

Washington State Ferries Sustainability Action Plan: 2023-2025



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Executive Summary

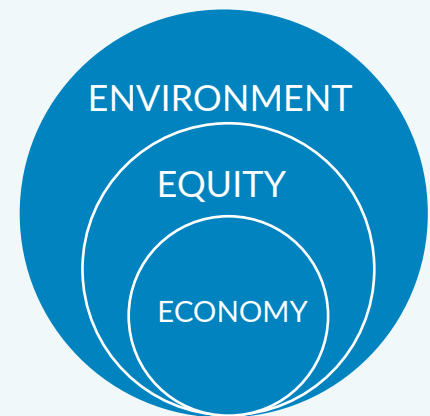
WSDOT strives to build sustainability into all of the work that we do. For WSF, as a division of WSDOT, sustainability is an integral part of our mission, vision, and goals, and defines one of our agency's six values, calling on each of us to "be resource stewards by supporting economic, environmental, and community need." Some may wonder, what exactly is sustainability? At WSF, sustainability, defined simply, is considering the short- and long-term effects of all our decisions and actions on the "three E's" of economy, environment, and equity.

In 2019, Washington State Ferries (WSF) launched its first Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) as one effort to implement the sustainability recommendations, goals, and actions laid out in our 2040 Long Range Plan.¹ SAP 2019-2021² outlined the context for sustainability at WSF and set goals and actions to be accomplished under six primary focus areas during the 2019-2021 biennium. These focus areas were: Greenhouse Gas (GHG) Emissions; Air Quality; Biodiversity; Water; Waste; and Community Impacts and Engagement.

Building on the success of our first plan, SAP 2021-2023 developed more action-oriented focus areas and applied the goal-setting tool of "Objectives and Key Results" (OKRs) to set "challenging, ambitious goals with measurable results."³ In contrast to SAP 2019-2021, focus areas in SAP 2021-2023 emphasized achievement over measurement. For instance, the focus area of "GHG Emissions" from SAP 2019-2021 is "Take Climate Action" in SAP 2021-2023.

Over the last two years, WSF has continued to make great strides in meeting our sustainability goals. We have also been able to further learn from our journey to make improvements and set new key results for SAP 2023-2025. As with the previous version, WSF considers SAP 2023-2025 to be a "living document" that will guide our sustainability efforts over the course of the next biennium. This Plan allows WSF to further implement the sustainability vision set out in the 2040 Long Range Plan and, in doing so, become the most sustainable ferry operator in the world.

WSDOT strives to build sustainability into all of the work that we do. For WSF, as a division of WSDOT, sustainability is an integral part of our mission, vision, and goals, and defines one of our agency's six values, calling on each of us to "be resource stewards by supporting economic, environmental, and community need." Some may wonder, what exactly is sustainability? At WSF, sustainability, defined simply, is considering the short- and long-term effects of all our decisions and actions on the "three E's" of economy, environment, and equity.



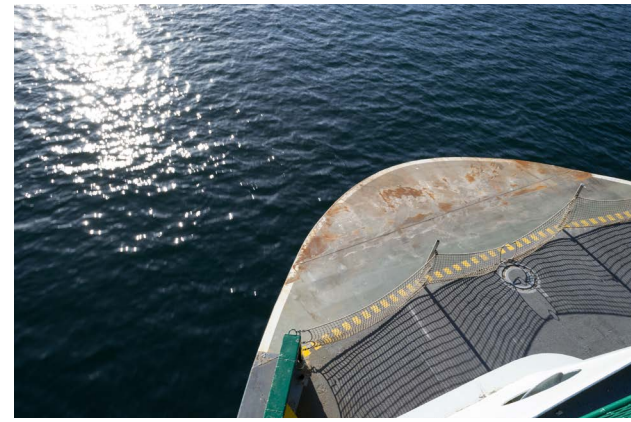
¹ 2040 Long Range Plan, Washington State Ferries (WSF), <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020/09/16/WSF-LongRangePlan-2040Plan.pdf>

² Sustainability Action Plan 2019-2021, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2019/04/22/washington-state-ferries-sustainability-action-plan.pdf>

³ What is an OKR? Definition and Examples, What Matters, <https://www.whatmatters.com/faqs/okr-meaning-definition-example/>

WSF'S SUSTAINABILITY JOURNEY

In January 2019, WSF completed its 2040 Long Range Plan,⁴ which included “Sustainability and Resilience” as one of the four key themes. The 2040 Long Range Plan outlined recommendations to invest in infrastructure and operations to maintain reliable service in a changing climate and reduce the ferry system’s environmental impact. Since that time, WSDOT has updated the agency’s Strategic Plan⁵ to include “Resilience” as one of our three agency goals. In fulfilling this resilience goal, “we plan and/or invest resources to improve our ability to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to emergencies, combat climate change, and build a transportation system that provides equitable services, improves multimodal access, and supports Washington’s long-term resilience.”



WSF launched its first Sustainability Action Plan (SAP) on Earth Day of 2019. SAP 2019-2021⁶ focused on goals and actions for the 2019-2021 biennium, and as such, served as a “biennial bite” of the 2040 Long Range Plan. WSF chose a biennial cycle for the SAP to correspond with the agency’s budgeting cycle and the legislative funding cycle that is tied to its implementation. Building on this strong foundation and baseline work, WSF pivoted toward a more visionary approach to SAP 2021-2023. Drawing upon the goal-setting tool of “Objectives and Key Results,”⁷ SAP 2021-2023 set a “north star” objective for each focus area and outlined the key results that serve as stepping stones for the next biennium to keep us heading toward that objective. WSF’s focus areas include:

- Eliminate Greenhouse Gas and Pollutant Air Emissions
- Clean the Water
- Increase Biodiversity
 - Contribute to SKRW Recovery
 - Improve Nearshore and Estuarine Habitat
- Achieve Zero Waste
- Enhance and Support Thriving Communities
 - Increase Community Engagement and Cultivate Partnerships
 - Create a Culture of Sustainability
 - Become an Anti-Racist Organization

WSF’s sustainability journey is implemented through a team approach with strong executive support. WSF developed a Sustainability Action Team (SAT) made up of representatives from each of its departments, appointed by the director of that department. Members of the SAT serve as conduits to inform their departments of sustainability efforts. They also consult with key members of their departments to help move the efforts forward. The SAT meets monthly to discuss progress, obstacles, and the necessary help to accomplish our goals. The Executive Team comprised of each department director, the Chief of Staff, and the Assistant Secretary, are provided with quarterly updates of SAP implementation. These updates allow engagement and accountability at an executive level.

