

Clean Water Plan

Making the right investments at the right time

Welcome

Clean Water Plan

Regional Water Quality

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Welcome to the Clean Water Plan Online Open House!

Our relationship to water is part of what makes this region special. Puget Sound and our lakes, rivers, and streams give us food, transportation, jobs, and fun.

Over the next few decades our region will spend billions of dollars on protecting water quality. The investments we make will benefit fish, jobs, seafood, wildlife, and our ability to play on beaches for future generations. King County is developing a plan to guide our investments over the next few decades. It's called the Clean Water Plan. We are starting a Clean Water conversation because we want to listen to you on the best ways to make these investments.

The purpose of this online open house is to provide a chance for you to:

- ▶ Learn about the Clean Water Plan.
- ▶ Share what's important to you when thinking about the future of our communities, our health, and our environment, and how we use and take care of our water today and for years to come.

How to use this online open house

- ▶ To advance through this open house, scroll down to read each page, then click the "Next Page" button at the bottom of the page, or select the tab you want at the top.
- ▶ Within this online open house, you will be asked questions and can provide your feedback. The online open house and questionnaire will only take a few minutes to complete.

Thank you for your participation!



Stay Connected

Sign up for updates and engagement opportunities on the Clean Water Plan.

First Name

Last Name

Email *

**Email is Required*

Submit

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What's the Clean Water Plan?

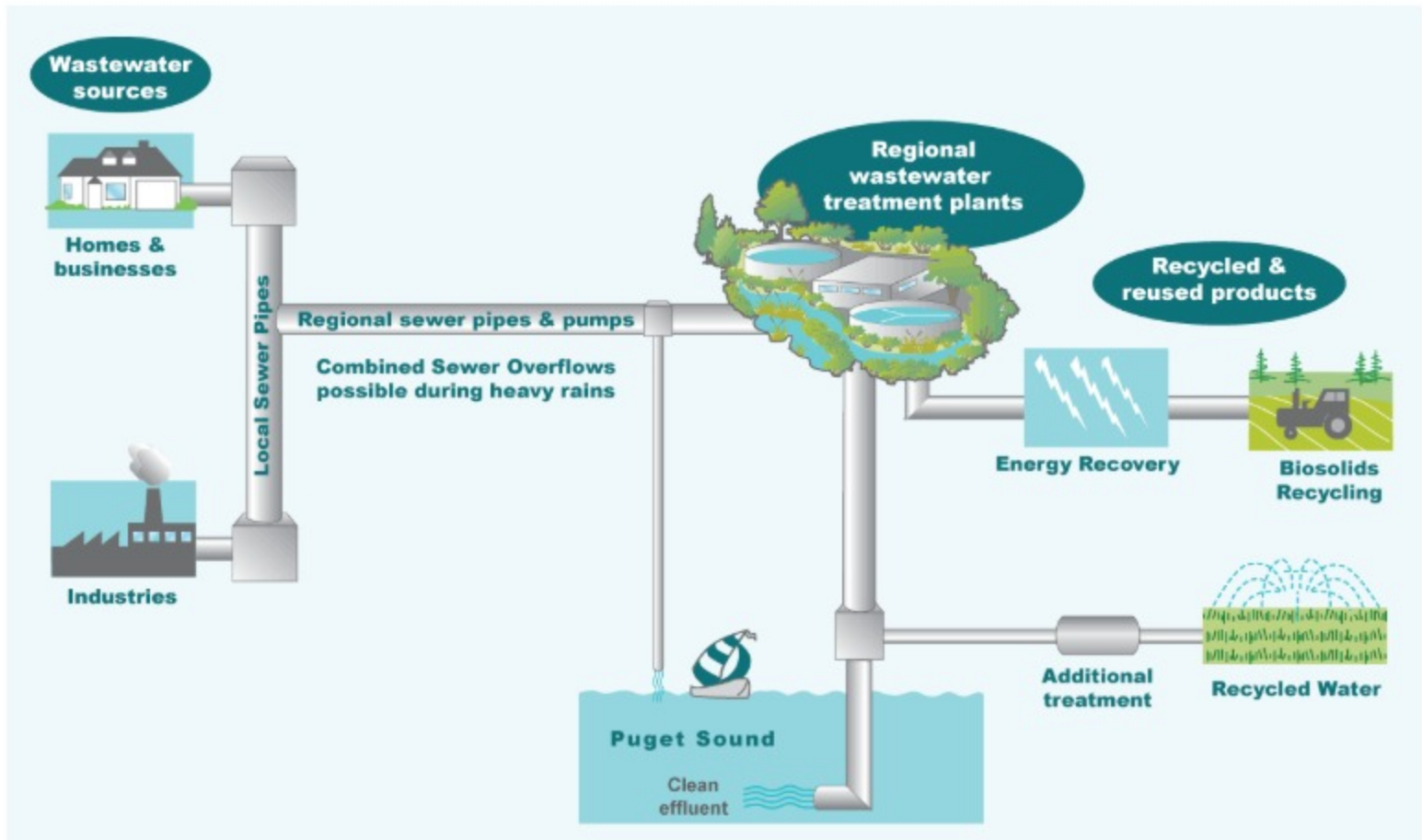
It's time to make a plan.

King County is undertaking this large planning effort because it is facing critical—and expensive—decisions that will affect the region's water quality.

