the community**

It has been a dream of the Board and staff to create an Estuarium near the waterfront in downtown Olympia. The Board feels we are in a position to move forward with developing plans for a new facility.

**Measures of Success**

* Continue to take all the necessary steps to maintain partnerships that support the development of a new Estuarium
* Research and implement a capital campaign for public/private funding
* Recruit community members to advocate for and support the establishment of a new and larger facility
* Develop a narrative outlining the value and benefit that would be derived from such a facility, and share it with policymakers, community leaders, and local businesses to gain their support
* Develop detailed facility designs that specify space for exhibits, aquariums, education, offices, and storage

# Organizational Background

In 2005, people interested in creating an estuary-focused organization in Olympia began meeting. Early participation included Executive Directors of other environmental education organizations, a previous mayor of Olympia, an environmental writer for the local newspaper, community activists, and a marine biologist. After two years of discussion and planning, it was clear that an Olympia-based marine and estuary-focused organization complimented and did not duplicate what other organizations were providing. The Estuarium filed as a nonprofit charitable corporation with Washington State in 2007. The Estuarium (as South Sound Estuary Association) was approved by the IRS as a 501(c)(3) non-profit in late 2010.

The Estuarium’s bylaws establish a 13-member Board that meets monthly. Terms are three years, with the exception of a student Board Fellow position, which is a one-year renewable term. The Board, along with staff and volunteer input, make decisions on the direction and activities of the Estuarium. All Board members are active and regularly participate in Board and team meetings. We have four active teams (Exhibits, Education, Development, and Events) that support programs and activities. All teams are composed of Board members, staff, and volunteers. A list of current Board members is included in Appendix A. We have a number of active volunteers and six paid part-time staff.

The Estuarium is a membership-based organization. Membership has many levels, each with accompanying benefits. Members and supporters receive regular communications, such as newsletters, notices of events, fundraisers, and volunteer opportunities.

**Base of support, partnerships, and similar organizations**

The Estuarium is an environmental educational organization that offers onsite, offsite, and virtual programs, as well as a marine science discovery center in downtown Olympia. Our primary focus is on South Puget Sound marine and estuary ecosystems. We collaborate with many organizations and may display the results of their work in our facility. We have partners in all program areas, for example:

* Pier Peer at Boston Harbor Marina
* Meet the Beach with park management (State, City of Olympia, and Thurston County)
* Nearshore education with South Sound GREEN
* Inspiring Kids Preserve and Bayshore with Capitol Land Trust
* Numerous school districts for STEM instruction
* Thurston and Mason County Conservation Districta variety of programs

Some Estuarium exhibit materials are on loan from partners, such as the Washington State Departments of Ecology, Fish and Wildlife, and Natural Resources; the Pacific Shellfish Club; and currently, marine creatures from another center are being fostered in our aquariums. There is one similar organization in the greater South Puget Sound area. The Nisqually Reach Nature Center (NRNC) operates a marine facility 13 miles to the north, near the Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge. Their work focuses on education in the Nisqually area. They have access to a beach and offer summer kids’ camps, which we publicize at the Estuarium and in our newsletter. NRNC, along with numerous other environmental organizations, have participated in our annual December Turn of the Tides Festival. Their Executive Director participated in our early planning meetings.

Environmental education partners are supportive of each other. We are active members of the Thurston ECO Network, a diverse community of more than 100 local education, communication, and outreach professionals working collaboratively to protect and enhance the health and vitality of the Thurston County region.

**Financial Overview**

The Estuarium develops and approves a calendar-year budget and tracks expenses. The organization has maintained this fiscal practice since its formation. Most recent fiscal reports, from 2012 to the present, show a steady growth in income and expenses. Budgets have increased each year due to increases in utilities, rent, salaries, and costs associated with maintaining current programs and offering additional programs. The current 2021 approved budget reflects a similar pattern of growth as in previous years. Appendix E lists income from 2017-2020. Over this period, our income has increased to support environmental education opportunities and associated staff costs. We anticipate this pattern of growth to continue, especially with a larger facility that can offer more programs to more children and adults.

The Estuarium will revise its business plan to implement strategies contained in the strategic plan. This business plan will include who is responsible for monitoring progress on each strategy.

# Evaluation Plan

**Evaluation of our organization and programs**

We will use our strategic plan as a living document. A detailed business plan will be developed directly from the strategic plan and will include specific activities, concrete measures of progress, financial considerations, and a detailed timeline. This business plan will be used by the Board for guidance and direction. We will update it as we address our goals, implement our strategies, and strive to reach our measures of success, as we adapt to challenges we encounter.



The Estuarium Board will review the strategic plan regularly and measure our goals and strategies as outlined in the business plan. We will discuss and update the plan, as needed, to document actual measurements in comparison to the benchmarks we have set.

The Estuarium has weathered nearly a year of restrictions necessary to respond to COVID19. While the facility has not been open for most of 2020, our excellent staff have transformed our education modules into virtual formats and have continued to expand the educational programs we can offer our community. In 2020, we were unable to host events like our annual cruise and Pier Peer, but we were able to pilot a walking tour (Sea Stroll) of Olympia’s historic shoreline. These tours were limited to 10 people. The Estuarium continues to celebrate our successes, accomplishments, and the exciting potential for the future.

