

Saving Puget Sound:

A Conservation Strategy for the 21st Century

by John Lombard



Practical proposal to conserve our natural heritage

- Landscape vision



- Funding



www.savingpugetsound.com

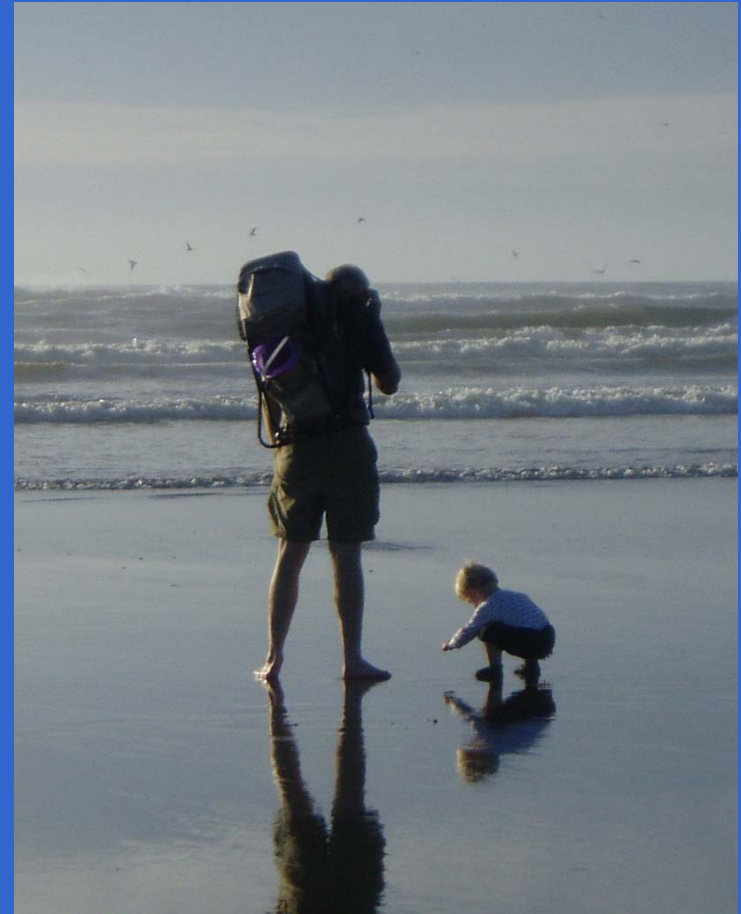
Why conserve?

Economics:

- Regional competitiveness
- Irreplaceable natural services
 - Clean water and air
 - Trap greenhouse gases
 - Flood protection
 - Pollination
 - Weed, pest control



What legacy will we leave?

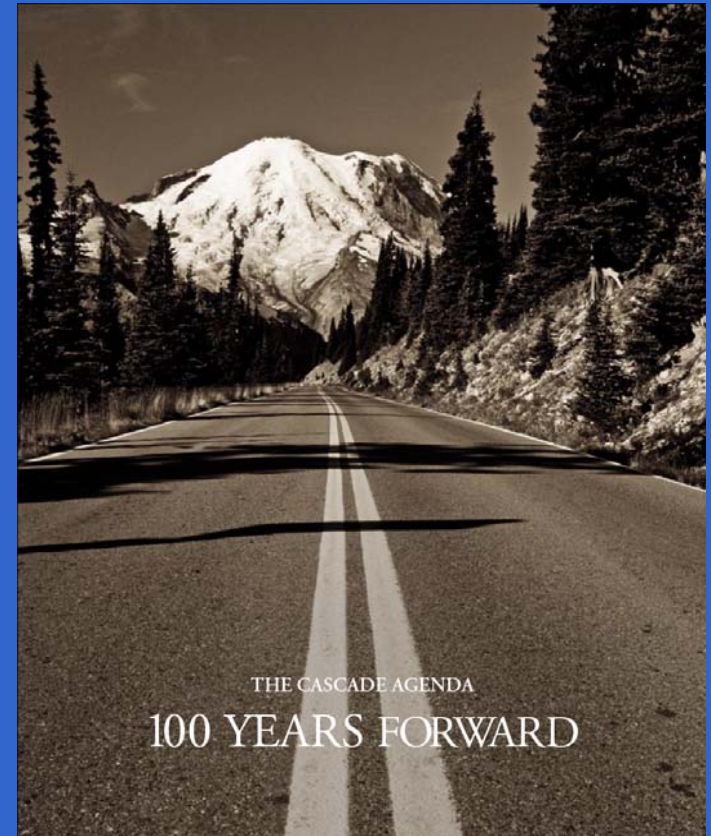


Regional Debate Underway



**SHARED STRATEGY
FOR PUGET SOUND**

working with communities to restore salmon



Positive developments, but...