⁴ 2040 Long Range Plan, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020/09/16/WSF-LongRangePlan-2040Plan.pdf>

⁵ Strategic Plan, WSDOT, <https://www.wsdot.wa.gov/about-us/strategic-plan>

⁶ Sustainability Action Plan 2019-2021, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2019/04/22/washington-state-ferries-sustainability-action-plan.pdf>

⁷ What is an OKR? Definition and Examples, What Matters, <https://www.whatmatters.com/faqs/okr-meaning-definition-example/>

To make this journey more transparent, WSF has developed a dashboard reporting tool to easily assess the status and trends of each goal and action outlined in the Plan. This tool is updated and reviewed monthly by the SAT, and quarterly by the Executive Team. In late 2020, with a redesign of the WSF website, WSF began publication of quarterly updates of the dashboard to increase transparency and accountability for the communities we serve, stakeholders, and the general public.⁸

RESULTS FOR SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2021-2023

Overall, the implementation of SAP 2021-2023 was successful with all key results except for six being met during the biennium.

Within the focus area of “Take Climate Action,” three key results related to the delivery schedules for a retrofitted hybrid Jumbo Mark II vessel, a new build Hybrid Electric Olympic Class (HEOC) vessel, and charging infrastructure at the Bainbridge and Seattle Ferry Terminals were not met. This was in part due to the standing up of a new electrification program and the work to fund the program through the Washington State Legislature.

Within the focus area of “Achieve Zero Waste,” the key result to complete a waste management plan was not met due to lack of staff to support this effort. The effort will be rolled into the coming biennium and staff support will be dedicated to the effort.

Within the focus area of “Enhance and Support Thriving Communities: Create a Culture of Sustainability,” the key result of supporting six additional staff members to attain their Envision Sustainability Professional (ENV SP) certification was not met due to a change of course in how WSF plans to implement the use of Envision. During the 2021-2023 biennium, leadership in Terminal Engineering and the Office of Sustainability and Environmental Services (OSES) decided to have OSES staff take the lead as ENV SP for terminal projects. There are currently seven ENV SP certified staff working for WSF.

Within the focus area of “Enhance and Support Thriving Communities: Become an Anti-Racist Organization,” the key result of developing and making public the horizontal and vertical representation of BIPOC individuals within WSF was not met due to those statistics currently not being available within the agency. In 2022, WSDOT published its first Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan,⁹ which includes “Data Informed Decisions” as one of its primary focus areas. The implementation of this plan will result in these demographic metrics being collected and shared internally and externally.

Due to the three key results from “Take Climate Action” not being met, an additional two key results in “Clean the Air” and “Increase Biodiversity: Contribute to Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) Recovery” were also not met. However, these key results just reiterated the completion of the “Take Climate Action” key results and were meant to show the interconnectedness of those key results to different focus areas.

⁸ Environment, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/ferries/about-us/environment>

⁹ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, WSDOT, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-Plan-2022.pdf>

LESSONS LEARNED AND IMPROVEMENTS TO SUSTAINABILITY ACTION PLAN 2023-2025

As noted previously, two key results not attained in SAP 2021-2023 were due to linking key results in one focus area to those of another area. If the results were not attained in their primary focus area, the result would cascade into other focus areas while not necessarily being another measure that went unmet. For this reason, key results have been kept solely within a single focus area even if there may be interconnected value to another focus area.

In addition, the connectivity between the focus areas “Take Climate Action” and “Clean the Air” was direct in SAP 2021-2023 given the planned emissions reduction strategy of electrification for the fleet. The objectives for the two focus areas (“operate a zero-carbon-emission ferry fleet” and “operate a zero-emission ferry fleet”) shared the same key results. For this reason, for SAP 2023-2025, these focus areas are combined into a single focus area, “Eliminate Greenhouse Gas and Pollutant Air Emissions.”

Eliminate Greenhouse Gas and Pollutant Air Emissions

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE 

With the signing of Executive Order 18-01,¹⁰ Governor Jay Inslee challenged WSF to reduce GHG emissions by beginning a transition to a zero-carbon-emission ferry fleet. Governor Inslee specifically cited “accelerated adoption of both ferry electrification and operational improvements” to achieve this ambitious goal. In 2020, Executive Order 18-01 was superseded by Governor Inslee’s issuance of Executive Order 20-01, which clarified some parts of the order.¹¹ This ambitious directive has set WSF on its path towards reducing both its GHG and air pollutant emissions with the ultimate objective being to operate a zero-emission ferry fleet.

Although there are several GHGs of particular concern, including methane, nitrous oxide, and fluorinated gases, carbon dioxide (CO₂) is the most prevalent GHG emitted into the atmosphere.¹² The primary effect of GHG is trapping heat within the planet’s atmosphere and increasing global temperatures, leading to climate change. This has enormous effects on human health, ecosystem vitality, and our economy. CO₂ is also a primary driver of ocean acidification, which occurs as CO₂ is absorbed by oceans and transformed into carbonic acid.¹³ Increased acidity has dramatic effects on calcifying species, such as oysters, clams, crabs, urchins, corals, planktons, and pteropods, which build shells and skeletons from calcium carbonate.¹⁴ The effects to pteropods, the small, swimming sea snails, which form the base of the food chain for salmon, are particularly troubling and threaten to further endanger the survival of salmon in our region.¹⁵ For Puget Sound, ocean acidification could lead to the demise of the shellfish and seafood industries, which contribute almost \$2 billion

In 2019, the fleet of WSF vessels produced about 180,000 metric tons (MT) of GHGs, which equated to approximately 73 percent of the GHG emissions for WSDOT as an agency. In addition to the vessels, operating the Eagle Harbor maintenance facility, terminals, and administration contributed about 700 MT of GHG per year, which was less than 1 percent of the emissions from the vessels.

Since the formation of its interdepartmental Operational Efficiency Working Group in 2017, WSF has implemented several strategies to increase efficiency in its vessel fleet, including the application of optimal speed guidance for vessels and properly managing vehicle loads to have vessels rest evenly in the water. Since the first initiatives were introduced in 2018, WSF has saved over 1,000,000 gallons of fuel due to these efforts



Photo credit: Darrel Austin.

