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Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

2018 Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference
(Seattle, Wash.)

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The 30-year History of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference: Where We Started, Where We've Been, and Where We May Be Going

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The 30-year History of the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference: Where We Started, Where We've Been, and Where We May Be Going

Evolving from the first "annual" Puget Sound research meeting, convened in spring 1988, the Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference has grown into a biennial gathering that is the centerpiece of transboundary collaboration to protect and restore the Salish Sea and its watersheds. Panelists explored how this event has been shaped by the region's changing institutional arrangements and how this history might help shape cross-system collaborations into the future.

Sheri Tonn (Pacific Lutheran University) and Usha Varanasi (NOAA Fisheries, retired) led a discussion of the work leading to and following up on 1988's final report from the Committee on Research in Puget Sound. This conversation helped us remember what the 1988 conference addressed and what participants imagined would develop for Puget Sound science and a recurring conference.

Andrea Copping (Pacific Northwest National Laboratory) and Richard Beamish (Department of Fisheries and Oceans, retired) led a discussion of the work and meetings of the 1994 marine science panel and the synthesis product, "Review of the marine environment and biota of the Strait of Georgia, Puget Sound and Juan de Fuca Strait." This conversation reflected on the transboundary work that developed under the auspices of the Puget Sound/Georgia Basin International Task Force.

In the final portion of this session, Joe Gaydos (Sea Doc Society) and Bert Webber (Western Washington University) discussed the more recent history of the conference and transboundary collaboration. Panelists joined with attendees in a discussion of ideas for how to move forward, especially developing: (1) honest, independent reporting to the public and governments and (2) an organization at the scale of the Salish Sea ecosystem that includes room for citizen voices.

For more details about this panel contact Scott Redman (scott.redman@psp.wa.gov) or see collected materials and continuing work at [shared folder on the Puget Sound Partnership's box site: https://pspwa.box.com/s/0lojxtq1232gcq618dsax7gmko2wsrzt](https://pspwa.box.com/s/0lojxtq1232gcq618dsax7gmko2wsrzt)