- Partnership scientists say it's not enough
- Lack of commitments—particularly for habitat
- Where's the water?
- Don't consider region as ecosystem
- Don't approach habitat at landscape scale

Key issues: how land and water are managed

- State and local governments control
- Region CAN determine its own future

Challenges: Population Growth, Climate Change

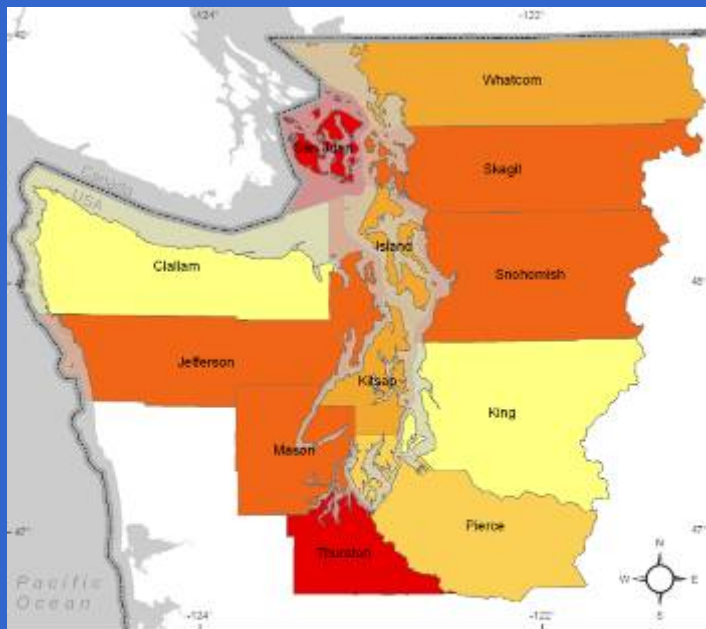
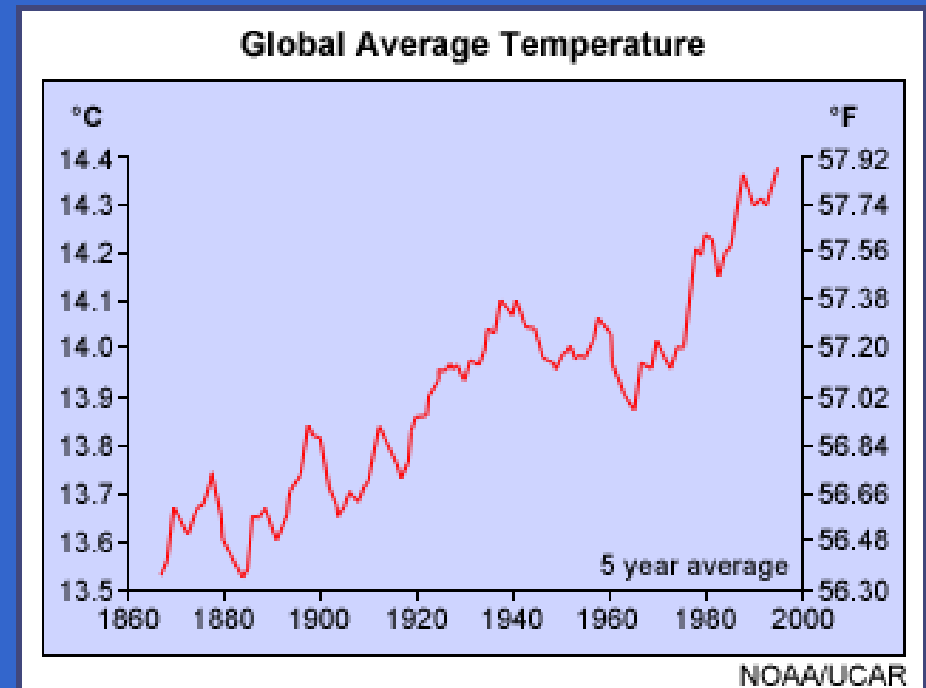
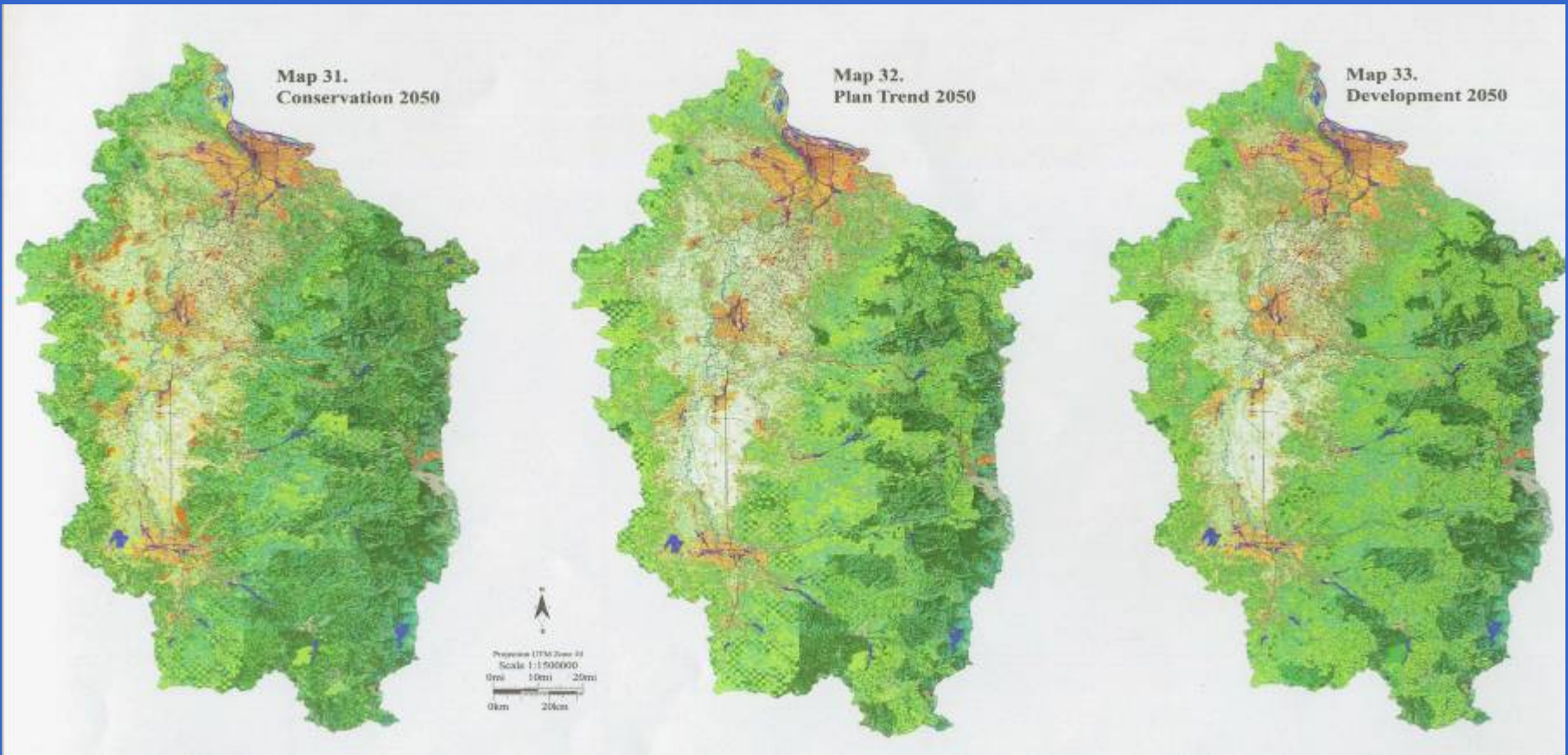


