

Guidelines for Whatcom Watershed Information Network

In order to function as smoothly and efficiently as possible, members of WWIN will operate by the following set of guidelines.

Membership:

WWIN will provide a variety of ways for network members to participate in the organization and enhance coordination with other larger regional efforts such as the Puget Sound Partnership. Figure 1 provides an illustration of the overall framework with additional details below.

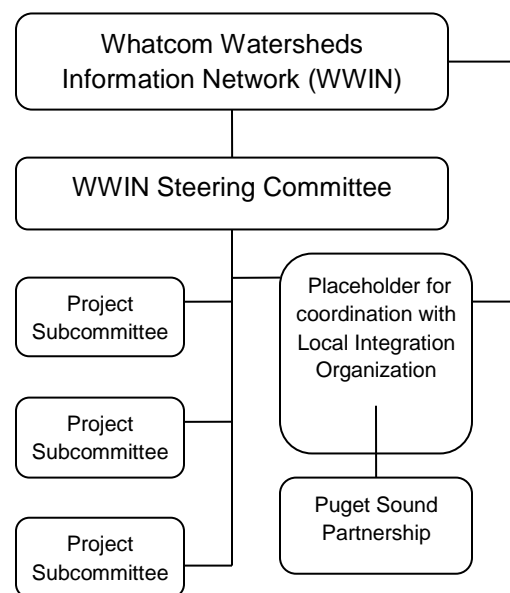
General Membership: The goal of the Whatcom Watershed Information Network is to have members who are involved and interested in marine and freshwater ecosystems and natural resource education and outreach and which represent a broad base of watershed and natural resource perspectives. Anyone can become a general member. General members will receive updates on WWIN activities, are eligible to participate on the Steering Committee or Project Sub-committees, will be asked for feedback on new projects/plans, and will be invited to participate in General Membership meetings.

General Membership meetings are typically held 3 - 4 times a year and are used to provide updates and get feedback on local and regional WWIN activities and share information among participants. Meetings may also be used for trainings, coordination, and other actions supporting WWIN's mission and goals.

Steering Committee: The purpose of the Steering Committee is to:

- develop annual work plans including implementation strategies;
- obtain feedback from the General Membership regarding the annual work plan and other issues as needed;
- coordinate projects undertaken by WWIN sub-committees, to ensure that projects are carried out consistent with the mission and goals of WWIN;
- plan and support General Membership Meetings; and
- address new needs/issues that may arise during the year.

Figure 1. WWIN Structure



Ideally the Steering Committee will have members which represent a broad base of watershed and natural resource perspectives. Membership on the Steering Committee is on a volunteer basis however anyone wishing to be a member should make a commitment of at least one year. Adjustments may be needed to maintain a functional Steering Committee. Steering Committee meetings occur on a regular basis which can vary from monthly to quarterly depending on activities underway. Steering Committee members agree to place a priority on activities undertaken by the Committee and attend as many of the meetings as possible.

A meeting schedule will be established at the beginning of each year though adjustments may be made as necessary. The Committee will select a chair and minute-taker that will record action items. This can be the same person if desired and may be rotated at the discretion of the Steering Committee. The Chair will be responsible for working with the Steering Committee to set the agenda and communicating with Committee members. Any major decision expected to be made at a meeting should be identified on the agenda. If a member cannot attend a particular meeting, it is their responsibility to contact the Chair with any comments they may have. The goal is for decisions to be made on a consensus (I can live with it) basis. If consensus can't be reached, a vote will be taken and a majority will be required.

Project Sub-Committees: Project Sub-Committees will be formed to carry out specific actions and program needs identified in the annual work plan and/or other avenues as supported by the Steering Committee. Any participant in WWIN general membership is eligible to participate in the project sub-committees. An effort will be made to ensure that each subcommittee includes at least one member from the Steering Committee. A representative from each subcommittee (which could be the Steering committee member) will provide activity updates to the Steering committee prior to or at the Steering Committee meetings in order to acquire feedback and guidance as necessary. Subcommittees will also provide updated information for the main WWIN website and General Membership meetings as appropriate for communication. Project Sub-Committees will determine their meeting dates, times, and ground rules consistent with the mission and intent of WWIN.

Placeholder for outcome of discussions with local integrating organization and regional efforts underway.