

# Washington State Kelp Strategic Plans/Initiatives and Workgroups

Comparison guide for large, ongoing, collaborative kelp strategic plans/initiatives and “workgroups” in Washington State

Welcome to the Washington State guide to kelp strategic plans/initiatives and “workgroups”. The purpose of this document is to highlight key differences between a few large, ongoing, and collaborative efforts that are commonly referenced, to improve the understanding of and dispel confusion between these efforts. This is not a comprehensive list but may be added to/updated as needed. Questions about each plan/initiative and workgroup can be directed to the respective contacts provided in the Summary Table below.

This guide is broken down into three parts. Please select a link below for additional information on each initiative/plan or workgroup.

- 1) [Detailed Descriptions](#): Descriptions and links for each group
- 2) [Summary Table](#): Comparison chart of key characteristics of each group, with group and contact email links (click on Title or Contact)
- 3) [Relationship Diagram](#): Illustration of main intergroup relationships

## DETAILED DESCRIPTIONS

### Strategic Plans & Initiatives:

#### **Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy** (<https://pugetsoundestuary.wa.gov/habitat-strategic-initiative/>)

The Habitat Strategic Initiative Lead (HSIL) is a cross-agency team lead by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and Washington Department of Natural Resources that works to accelerate habitat restoration across Puget Sound through targeted funding, strategic planning, and collaborative partnerships. The Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy (IS) is housed within the HSIL and identifies key needs and opportunities for kelp and eelgrass conservation and recovery. The Marine Vegetation IS also tracks and informs progress toward targets and goals established within the Puget Sound Partnership’s Action Agenda and Vital Signs program.

#### **Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan** (<https://nwstraits.org/our-work/kelp/>)

The Puget Sound Kelp Conservation and Recovery Plan (Kelp Plan) is a collaboratively developed, living document (published in 2020) that embodies the vision of organizations and individuals that value Puget Sound kelp forests. The Kelp Plan provides a strategic framework of coordinated policy and research-based goals and actions to advance Puget Sound kelp conservation and recovery. The Kelp Plan, through its coordinator and collaborators, leads and supports continued coordination, communication, and advancement of the Kelp Plan actions.

#### **Washington State Kelp Forest and Eelgrass Meadow Health and Conservation Plan** (<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/kelp-and-eelgrass-plan>)

In 2022, the Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) was tasked with identifying at least 10,000 acres of kelp and eelgrass priority habitat under a statewide kelp and eelgrass health and conservation plan. Developed in collaboration with state agencies, organizations, Tribes, and communities across the state, this Plan will guide an iterative process tackling stressor mitigation using WA DNR’s unique authorities and partnerships with other groups.

# Washington State Kelp Strategic Plans/Initiatives and Workgroups

Comparison guide for large, ongoing, collaborative kelp strategic plans/initiatives and “workgroups” in Washington State

## Collaborative Workgroups:

### **British Columbia-Washington State Kelp Node** (<https://kelpnode.org/>)

Building on other international initiatives, a cross-boundary (US – Canada) network of kelp practitioners (First Nations stewards, researchers, managers, policy makers, educators, and community scientists) is emerging in the Pacific Northwest. The Kelp Node aims to: 1) advance kelp conservation, management, and recovery in the transboundary waters of British Columbia (Canada) and Washington (USA) through implementing and expanding collective actions for kelp; and 2) serve as a forum for communicating about and organizing relevant research activities. Working groups are structured as clusters of actions that will form a basis for knowledge exchange, data collation, and novel research.

### **Kelp Forest Monitoring Alliance of Washington State** (<https://kelp-canopy-vital-sign-for-puget-sound-wadnr.hub.arcgis.com/>)

The alliance unites a diverse set of organizations, working together to track floating kelp status and trends across Washington state. The alliance works to advance understanding and conservation through co-production of knowledge and information sharing. The primary product is the statewide floating kelp indicator, which synthesizes multiple monitoring datasets with other ways of knowing. The statewide indicator provides regional monitoring data to the Puget Sound Partnership’s Vital Signs program and other research and management efforts. Through collaborations and partnerships, the alliance links floating kelp monitoring to broader ecosystem topics, including species that depend on floating kelp, understory kelp monitoring, stressors, restoration, and management.