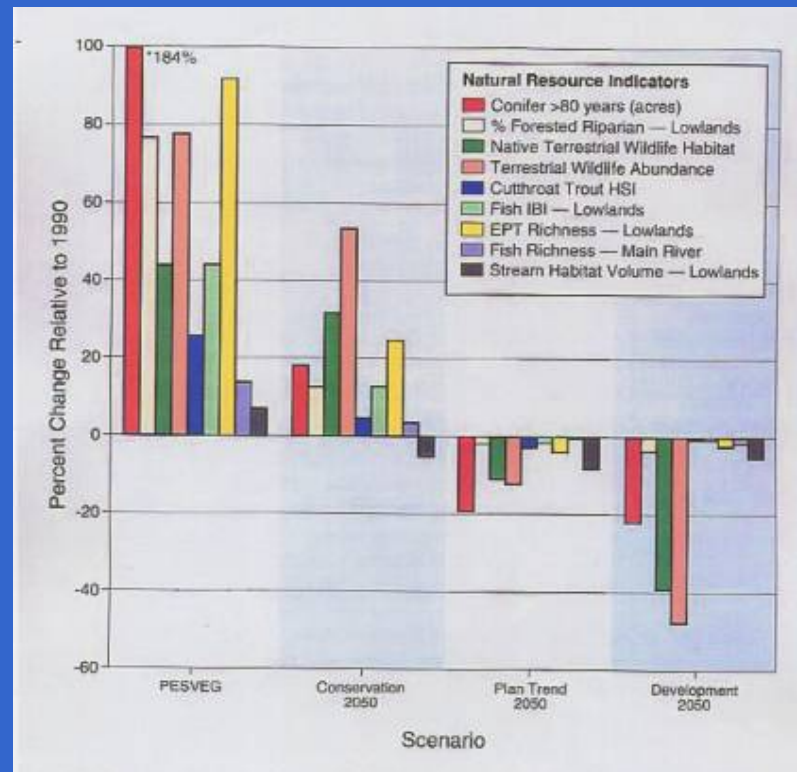
Figure 1-2. Projected Puget Sound Population Growth by County 2000 - 2025



Willamette “Alternative Futures”



Even with doubling population, could improve most indicators

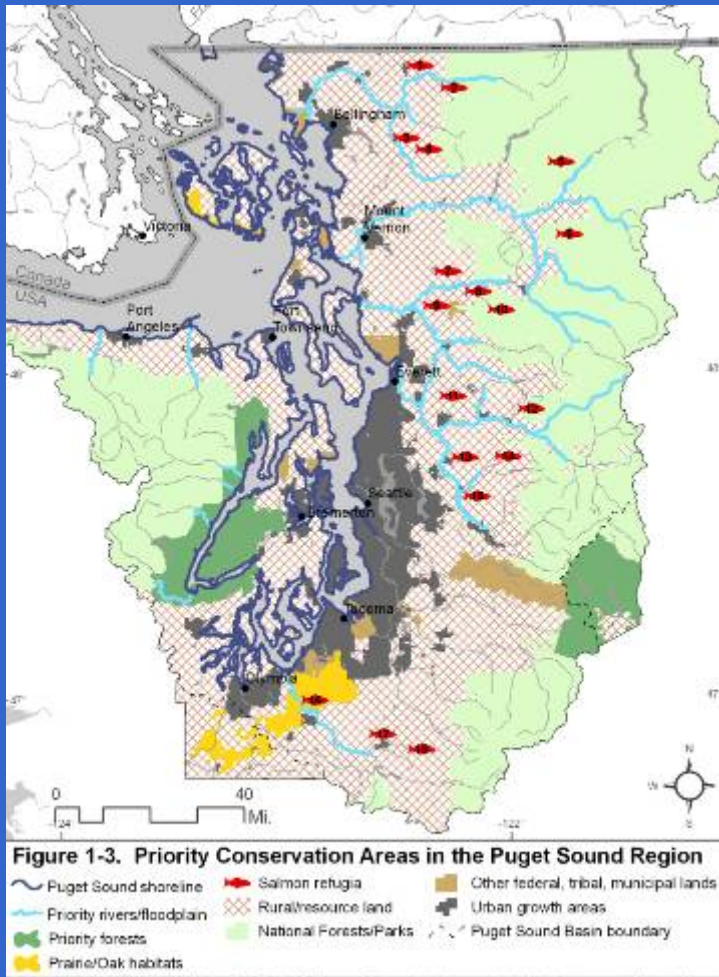


Add climate change, invasive species:
Lowers projections, widens gap

Key factors:

- Rural sprawl
- Floodplain interactions
- Mature forests
- Riparian vegetation

Landscape priorities here:



- **Willamette issues, plus:**
- Puget Sound shoreline
- Salmon refuge basins
- Hood Canal forests
- Snoqualmie wildlife corridor
- Prairie habitats

Key questions:

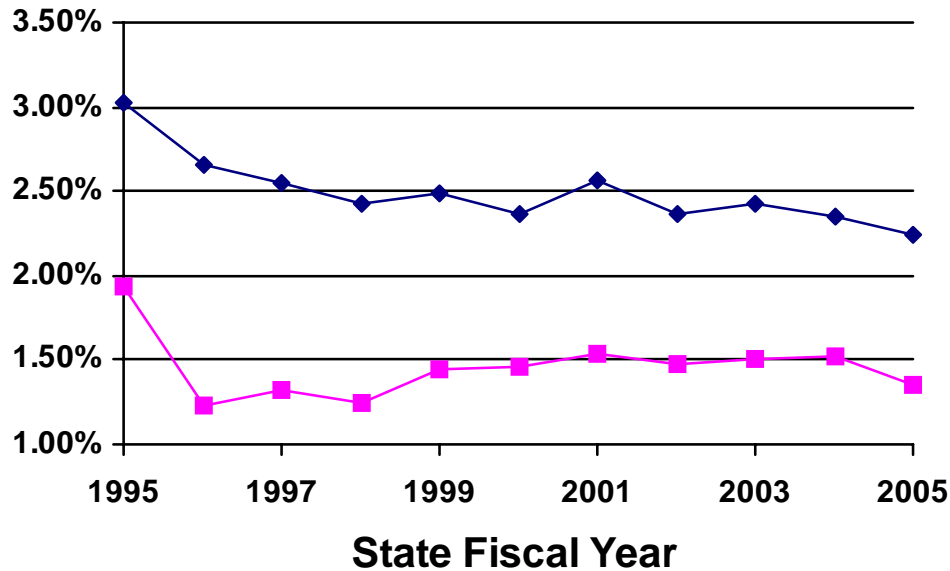
- Where are we going to allow localized impacts to occur?
- Where are we going to do our best to avoid new impacts?
- Where are we going to make up for past harm (to mitigate for new impacts)?
- How are we going to pay for all this?

Need funding to:

- Acquire most important habitats
- Restore habitats on new scale
- Pay landowners for ecological services beyond regulatory baseline
- Pay for critical programs: water conservation, stormwater planning, etc.

20-Year Cost: \$10 billion?