# Appendix A: Puget Sound Estuarium Board of Directors

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Masiti Haji, Board Fellow, The Evergreen State College student, Masitihaji321@gmail.com

# Appendix B: List of Supporting Partners

Black Hills Audubon Society

Boston Harbor Marina

Capitol Land Trust

City of Olympia Parks

Hands on Children’s Museum

Harbor Wild Watch

LOTT Alliance/Water Education and Technology Center (WET)

Mason County Conservation District

National Estuarine Research Reserve System

Native Plant Salvage

Billy Frank Jr. Nisqually National Wildlife Refuge

Nisqually Reach Nature Center

The Pacific Shellfish Institute (PSI)

Pacific Education Institute

PARC Foundation

School Districts: Olympia, North Thurston, Tumwater, Shelton, Rainier, Rochester, Yelm, Tenino, Puyallup, Jefferson, Kitsap

South Sound GREEN

South Sound Salmon Enhancement Group

Stream Team

Taylor Shellfish Farms Inc.

Thurston Conservation District

Thurston County Parks

Thurston County Stream Team

U. S. Fish and Wildlife

Washington State Departments of Fish and Wildlife

Washington Department of Ecology

Washington State Parks

Washington Department of Health

Washington Sea Grant

WSU-Thurston County Extension, Water Quality Division

Capital Region ESD 113

Squaxin Island Tribe

Nisqually Indian Tribe

West Sound STEM Network

Thurston TOGETHER!

UW Environmental Science Program

Nisqually River Education Project

Olympia Yacht Club

YWCA

City of Lacey

Pacific Coast Shellfish Growers Association

Port of Olympia

Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Project

Kelp Krawlers Dive Club

Girl Scouts

OlyEcosystems

Mix 96 radio station

Boston Harbor Fire Station

PNW Shell Club

Community of Marine Centers of the Salish Sea

SEA Discovery Center

MAST Center

Port Townsend Marine Science Center

Nisqually Land Trust

Thurston EcoNet

Friends of Woodard Bay

Olympia Downtown Association

Washington Foundation for the Environment

Cascadia Research Collective

Washington State Department of Ecology Coastal Monitoring & Analysis Program

# Appendix C: Strategic Planning Process

The Estuarium began its first strategic planning process in early 2015 with the support of strategic planning consultants John Roush and Joyce Chin. The consultants met with the Estuarium Board, staff, and key volunteers to start the planning process. Over the next several months a great deal of work was done to create a five-year strategic plan. The planning document received tremendous support. We feel we have stayed true to the mission and vision that was held by the founding members, while expanding the opportunities we offer our community to connect, explore, and be inspired to protect South Puget Sound estuaries and marine environment.

Now, in 2021, we are preparing our 2021-2025 strategic plan. As we reviewed the 2015-2020 plan, we were pleased with how we remained focused, even in the face of a pandemic that disrupted all our services and programs during 2020. We rose to the challenge. We created revised programs that met children’s and teachers’ educational needs; developed a televised live feeding schedule so people who cannot visit the Estuarium due to its required closure can still enjoy seeing and interacting with the animals in the aquariums; and, revised our media outreach and website to be more engaging. We are excited about and ready to take on the challenges and opportunities of the next five years.

# Appendix D: Strategic Planning Products: Summary of Strengths and Challenges

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**Strengths:** The Estuarium continues to develop and strengthen its programming and volunteer base. We have four standing teams: Exhibits, Development, Events, and Education that meet regularly. We have added fiscal and volunteer management software to support our activities and to more accurately reflect the thousands of hours volunteers donate to support the Estuarium’s mission. With the addition of a half-time Executive Director and five staff, our annual budget will approach $200,000. With the success of our on-line marine and estuary environmental education, we anticipate growing budgets over the next five years.

**Challenges:** With success comes the challenge of being strategic about what we take on so that we can continue to provide quality programming, maintain excellent services, and do not stray into areas that are not central to our mission and goals, even when funding is available.

# Appendix E: Puget Sound Estuarium Financial Report

 **2017 2018 2019 2020**

|  |  |  |  |  |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Corporate Contributions |  $4,289 |  $15,426 |  $2,101 |  $1,214 |
| Foundation Grants | $52,680 | $148,571 |  $96,667 |  $95,925  |
| Government Grants |  $2,755 | $19,494 |  $25,824  |  $31,717  |
| Individual Contributions |  $26,227 |  $37,560 |  $10,455 |  $32,519  |
| Estuarium Admissions |  $1,783 |  $2,900 |  $2,985 |  $1,178   |
| Other Income (Gift Shop & Misc.) |  $358 |  $647 |  $427 |  $393 |
| Program Fees |  $2788 |  $2,847 |  $3,125 |  $2,222  |
| Ticket Sales |  $7,691 |  $1,400 |  $5,677 |  $690 |
| Interest |  $51 |  $59 |  $154 |  $154 |
| **Total Income** | **$98,613** | **$228,902** |  **$156,148** | **$166,011** |
|  |  |  |  |  |