¹⁰ Executive Order 18-01 “State Efficiency and Environmental Performance,” Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/18-01%20SEEP%20Executive%20Order%20%28tmp%29.pdf

¹¹ Executive Order 20-01 “State Efficiency and Environmental Performance,” Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/20-01%20SEEP%20Executive%20Order%20%28tmp%29.pdf

¹² Overview of Greenhouse Gases, Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), <https://www.epa.gov/ghgemissions/overview-greenhouse-gases>

¹³ Ocean Acidification: The Other Carbon Dioxide Problem, National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), <https://www.pmel.noaa.gov/co2/story/Ocean+Acidification>

¹⁴ Acidification in Puget Sound, Ecology, <https://ecology.wa.gov/Water-Shorelines/Puget-Sound/Issues-problems/Acidification>

¹⁵ Ocean Acidification: A Wake-up Call in Our Waters, NOAA, <http://www.noaa.gov/ocean-acidification-high-co2-world-dangerous-waters-ahead>

in revenue and account for over 45,000 jobs.¹⁶ Shellfish and seafood are also critical food, economic, and cultural resources for Puget Sound tribes, who have reserved treaty rights throughout Puget Sound.

In addition to the effects of GHGs on the health of the environment and the economy, poor air quality is the largest environmental health risk in the United States, with fine particulate matter pollution alone being responsible for more than 100,000 deaths each year.¹⁷ However, the effects of poor air quality are not evenly distributed throughout the population. Recent research in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences developed a “pollution inequity metric” that demonstrated racial and ethnic disparities in air pollution exposure.¹⁸ Black and Hispanic minorities bear a “pollution burden” of 56 percent and 63 percent excess exposure when compared to non-Hispanic whites. For this reason, air quality is more than just an environmental health issue, it is also a critical environmental justice concern.¹⁹

According to the Puget Sound Clean Air Agency (PSCAA), diesel exhaust represents 78 percent of the potential cancer risk from all air toxics in Puget Sound. Diesel exhaust has also been linked to respiratory problems, cardiovascular problems, and premature death.²⁰ According to the PSCAA, roughly 23 percent of the diesel exhaust in Puget Sound comes from the maritime sector.²¹ Sulfur oxides (SO_x) and nitrogen oxides (NO_x) emissions lead to increases in nitrogen and sulfur compounds in the atmosphere that are transformed to sulfuric and nitric acid, which contribute to the acidification of aquatic and terrestrial environments, including the deterioration of buildings and other structures in the built environment.²² NO_x also contributes to ground-level ozone formation, which leads to smog and has adverse effects on human health.²³

Based on our current long-range plan, WSF is on pace to exceed our state-mandated goals for GHG reduction in 2030 and 2040, and with future planning efforts beyond 2040, has an opportunity to achieve the 2050 goal of a zero-carbon-emission ferry fleet.²⁴ This transition of the fleet to electrification is also the key to WSF's commitment to reducing pollutants of concern and contributing to cleaner air throughout Puget Sound.

OBJECTIVE

- Operate a zero-emission ferry fleet.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Develop public anti-idling campaign for terminals and vessels.
- Implement one new operational efficiency initiative.

¹⁶ Ocean Acidification in Washington State: From Knowledge to Action, Ecology, <https://fortress.wa.gov/ecy/publications/publications/1201017.pdf>

¹⁷ Black and Hispanic Americans Bear a Disproportionate Burden from Air Pollution, UW News, <https://www.washington.edu/news/2019/03/11/disproportionate-burden-from-air-pollution/>

¹⁸ Inequity in Consumption of Goods and Services Adds to Racial–Ethnic Disparities in Air Pollution Exposure, Tessum et al., <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/13/6001>

¹⁹ bid.

²⁰ Air Pollution and Your Health, PSCAA, <https://www.pscleanair.org/161/Air-Pollution-Your-Health>

²¹ Reducing Pollution from Maritime Engines, PSCAA, <https://www.pscleanair.org/249/Maritime>

²² Environment at a Glance 2013: OECD Indicators, Organisation for Economic Cooperation and Development, <https://www.oecd-ilibrary.org/docserver/9789264185715-7-en.pdf?expires=1534345706&id=id&accname=guest&checksum=E9FBB475B291E8FDCC998C4740E36D52>

²³ Nitrogen Oxides (NO_x), Why and How They Are Controlled, United States Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www3.epa.gov/ttnatc1/dir1/fnoxdoc.pdf>

²⁴ Energy Performance Plan, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/WSF-EnergyPerformancePlan-2021.pdf>

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Complete construction of two retrofitted electric hybrid Jumbo Mark II vessels.
- Award a contract for the construction of the Hybrid Electric Olympic Class (HEOC) vessels.
- Complete systemwide plan for electric vehicle charging infrastructure at WSF facilities.
- Implement public anti-idling campaign for terminals and vessels.
- Implement an additional new operational efficiency initiative.

With the implementation of the System Electrification Plan,²⁵ which will transform the vessel fleet to 85 percent hybrid electric by 2040, WSF will reduce sulfur oxides (SOx) emissions by 75 percent, nitrogen oxides (NOx) emissions by 94 percent, and diesel particulate matter (PM) by 90 percent.

²⁵ System Electrification Plan, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2021/01/13/WSF-SystemElectrificationPlan-December2020.pdf>

Clean the Water

An important component of water quality is effective stormwater management. Stormwater runoff is rain that falls on hardened or impervious surfaces, such as streets, parking lots, and rooftops, flowing directly into natural water bodies, such as rivers, lakes, or Puget Sound.²⁶ As this water flows, it picks up contaminants from these surfaces. Much of this water with its contaminants enters Puget Sound untreated. Given the higher presence of hardened or impervious surfaces in more densely populated areas, urban stormwater runoff is of particular concern.

Urban stormwater runoff contains a mix of heavy metals, pathogens, petroleum products, excess nutrients, and other toxins, which affect aquatic life and human health. For example, Coho salmon in urban watersheds experience a 60 percent to 100 percent die off prior to spawning.²⁷ This condition, known as “urban spawner mortality syndrome,” appears attributable to toxins within urban stormwater runoff.²⁸ Recent research has determined that this mortality is likely linked to a single compound, 6PPD-quinone, which is formed when a ubiquitous additive in vehicle tires, 6PPD, reacts with ozone in the environment.²⁹ Increasing impervious surfaces leads to increased levels of stormwater runoff and therefore increased levels of toxic compounds entering Puget Sound.³⁰ EPA-approved testing methodology for 6PPD-quinone in water is currently being researched and developed for use.

From 1996 to 2006, the amount of impervious surfaces in the Puget Sound drainage basin increased from 3.7 percent of the total basin to 4.1 percent of the total basin.³¹ Although the overall rate of increase has shown a decline from 2011 to 2016, the rate still approached 4 percent in many areas of Puget Sound.³² Studies have shown that a 10 percent coverage of impervious surfaces within a watershed often

During the construction of the new Mukilteo Ferry Terminal, WSF removed approximately 7,000 tons of creosote-treated piling from a former military fueling facility. This amount of creosote represented almost 4 percent of the estimated creosote remaining in Puget Sound at the time. Over the next ten years, WSF plans to remove an additional 10,000 tons of existing creosote from its facilities.