Natural Resources Spending as a Percentage of State Spending, 1995 - 2005

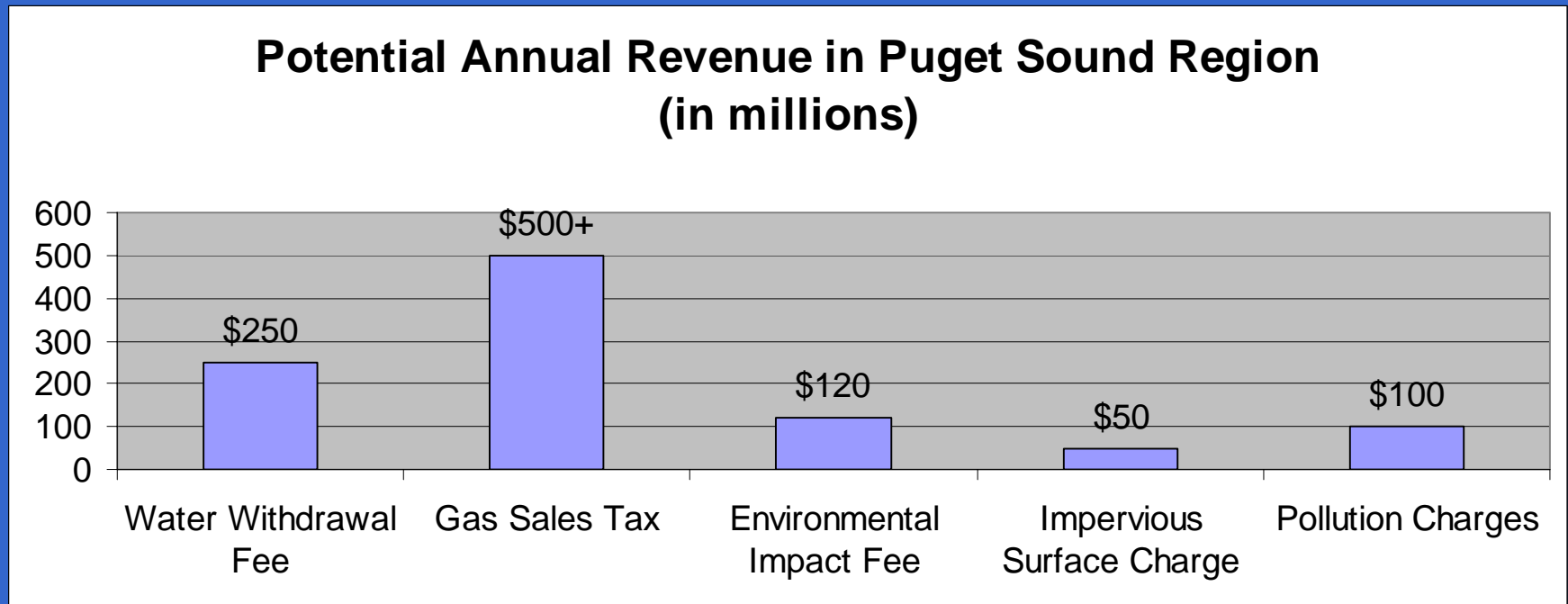


—◆— Percentage of Total State Operating Expenditures
—■— Percentage of State General Fund

Socialism collapsed because it did not allow the market to tell the economic truth. Capitalism may collapse because it does not allow the market to tell the ecological truth.

--Oysten Dahle, former VP of Exxon for Norway and North Sea

Solution: Ecological Pricing (aka “environmental sin taxes”)



Water Withdrawal Fee

- Region withdraws 250B+ gal/yr
- $1/10\text{¢}/\text{gal} =$
\$200-250M/yr,
\$5/mo. avg. cost
- Could be higher in summer, or for larger withdrawals



Gasoline sales tax

- Gas tax not cover cost to build, maintain roads
- Ought to cover more, given environmental costs
- Air pollution alone: 40¢/gal?
- Remove exemption from sales tax: \$500M+/yr



Environmental Impact Fee

- General taxes subsidize >\$20K/house for schools, roads, utilities



- Environmental impacts similar
- \$5K/house = \$120M/yr



SinceSlicedBread.com
WHAT'S YOUR COMMON SENSE IDEA?

- #1 idea in national contest
- Despite socio-economic focus
- Popular vote + expert review



Is \$10 billion too much to ask?

- Already spent on fish and wildlife in Columbia basin since 1970s (including expenses for flows)
- Largely failed because did not address fundamental issues



Pay for conservation AND tax reduction

\$1B/yr from ecological pricing

(+ \$500M/yr from full impact fees?)

= \$500M/yr for conservation

+ \$500M to \$1B/yr tax reduction

(up to \$2.50 per \$1,000 AV, 2¢ in sales tax)

Head start:



- Growth Management Act
- Federal, state, private forests
- Salmon recovery planning
- Non-profit work
- Legal underpinning: tribal treaties

Challenges

- Scale of issue
- Institutional denial
- Governance
- Rural/urban divide
- Funding



That was then...

Organizing principles:

- Think of region as ecosystem
- “The land speaks first.”
*--Central Puget Sound Growth Board,
Bremerton v. Kitsap County, 1997*
- We’re all in this together

The significant problems we face cannot be solved at the same level of thinking we were at when we created them.

--Albert Einstein

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