



**TO:** Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager  
**FROM:** Daniel C. Thompson, Ph.D., Division Manager, Environmental Services  
 Michael P. Slevin III, P.E., Director, Environmental Services  
**COPY:** City Council and City Clerk  
**SUBJECT:** Resolution - Interlocal Agreement with the University of Washington Puget Sound Institute-  
 June 21, 2022  
**DATE:** May 26, 2022

DS DS  
 CMS MPS

**SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:**

A resolution authorizing an amendment to the interlocal agreement with the University of Washington (UWT) Puget Sound Institute, to extend the agreement for two additional years, to establish a sustainable program of work at the UWT Puget Sound Institute to addresses regional modeling needs, stakeholder engagement, and model applications through May 30, 2024.

**BACKGROUND:**

**This Department’s Recommendation is Based On:** Nutrient dynamics in the Puget Sound may be playing a part in lower dissolved oxygen levels in parts of the Sound. There is a need to understand these nutrient dynamics in order to develop strategies that best protect and enhance the health of the Puget Sound. The Puget Sound Institute is uniquely qualified to investigate nutrient dynamics and model scenarios that will provide insights into effects of various sources of nutrients on dissolved oxygen levels in the Puget Sound. Expertise currently exists at the Puget Sound Institute to run and refine the Salish Sea model.

The overall objective of this agreement is to utilize the established modeling center and sustainable program of work at the Puget Sound Institute, Center for Urban Waters, and utilize the Salish Sea Model and the expertise of the UWT Puget Sound Institute to identify effective strategies for protecting the Puget Sound.

This Agreement will enable the City, participating agencies, government and non-government stakeholders and collaborators to have increased model access; to support confidence in model results and capacity to undertake runs of interest in a timely fashion. An extension is needed to complete the final reports. No additional funds are needed.

**COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:**

This agreement facilitates the development of effective strategies for protecting the Puget Sound. It will inform discharge permits, stormwater mitigation strategies and other efforts that manage nutrient inputs to the Sound. The information generated by the Institute will impact everyone that has a connection to the Puget Sound. Staff have worked extensively with neighboring jurisdictions, wholesale wastewater customers, the Association of Washington Cities, and the business community.



**2025 STRATEGIC PRIORITIES:**

**Equity and Accessibility:**

Environmental Services seeks City Council approval to establish a modeling center and sustainable program of work related to nutrient dynamics in the Puget Sound. This legislation will benefit the City of Tacoma as a whole, along with neighboring municipalities, by providing the data necessary to most efficiently protect Puget Sound thereby keeping wastewater rates as low as possible.

**Economy/Workforce:** *Equity Index Score:* Very Low Opportunity  
Increase positive public perception related to the Tacoma economy.

**Education:** *Equity Index Score:* Very Low Opportunity  
No indicators.

**Civic Engagement:** *Equity Index Score:* Very Low Opportunity  
No indicators.

**Livability:** *Equity Index Score:* Moderate Opportunity  
Increase positive public perception of safety and overall quality of life.

**Explain how your legislation will affect the selected indicator(s).**

Establishing the modeling center will provide critical data needed to develop strategies to effectively and efficiently protect Puget Sound. Puget Sound is a signature resource of the City of Tacoma and a healthy sound greatly improves the livability of the City of Tacoma.

**ALTERNATIVES:**

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
Do not extend the agreement with PSI.	Other entities may step forward to support this important task saving the City some expense.	The modeling center does not get funded and important data required for the protection of Puget Sound is not collected.

**EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:**

A phased approach is proposed in year 1 and in subsequent years with benchmarks, outputs, and goals outlined in the agreement.

**STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:**

Environmental Services recommends authorizing the extension of an interlocal agreement with the UWT Puget Sound Institute to continue a sustainable program of work at the UWT Puget Sound Institute, Center for Urban Waters that addresses regional modeling needs, stakeholder engagement, and model applications.



**FISCAL IMPACT:**

The original interlocal agreement was budgeted in the amount of \$396,005, to understand nutrient dynamics in order to develop strategies that best protect and enhance the health of the Puget Sound. Several utilities across the Puget Sound have expressed interest in this project and an interlocal agreement allowing other utilities to participate and in turn reimburse the City of Tacoma for the initial expenditure to establish the Salish Sea Modeling Center has been created.

Fund Number & Name	COST OBJECT (CC/WBS/ORDER)	Cost Element	Total Amount
1.Wastewater Fund 4300	523430	5310100	\$396,005
<b>TOTAL</b>			<b>\$396,005</b>

**What Funding is being used to support the expense?**

The expenses associated with this project are supported by rates collected in Wastewater Fund 4300.

**Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget?**

YES

**Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?**

YES

**Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?**

NO

**Will the legislation change the City’s FTE/personnel counts?**

NO

**ATTACHMENTS:**

- Draft Interlocal Agreement with Puget Sound Institute