²⁶ Stormwater Runoff Pollution and How to Reduce It, King County, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/services/environment/water-and-land/stormwater/introduction/stormwater-runoff.aspx>

²⁷ Recurrent Die-Offs of Adult Coho Salmon Returning to Spawn in Puget Lowland Urban Streams, Scholz et al., <http://journals.plos.org/plosone/article?id=10.1371/journal.pone.0028013>

²⁸ Interspecies Variation in the Susceptibility of Adult Pacific Salmon to Toxic Urban Stormwater Runoff, McIntyre et al., <https://www.sciencedirect.com/science/article/pii/S026974911734527X?via%3DiHub>

²⁹ A Ubiquitous Tire Rubber-Derived Chemical Induces Acute Mortality in Coho Salmon, Tian et al., <https://science.sciencemag.org/content/371/6525/185>

³⁰ Stormwater + Transportation, Washington Environmental Council, <https://wecprotects.org/stormwater-transportation/>

³¹ Impervious Surfaces and Stormwater Runoff, Encyclopedia of Puget Sound, <https://www.eopugetsound.org/articles/stormwater-facts>

³² 2020 State of Our Watersheds: A Report by the Treaty Tribes in Western Washington, NWIFC, <https://nwtreatytribes.org/2020-state-of-our-watersheds-more-restoration-projects-less-shoreline-armoring/>

leads to measurable and irreversible loss of ecosystem function.³³ Some watersheds within Puget Sound, notably the lower Snohomish watershed, already exceed this 10 percent coverage threshold.³⁴

WSDOT has been closely tracking urban spawner mortality syndrome research and its relation to highway facilities. In the last few years, we have learned that filtering stormwater through compost or biofiltration media reduces toxicity, which has been tied directly to 6PPD-quinone. Building on this research, WSF has incorporated several low-impact development (LID) strategies^{35,36} into recent work at the Seattle and Mukilteo Terminals.³⁷ These projects have implemented stormwater treatment, such as pervious pavement, vegetated filter strips, and proprietary bioretention units, that allow water to flow and naturally filter through soils and plants.

In actively maintaining its stormwater systems, WSF removes deposited sediment and accompanying pollutants, which prevents those contaminants from reaching nearby waterbodies and helps to ensure that stormwater controls work as intended. A large number of maintenance personnel are devoted to the task of annually inspecting and maintaining WSF's stormwater controls. Some of these controls include spill response, preventative maintenance, and pollution prevention.

In addition to managing stormwater from impervious surfaces, WSF has other potential releases of toxins to the waters of Puget Sound, most notably in legacy creosote-treated wood. Creosote is a wood preservative made up of as many as 10,000 different chemicals, all of which break down slowly in the environment and are acutely toxic and/or carcinogenic to fish, birds, amphibians, and mammals. Compounds in creosote can accumulate in the tissues of mollusks and other invertebrates and have also been shown to negatively affect the development of salmon and of Pacific herring, which is an important forage fish in Puget Sound.³⁸

As part of the design of terminal preservation and improvement projects, WSF consistently removes creosote from its facilities. Currently, WSF removes creosote and replaces it with more environmentally-friendly materials, such as steel and concrete. To date, WSF has removed over 13,000 tons of creosote from the marine environment.

OBJECTIVE

- Provide treatment for stormwater from all impervious surfaces and remove all creosote at our facilities.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Develop a water quality testing program at WSF facilities that leverages partnerships and grant opportunities to work with community and school groups.
- Develop a public anti-drip, leak, and spill campaign.
- Develop and implement an electronic spill kit inventory.

Mukilteo Ferry Terminal

³³ Consequences of Urbanization on Aquatic Systems—Measured Effects, Degradation Thresholds, and Corrective Strategies, Derek B. Booth and Lorin E. Reinelt, Proceedings Watershed '93: A National Conference on Watershed Management, pp.545-550, 1993.

³⁴ 2016 State of Our Watersheds: A Report by the Treaty Tribes in Western Washington, NWIFC, p.8, https://geo.nwifc.org/SOW/SOW2016_Report/SOW2016.pdf

³⁵ Low Impact Development (LID) Guidance, Department of Ecology, <https://ecology.wa.gov/Regulations-Permits/Guidance-technical-assistance/Stormwater-permittee-guidance-resources/Low-Impact-Development-guidance>

³⁶ Urban Runoff: Low Impact Development, US Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.epa.gov/nps/urban-runoff-low-impact-development>

³⁷ With Input from Local Tribes, LMN's Washington Ferry Terminal is Optimized for Minimal Environmental Impact, Matt Hickman, <https://www.archpaper.com/2020/07/washington-ferry-terminal-optimized-for-minimal-environmental-impact/>

³⁸ Brief Science of Creosote, Washington Department of Natural Resources, https://www.dnr.wa.gov/publications/aqr_cleanup_creosote_brief.pdf

- Develop and implement an electronic stormwater inspection form.

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Initiate pilot programs for the use of Environmentally Acceptable Lubricants (EALs) for shoreside hydraulic equipment and cables.
- Implement a water quality testing program at WSF facilities that leverages partnerships and grant opportunities to work with community and school groups.
- Implement a public anti-drip, leak, and spill campaign.

Increase Biodiversity

To help implement Governor Inslee's Executive Order 18-02 and the recommendations of the Washington State Southern Resident Killer Whale Task Force, WSF served on the planning committee and as a founding member of "Quiet Sound," a collaboration between ports, government, industry, and others to reduce underwater noise levels from large commercial vessels in Puget Sound. Other founding members include:



- Port of Seattle
- Northwest Seaport Alliance
- Puget Sound Partnership
- Washington Maritime Blue
- Pacific Merchants Shippers Association
- Marine Exchange of Puget Sound
- US Coast Guard
- NOAA NMFS
- The Makah Tribe

CONTRIBUTE TO SRKW RECOVERY

Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKWs) are a distinct population segment of killer whales that are listed as endangered under the Endangered Species Act in the United States³⁹ and under the Species at Risk Act in Canada.⁴⁰ In June 2018, the death of a member of the L Pod of SRKW (L92 "Crewser") brought the total number of SRKWs in the wild down to 75, which was the lowest population level since 1984.⁴¹ In 2020, the total number was reduced further to 74 individuals despite two births that year.^{42, 43} In early 2021, a new birth brought the number back up to 75 individuals.⁴⁴ As of July 1, 2022, the SRKW population had dropped back to 73.⁴⁵ A peer-reviewed article in *Scientific Reports* suggests that a decrease in ambient sound levels in the Salish Sea by 50 percent and an increase in prey availability by 15 percent would allow the population of SRKWs to attain a recovery target of 2.3 percent annual population growth.⁴⁶

