



2020 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference



Shared Knowledge for the Future

The Salish Sea is an international sea that includes the Strait of Georgia in British Columbia, Canada and Puget Sound and the Strait of Juan de Fuca in Washington state, US. It's an area of spectacular beauty, biologically rich marine waters and rich cultural history. The Salish Sea is also experiencing detrimental impacts of human development and has suffered significant loss of marine fish and wildlife populations.

The Salish Sea name recognizes the Coast Salish peoples who were the first inhabitants and who continue to reside in the region. Over seven million people live, work and play in the Salish Sea watershed. They benefit from the area's rich natural resources and deep culture. Vancouver, BC and Seattle, WA anchor the northern and southern portions of the ecosystem and provide dynamic economic growth and highly urbanized environments. By the year 2025, the Salish Sea regional population is expected to be over nine million people. Sustaining the Salish Sea ecosystem is critical to economic vitality, the preservation of indigenous cultures and quality of life.

Recognizing the importance of scientific exchange and dialogue with resource managers and public officials, thirteen organizations co-sponsored the first Puget Sound Research Conference in April 1988. Fifteen years later the event built, with support from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency and Environment Canada, into an international conference occurring every other year and alternating between venues in Seattle and Vancouver. Now known as the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference, it brings together scientists, First Nations and tribal government representatives, resource managers, community and business leaders, knowledge holders and policy makers.

The conference attracts about fifteen hundred participants and has become the premier scientific research and policy gathering in the Pacific Northwest. The presentations and discussions that occur at the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference are a platform to build shared policies, practices and procedures necessary to guide future actions for protecting and restoring the Salish Sea and its watersheds. The outcome is improved scientific collaboration, data sharing and dynamic discussions and on the state of the Salish Sea ecosystem. The Conference is administered by Western Washington University's Salish Sea Institute.

The next Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference will be April 19-22, 2020 at the Vancouver Convention Center in Vancouver, BC. The theme is *Shared Knowledge for the Future*. Presentations are expected to cover the most pressing issues and solutions from storm water monitoring and management, to orca protection and impacts of climate change.