### **Kelp Policy Advisory Group** (<https://nwstraits.org/media/3514/kelp-policy-advisory-group-recommendations.pdf>)

Washington State interagency workgroup that focuses on understanding challenges, gaps, hurdles, and opportunities to improve kelp recovery and protection efforts. The Advisory Group developed a list of 11 recommendations intended to provide clear guidance, resources, and tools to individuals and entities responsible for upholding kelp protection and recovery measures and authorities in Washington, especially those at local jurisdictions. The group seeks support from agency leadership, researchers, grant funding sources, and others to advance progress on these recommendations.

### **Washington State Kelp Research and Monitoring Workgroup** (<https://www.dnr.wa.gov/programs-and-services/aquatics/aquatic-science/kelp-research-and-monitoring-workgroup>)

WA DNR led open workgroup, which facilitates collaboration and information sharing related to kelp research and monitoring in Washington.

### **Washington State Seaweed Collaborative** (<https://waseaweedcollaborative.org/>)

The Washington Seaweed Collaborative (WSC) is a diverse community committed to the cultivation and conservation of kelp and other seaweeds for commercial, cultural, and environmental purposes. Established in 2020 by a grassroots network of seaweed enthusiasts, it has evolved into an objective-focused program coordinated by Washington Sea Grant, in partnership with The Nature Conservancy and Puget Sound Restoration Fund.

# Washington State Kelp Strategic Plans/Initiatives and Workgroups

Comparison guide for large, ongoing, collaborative kelp strategic plans/initiatives and “workgroups” in Washington State

## SUMMARY TABLE (links embedded in Titles and Contacts)

Title	Alias	Contact	Subject Matter	Description
Marine Vegetation Implementation Strategy	Marine Vegetation IS	Bree Turner, WA DNR	<a href="#">Puget Sound Kelp and Eelgrass Strategic Initiative</a>	Facilitates implementation of regional marine vegetation recovery plans
Puget Sound Kelp Conservation & Recovery Plan	Kelp Plan	Jeff Whitty, NWSC	<a href="#">Puget Sound Kelp Strategic Plan</a>	Coordinates and provides framework of research and policy goals and actions to advance kelp conservation and recovery
Washington State Kelp Forest & Eelgrass Meadow Health & Conservation Plan	Kelp and Eelgrass Health and Conservation Plan	Cynthia Harbison & Max Showalter, WA DNR	<a href="#">WA Kelp and Eelgrass Strategic Plan</a>	Working towards identifying, conserving, and recovering over 10,000 acres of kelp and eelgrass habitat
British Columbia-Washington State Kelp Node	Kelp Node	Margot Hessing-Lewis & Jasmin Schuster, Hakai Institute, UN Ocean Decade Collaborative Centre	<a href="#">WA/BC Kelp Multiple Workgroups*</a>	Transboundary network of working groups implementing and expanding actions for kelp, and serving as a forum for communicating and organizing relevant research activities
Kelp Forest Monitoring Alliance of Washington State	Floating Kelp Indicator	Danielle Claar, WA DNR	<a href="#">WA Kelp Monitoring Workgroup</a>	Collaborative group monitoring kelp for programs including the Vital Sign’s Floating Kelp Indicator
Kelp Policy Advisory Group	-	Brenda Campbell, Pew	<a href="#">WA Kelp Policy Workgroup</a>	Collaborative group working to better understand and strengthen implementation of existing kelp rules and regulations/management planning
Washington State Kelp Research & Monitoring Group	-	Helen Berry, WA DNR	<a href="#">WA Kelp Research Workgroup*</a>	Facilitates collaboration and data sharing related to kelp research and monitoring
Washington Seaweed Collaborative	Seaweed Collaborative	Meg Chadsey, WA Sea Grant	<a href="#">WA Kelp Aquaculture Workgroup*</a>	Facilitates information sharing and collaboration related to kelp aquaculture for commercial and restorative sectors

\*Open workgroup; select contact names to email and learn more