In March 2018, Governor Inslee signed Executive Order 18-02 "Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery and Task Force."⁴⁷ Executive Order 18-02 created a task force to focus on solutions to the three primary threats to SRKWs: prey availability; toxic contaminants; and disturbance from vessel noise and traffic. Key Results included within this Plan in "Eliminate Greenhouse Gas and Pollutant Air Emissions," "Clean the Water," and "Improve Nearshore and Estuarine Habitat" will provide positive benefit to SRKWs in terms of helping to increase prey availability and lower toxins in their prey. However, Executive Order 18-02 specifically directed WSF to "develop strategies for quieting state ferries in areas most important to Southern Residents," and the primary focus of WSF's efforts in SRKW

³⁹ Listing of Southern Resident Killer Whale Under the ESA, NOAA, <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/action/listing-southern-resident-killer-whale-under-esa>

⁴⁰ Killer Whale (Northeast Pacific Southern Resident Population), DFO, <https://species-registry.canada.ca/index-en.html#/species/699-5>

⁴¹ Death Brings Endangered West Coast Orca Population to Lowest in Decades, Center for Biological Diversity, https://www.biologicaldiversity.org/news/press_releases/2018/southern-resident-killer-whale-06-18-2018.php

⁴² Southern Resident Killer Whale Population, Center for Whale Research, <https://www.whaleresearch.com/orca-population>

⁴³ Southern Resident Orca Community Demographics, Composition of Pods, Births and Deaths since 1998, Orca Network, https://www.orcanetwork.org/Main/index.php?categories_file=Births%20and%20Deaths

⁴⁴ L86's New Calf, L125, Center for Whale Research, <https://www.whaleresearch.com/l125>

⁴⁵ Southern Resident Killer Whale Population, Center for Whale Research, <https://www.whaleresearch.com/orca-population>

⁴⁶ Evaluating Anthropogenic Threats to Endangered Killer Whales to Inform Effective Recovery Plans, Lacy et al., <http://www.nature.com/articles/s41598-017-14471-0>

⁴⁷ Executive Order 18-02 "Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery and Task Force," Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/eo_18-02_1.pdf

recovery is focused on the reduction of acoustic and physical disturbance.

In 2023, the Washington State Legislature once again increased protections for SRKWs in relation to vessel behaviors in their vicinity.⁴⁸ The stricter regulations for SRKWs included:

- Not approaching a SRKW within 1,000 yards;
- Not positioning the vessel to be in the path of or behind a SRKW at any point within 1,000 yards;
- Disengaging the transmission of the vessel when it is within 400 yards of a SRKW; and,
- Slowing to seven knots over ground when the vessel is located within 1,000 yards of a SRKW.

Although these regulations are only applicable to SRKWs, WSF applied these stricter regulations for all cetaceans. These measures provide for the reduction of acoustic and physical disturbance to benefit all cetaceans, including gray whales and endangered humpback whales, not just SRKWs.

OBJECTIVE

- Contribute to the recovery of SRKWs.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Help to lead the expansion of the sighting network, which feeds real-time cetacean sightings to the Whale Report Alert System used by WSF to inform vessels of cetacean presence.

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Integrate reduction of underwater radiated noise as a key design element in the design of new vessel builds.

⁴⁸ Protection of Southern Resident Orca Whales, RCW 77.15.740, <https://apps.leg.wa.gov/rcw/default.aspx?cite=77.15.740>

IMPROVE NEARSHORE AND ESTUARINE HABITAT

In the “2020 State of Our Watersheds” report, the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission (NWIFC) identified the continued loss or degradation of estuarine and nearshore habitat as a principal threat to salmon recovery in Puget Sound.⁴⁹ One specific example of such degradation is the hard armoring of shoreline with bulkheads, rip rap or seawalls, which removes critical sources of sand and gravel that replenish beaches and provide spawning habitat for forage fish. Forage fish are an important food source for endangered salmon. Improving this food source would not only benefit salmon but would also help in the recovery of the SRKWs, as salmon are a critical part of their diet. “Of the Puget Sound’s 2,500 miles of shoreline, more than one quarter are currently armored.”⁵⁰ From 2016 to 2020, armored shoreline was only reduced by one mile in Puget Sound, with another 6.7 miles of armoring currently permitted to be replaced. WSF manages nearshore habitat at all its 20 facilities across the Puget Sound estuary, and the San Juan Islands marine nearshore.

WSF has replaced a failing concrete and creosote timber bulkhead at the Tahlequah Terminal with a “soft shore” solution that uses native materials to mimic the natural shoreline while still being engineered to control erosion at the location. Removal of this armoring will benefit forage fish and other marine species.



Photo credit: Hugh Shipman, Department of Ecology, 2019

OBJECTIVE

- Improve nearshore and estuarine habitat at all WSF facilities.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Develop community engagement or educational opportunities to improve habitat at WSF facilities.

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Integrate habitat improvements into a project or develop habitat improvement at a WSF facility.
- Implement a community engagement or educational opportunity to improve habitat at WSF facilities.

⁴⁹ 2020 State of Our Watersheds: A Report by the Treaty Tribes in Western Washington, NWIFC, <https://nwtreatytribes.org/2020-state-of-our-watersheds-more-restoration-projects-less-shoreline-armoring/>

⁵⁰ First Salish Sea-wide Shoreline Armoring Study Shows Cumulative Effects on Ecosystem, UW News, <https://www.washington.edu/news/2016/04/18/first-salish-sea-wide-shoreline-armoring-study-shows-cumulative-effects-on-ecosystem/>

Achieve Zero Waste

Ecology is required by law to develop and regularly update the State of Washington's solid and hazardous waste plan.^{51, 52} The current version of this plan, "Moving Washington Beyond Waste and Toxics,"⁵³ was published in 2021. The plan shifts the state toward the use of a "sustainable materials management" approach, which focuses on the full life cycle of materials from production through use to eventual disposal. The emphasis is on reducing environmental impacts throughout this cycle. "The State Plan builds on waste hierarchies adopted in the solid and hazardous waste laws of the mid-1980s, which place waste reduction as the highest priority, followed by recycling, and then safe disposal. The state's 30-year vision—to eliminate most wastes and toxics and use remaining waste as resources— supports this hierarchy."⁵⁴



Ecology's vision for Washington State aligns with a "zero waste" goal that has been championed by agencies, communities, organizations, and businesses throughout the world. A commonly accepted definition of zero waste has been vetted and provided by the Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA).⁵⁵

"Zero Waste: The conservation of all resources by means of responsible production, consumption, reuse, and recovery of products, packaging, and materials without burning and with no discharges to land, water, or air that threaten the environment or human health."⁵⁶

There are varying discussions on the practicality and potential of reaching zero waste. The international community has set out principles that target a 90 percent waste diversion rate followed by continual improvement to reach 100 percent. Though this goal of diversion may be difficult to achieve, the journey toward the goal will result in actual increases in waste diversion that can be measured and reported. As we find more ways to better manage waste, these numbers will increase over time and hopefully approach that ultimate goal.

Many agencies, communities, organizations, and businesses throughout the world have adopted a zero-waste goal, as well as the policies and practices that support that goal.⁵⁷ In Washington State, King County⁵⁸ and Seattle Public Utilities⁵⁹ have adopted zero waste goals, and their efforts have produced practical case studies with best practices to achieve that goal.⁶⁰ However, there remains considerable work to do to reach this goal in Washington

⁵¹ Solid Waste Management – Reduction and Recycling, RCW 70.95, <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/dispo.aspx?Cite=70.95>

⁵² Hazardous Waste Management, RCW 70.105, <https://app.leg.wa.gov/RCW/dispo.aspx?cite=70.105>

⁵³ The State Solid and Hazardous Waste Plan: Moving Washington Beyond Waste and Toxics, Ecology, <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2104050.pdf>

⁵⁴ The State Solid and Hazardous Waste Plan: Moving Washington Beyond Waste and Toxics, p.6, Ecology, <https://apps.ecology.wa.gov/publications/documents/2104050.pdf>

⁵⁵ Who is the Zero Waste International Alliance (ZWIA), ZWIA, <http://zwia.org/>

⁵⁶ Zero Waste Definition, ZWIA, <http://zwia.org/zero-waste-definition/>

⁵⁷ Zero Waste: 'Nil to Landfill' is Now a Practical Goal, Knowledge @ Wharton, Wharton School of Business, University of Pennsylvania, <https://knowledge.wharton.upenn.edu/article/zero-waste-nil-landfill-now-practical-goal/>

⁵⁸ Zero Waste, King County, <https://kingcounty.gov/depts/dnrp/solid-waste/garbage-recycling/zero-waste.aspx>

⁵⁹ Zero Waste, Seattle Public Utilities, <https://www.seattle.gov/utilities/about/plans/solid-waste/zero-waste>

⁶⁰ Zero Waste Case Study: Seattle, US Environmental Protection Agency, <https://www.epa.gov/transforming-waste-tool/zero-waste-case-study-seattle>

State. Ecology reported that just under 50 percent of solid waste in Washington in 2015 was diverted from landfills through recycling or recovery.⁶¹ BC Ferries, a comparable peer to WSF, reported a 40 percent diversion rate in 2018.⁶²

As part of our commitment to continuous improvement through Green Marine, WSF collects baseline waste diversion information from its facilities. These data indicate that in 2022, WSF diverted approximately 29% percent of its waste from landfills. To set a path to achieve zero waste, WSF will evaluate solid waste from vessels, terminals, and its shipyard to increase diversion through conventional means. At the same time, reductions in food packaging and diversion of compostable waste will increase this percentage. For hazardous waste, WSF will continue to work with Ecology's Hazardous Waste and Toxics Reduction Program⁶³ to identify waste reduction goals as part of our pollution prevention plan, which will be tracked separately given the particular challenges with hazardous waste streams.

OBJECTIVE

- Become a "Zero Waste" organization.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024:

- Include language to promote WSF's zero-waste objective in all WSF vendor contracts.
- Develop plan to integrate water bottle filling stations at WSF facilities and on WSF vessels.
- Develop plan for landfill diversion through recycling and compost at terminals where such vendor services are available.

By June 30, 2025:

- End use of single-use plastics with WSF vendors and at WSF facilities.
- Implement plan to include water bottle filling stations at WSF facilities and on WSF vessels.
- Implement plan for landfill diversion through recycling and compost at terminals where such vendor services are available.

⁶¹ Material Recovery and Disposal Data in Washington, Ecology, <https://ecology.wa.gov/Asset-Collections/Doc-Assets/Solid-waste/Solid-waste-recycling-data/MaterialRecoveryandDisposal-2015>

⁶² BC Ferries' Journey Towards Sustainability, BC Ferries, https://www.bcferries.com/web_image/hf5/h8b/8798823677982.pdf

⁶³ Hazardous Waste & Toxics Reduction, Ecology, <https://ecology.wa.gov/About-us/Get-to-know-us/Our-Programs/Hazardous-Waste-Toxics-Reduction>

Enhance and Support Thriving Communities

SUSTAINABILITY & RESILIENCE 

INCREASE COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT AND CULTIVATE PARTNERSHIPS

Community and stakeholder engagement is a crucial part of developing and maturing a sustainability journey. It is also a focus area that impacts all other aspects of this Plan. Development of the 2040 Long Range Plan included an extensive community engagement effort that continues. WSF consistently engages Ferry Advisory Committees, community members, customers, taxpayers, tribes, elected officials and others in decisions that affect ferry service, the communities we serve, and our environment. In doing this, WSF seeks to be transparent with the public and provide meaningful ways to shape our projects and programs. We also recognize that there is no single “public” and proactively find ways to engage the many “publics” in Washington State, particularly historically underrepresented and underserved communities. Robust community engagement ensures that the options we consider and the decisions we make are the right fit for the communities we serve.

Over the next biennium, WSF will be developing a community engagement commitment statement that will serve as the framework for a future WSF Community Engagement Plan to be developed in the 25-27 biennium. The commitment and resulting plan will follow WSDOT’s Community Engagement Plan⁶⁴ in addressing the Healthy Environment for All (HEAL) Act and will build upon the strategies outlined in WSDOT’s Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan,⁶⁵ which has community engagement as key focus area. “WSDOT aims to move communications and community engagement from a project-oriented approach, in which communities are contacted only when a study or project is underway, to a community-based approach, where regular communication contributes to better-informed projects and increased community trust.”⁶⁶ In doing this, WSF will address obstacles to engaging marginalized communities and vulnerable populations so as to provide new opportunities for those populations to provide input and have the impacts to their communities recognized. The goal of this effort is to incorporate the feedback and consultation of these efforts in such a way as to improve the lives and well-being of the diverse communities that we serve.

From Tacoma in the south to Friday Harbor and Sidney, British Columbia in the north, WSF has spent more than 70 years working with the communities we serve. Community participation is at the core of decision-making at WSF, and we are proud to be active in listening to and playing a positive role in communities across Puget Sound and the San Juan Islands.



Former WSF Assistant Secretary Amy Scarton, foreground, chats with Island County Commissioner Helen Price Johnson during the open house

⁶⁴ Community Engagement Plan, WSDOT, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-07/CommunityEngagementPlan-DRAFT2022Update-PolicyPlan.pdf>

⁶⁵ Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Plan, WSDOT, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2022-09/Diversity-Equity-Inclusion-Plan-2022.pdf>

⁶⁶ Ibid., p.27

By continuing to engage and strengthen these relationships, WSF creates and maintains a “social license to operate” with our employees, the communities we serve, and the public.⁶⁷

OBJECTIVE

- Enhance the social, economic, and environmental well-being of the communities we serve.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Engage existing community stakeholder groups to establish partnerships in regards to the development of water quality testing and habitat improvements at WSF facilities.

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Develop WSF community engagement commitment.
- Develop a programmatic systemwide plan to address the “Complete Streets” initiative.
- Complete origin and destination study to understand where customers are coming from and going to in order to better understand those we serve and identify opportunities for improved community engagement.

WSF has led the formation of a West Coast Maritime Envision Working Group, focused on the implementation of the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure’s Envision Sustainable Infrastructure Framework within the maritime sector. This group includes:



- | | |
|--|--|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • The Institute of Sustainable Infrastructure • Northwest Seaport Alliance • Vancouver Fraser Port Authority • Port of Long Beach (California) • Port of Los Angeles | <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Port of San Francisco • Port of Portland • Port of Seattle • Port of Tacoma |
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⁶⁷ Social License to Operate, Will Kenton, <https://www.investopedia.com/terms/s/social-license-slo.asp>

Create a Culture of Sustainability

Recognizing that it is people who drive sustainability efforts within an organization, a key focus for WSF is cultivating a culture of sustainability within our organization. “Effecting transformation into a sustainable organization begins with senior management support but requires embedding a culture of sustainability within the organization so that it becomes part of every employee’s daily function, mindset, and actions.”⁶⁸ Daily actions by individuals within WSF can change the organizational culture and, in doing so, positively influence the communities we serve. A mature organizational culture will prioritize sustainability as a key component of all the decisions made and actions taken.

In 2022, WSDOT leadership initiated a robust process to update our agency goals. One of the new goals developed is “Resilience,” which encourages every WSDOT employee to “plan and/or invest resources to improve our ability to mitigate, prepare for, and respond to emergencies, combat climate change, and build a transportation system that provides equitable services, improves multimodal access, and supports Washington’s long-term resilience.”⁶⁹ In addition to this goal that directly addresses sustainability, WSDOT’s other two goals, “Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion” and “Workforce Development” are also key components in building a culture of sustainability within our organization. WSDOT employees are also still reminded that one of our agency values is “Sustainability,” which for our agency means “Be resource stewards by supporting economic, environmental and community needs.”

Guided by our larger agency goals and values, WSF culture will be transformed with a focus on both learning and action. Through focused sustainability trainings, all WSF staff have been introduced to or reminded of the focus areas and OKRs that comprise WSF’s Sustainability Action Plan. This training allows individuals on a biennial basis to understand the role they play within our organization and become internal change agents. At the same time, these individuals also become ambassadors within the communities we serve as they share the work that we are accomplishing.

In addition to targeted training, WSF is also implementing sustainable measures into how we work, and how we design, construct, and maintain our facilities. Leveraging an opportunity presented by the COVID-19 pandemic, WSF has implemented WSDOT’s goal of an average of 40 percent of eligible employees teleworking every day, which results in a reduction of emissions attributable to employee commuting. WSF also continues its implementation of the Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure’s Envision Sustainable Infrastructure Framework, which will help WSF design, construct, and maintain more sustainable infrastructure projects.⁷⁰

WSF has led the development of peer working groups, bringing together members of the maritime industry at the regional, national, and international level. Through quarterly meetings, WSF has engaged with public ports in Puget Sound as well as the United States Navy to collaboratively address environmental issues. WSF also founded a quarterly working group made up of members of the maritime industry in California, Oregon, Washington, and British Columbia to help each other implement more sustainable infrastructure practices. Currently, WSF is co-chair, along with Brittany Ferries in France, of Green Marine’s Ferry Forum, bringing ferry operators in North America and Europe together on a quarterly basis to implement continuous improvement in sustainability.

⁶⁸ Becoming a Sustainable Organization: A Project and Portfolio Management Approach, Kristina Kohl, p.xiv.

⁶⁹ Strategic Plan, WSDOT, <https://wwwi.wsdot.wa.gov/about-us/strategic-plan>

⁷⁰ Envision, Institute for Sustainable Infrastructure, <https://sustainableinfrastructure.org/envision/use-envision/>

OBJECTIVE

- Consider the “three E’s” of economy, environment, and equity in all our decisions and actions.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Include a standing sustainability update/story within WSF’s internal employee newsletter.

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Create Envision worksheet templates for each terminal asset type.

Become a Pro-Equity and Anti-Racist Organization

“Being antiracist results from a conscious decision to make frequent, consistent, equitable choices daily. These choices require ongoing self-awareness and self-reflection as we move through life. In the absence of making antiracist choices, we (un)consciously uphold aspects of white supremacy, white-dominant culture, and unequal institutions and society. Being racist or antiracist is not about who you are; it is about what you do.”⁷¹

In 2020, the murder of George Floyd by the Minneapolis Police sparked outrage and protest across the country, the likes of which had not been witnessed in the United States in 40 years. For many people, Floyd’s death served as a wake-up call. For others, particularly members of the Black, Indigenous, and People of Color (BIPOC) community, the murder further amplified the acute impacts of systemic racism in the United States, through continuous economic, social, environmental, and physical violence in their communities. As a nation, we continue to be reminded of this injustice, inequity, and racism aimed at more and more BIPOC individuals, resulting in an almost ceaseless rise in attacks – sometimes fatal, but always traumatic – that cause lasting damage to themselves and their loved ones. A recent study published in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Sciences reported that the use of force by police is one of the leading causes of death for men of color between the ages of 20 and 35 years old, with as high as 1 in 1000 expected to die at the hands of the police.⁷²

Racist violence is not limited to young men of color, however. Looking at the issue through the lens of intersectionality demonstrates that, in the words of Kimberlé Crenshaw, “all inequality is not created equal.”⁷³ In coining the term “intersectionality,” Crenshaw reminded us that “We tend to talk about race inequality as separate from inequality based on gender, class, sexuality or immigrant status. What’s often missing is how some people are subject to all of these, and the experience is not just the sum of its parts.”⁷⁴ As an example, from 2013 to 2022, at least 304 transgender and gender non-conforming individuals have been murdered with the overwhelming majority of those individuals being people of color, transgender women, and below the age of 35.⁷⁵

To fight the long standing and systemic intersectional racist oppression in the United States, it is necessary to be more than “not racist.” It requires a commitment to be “anti-racist.” As Ibram Kendi stated, “There is no such thing as a non-racist idea, only racist ideas and anti-racist ideas.”⁷⁶ In making this statement, Kendi concluded that there is no neutrality when it comes to race and that each of us must examine our own beliefs and actions to see if we are in fact supporting or dismantling the racism that permeates our society.

⁷¹ Talking about Race: Being Antiracist, National Museum of African American History & Culture, <https://nmaahc.si.edu/learn/talking-about-race/topics/being-antiracist>

⁷² Risk of Being Killed by Police Use of Force in the United States by Age, Race-Ethnicity, and Sex, Edwards et al., <https://www.pnas.org/content/116/34/16793>

⁷³ Intersectional Feminism: What It Means and Why It Matters Right Now, UN Women, <https://www.unwomen.org/en/news/stories/2020/6/explainer-intersectional-feminism-what-it-means-and-why-it-matters>

⁷⁴ She Coined the Term ‘Intersectionality’ Over 30 Years Ago. Here’s What It Means to Her Today, Katy Steinmetz, <https://time.com/5786710/kimberle-crenshaw-intersectionality/>

⁷⁵ An Epidemic of Violence 2022, Human Rights Campaign Foundation, <https://reports.hrc.org/an-epidemic-of-violence-2022>

⁷⁶ How to Be an Antiracist, Ibram X. Kendi, p.20.

WSDOT Secretary's Executive Order 1119⁷⁷ makes clear that our own agency has never been “not racist” and instead has instituted policies and projects that have furthered racist ideas and actions. “Decisions and projects have the potential to disproportionately and negatively affect neighborhoods and communities of color throughout the state. The legacy and consequences of past decisions persist in the disparities and inequities today.” Even closer to home for WSF, we are reminded that BIPOC individuals were once not even allowed to leave the car decks and use the restroom facilities in our passenger cabins.

As employees of WSDOT, we must implement Executive Order 1119 by “identifying and dismantling systemic racism in our agency’s practices and policies, ... [leading and supporting] employees to increase understanding of their responsibility to play an active role in ending racism and inequality, ... [and advancing] anti-racist practices and policies by extending equal opportunity, justice, equity, diversity, accessibility, and inclusion to individuals of every race, national origin, ancestry, indigenous heritage, age, religion, gender, disability, pregnancy status, marital or parental status, sexual orientation, gender identity or expression, arrest record status, military or veteran status, social or economic status, or any other protected class.”⁷⁸

Furthermore, in 2022, Governor Inslee issued Executive Order 22-04,⁷⁹ which focuses state government on both anti-racism and pro-equity. Through the lens of pro-equity and anti-racism, WSF will “bridge opportunity gaps and reduce disparities so everyone in Washington flourishes and achieves their full potential.”⁸⁰ In doing so, we will not only transform our agency but also be a positive force for change within the communities we serve.

OBJECTIVE

- Become a pro-equity and anti-racist organization.

KEY RESULTS

By June 30, 2024, WSF will:

- Incorporate legislative direction on diversity, equity, and inclusion into WSF recruitment, hiring, training, and retention.
- Create internal communications aimed at raising awareness of WSF diversity, equity and inclusion efforts, the passenger Code of Conduct, and the actions of the Diversity Advisory Group.
- Complete changes to language used in position descriptions, policies, and procedures to correct non-inclusive and/or racist language.
- Develop an updated employee Code of Conduct that addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Complete demographic analysis of the communities and customers we serve.

By June 30, 2025, WSF will:

- Work with elected officials, and state and federal agencies to encourage changes to language used in state and federal maritime regulations, policies, procedures, and documentation.
- Implement an updated employee Code of Conduct that addresses diversity, equity, and inclusion.
- Develop and make public statistics concerning the horizontal and vertical representation of BIPOC individuals within WSF.

⁷⁷ Secretary's Executive Order E 1119.00 “Anti-Racism Policy and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning,” WSDOT Secretary Roger Millar, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/Anti-Racism-Policy-DEI-Planning-E119.pdf>

⁷⁸ Ibid.

⁷⁹ Executive Order 22-04 “Implementing the Washington State Pro-Equity Anti-Racism (PEAR) Plan & Playbook,” Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/22-04%20-%20Implementing%20PEAR%20%28tmp%29.pdf

⁸⁰ Ibid.

Conclusion

Washington State Ferries created this Sustainability Action Plan to fulfill our agency's commitment to sustainability,⁸¹ achieve the ambitious goals set out in Governor Inslee's Executive Order 20-01,⁸² identify and eliminate racist practices in our agency as outlined in WSDOT Secretary's Executive Order 1119,⁸³ and implement our commitment to sustainable practices and environmental stewardship outlined in our 2040 Long Range Plan.⁸⁴ Keeping in mind our definition of sustainability as considering the short- and long-term effects of all our decisions and actions on the "three E's" of economy, environment, and equity, we believe SAP 2023-2025 is the next step in our journey to be a worldwide leader in the maritime transportation industry, and in that way, to do our part in serving the needs of the present while preserving those of the future.



Photo credit: WSDOT Flickr, woodleywonderworks

⁸¹ Secretary's Executive Order E1113.00 "Sustainability," WSDOT, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020/09/22/WSDOT-ExecutiveOrder-111300.pdf>

⁸² Executive Order 20-01 "State Efficiency and Environmental Performance," Washington State Governor Jay Inslee, https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/exe_order/20-01%20SEEP%20Executive%20Order%20%28tmp%29.pdf

⁸³ Secretary's Executive Order E 1119.00 "Anti-Racism Policy and Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Planning," WSDOT Secretary Roger Millar, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2021-11/Anti-Racism-Policy-DEI-Planning-E119.pdf>

⁸⁴ 2040 Long Range Plan, WSF, <https://wsdot.wa.gov/sites/default/files/2020/09/16/WSF-LongRangePlan-2040Plan.pdf>