We are facing new challenges, including a changing climate, aging pipes and wastewater treatment facilities, and a rising cost of living, and it's time to make a plan for the future.



King County protects water quality by cleaning the water that people use. We have hundreds of miles of pipes, pumps, tanks, treatment plants, and other equipment to collect, carry and treat wastewater. We recycle what we can and send it back to nature. King County and other local governments help manage stormwater facilities that protect water bodies from pollutants that run off streets, parking lots and other paved surfaces.



Click image to enlarge.

What will the plan do?

The Clean Water Plan will guide decisions about our wastewater system and how to protect our local waterways and health in the future. The plan will also look at how we are managing water that runs off streets, parking lots, driveways, lawns and sidewalks when it rains. King County is preparing the plan so that we make the right investments at the right time.

The goal of the plan is to identify policies, programs, and projects that reflect community priorities and guide us toward the best water quality outcomes for the region. When complete, the plan will provide a path for water quality investments in the near-term as well as long-term over the next 40 years.

What makes this plan and your input so important?

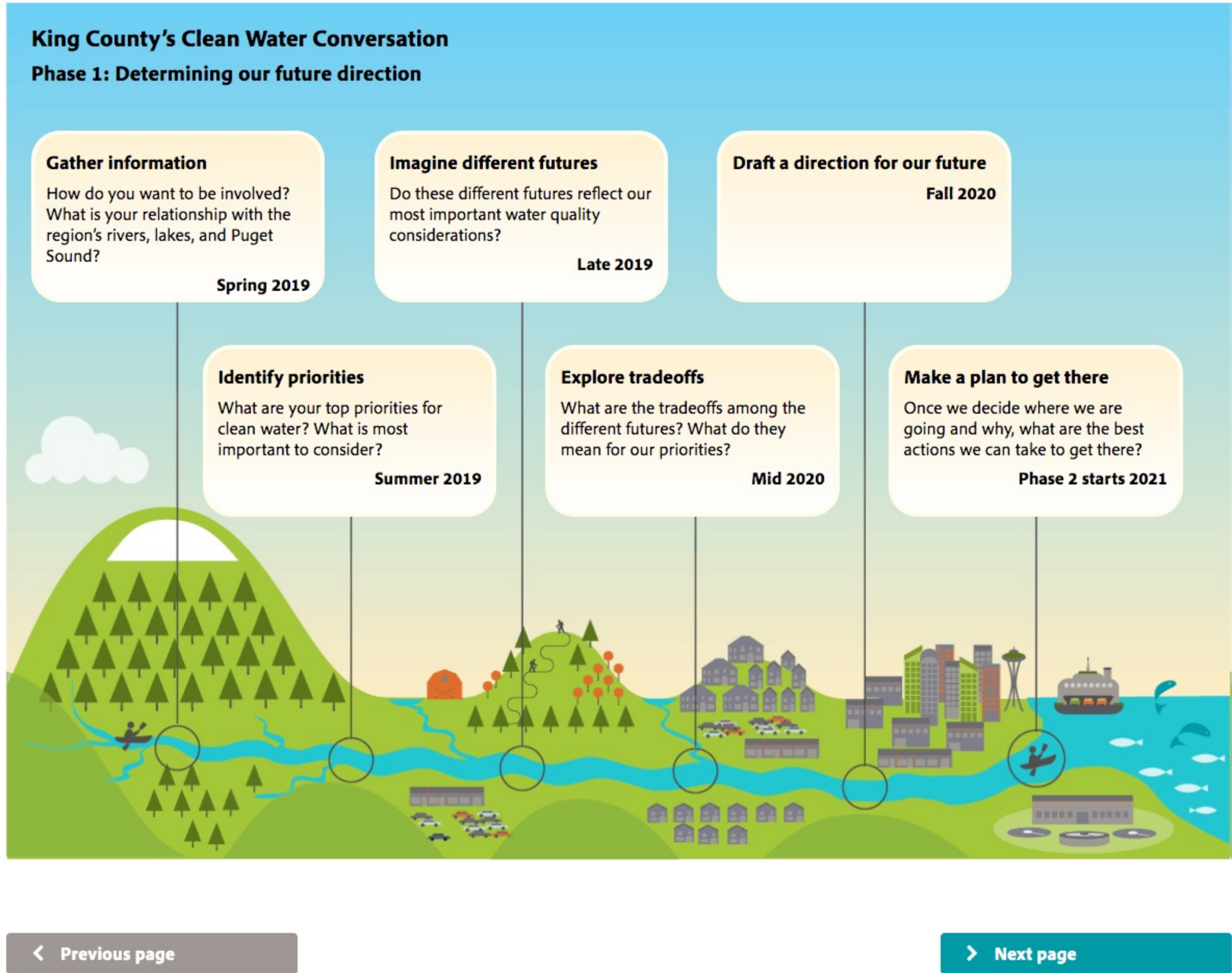
- ▶ Our future investments are a major chance to benefit the economic, social and ecological health of the region.
- ▶ We may find overlap between water quality investments and other issues that need attention—so we can meet multiple needs.
- ▶ Solving all the regional water quality problems will take time and collaboration.

What will the planning process look like?

Our planning process will be divided into two main phases:

1. Determining our future direction (2019–2020)
2. Making a plan to get there (beginning in 2021)

Public input is important during this first phase. Complete [our questionnaire](#) at the end of this open house to help us identify what's important to you and your community.



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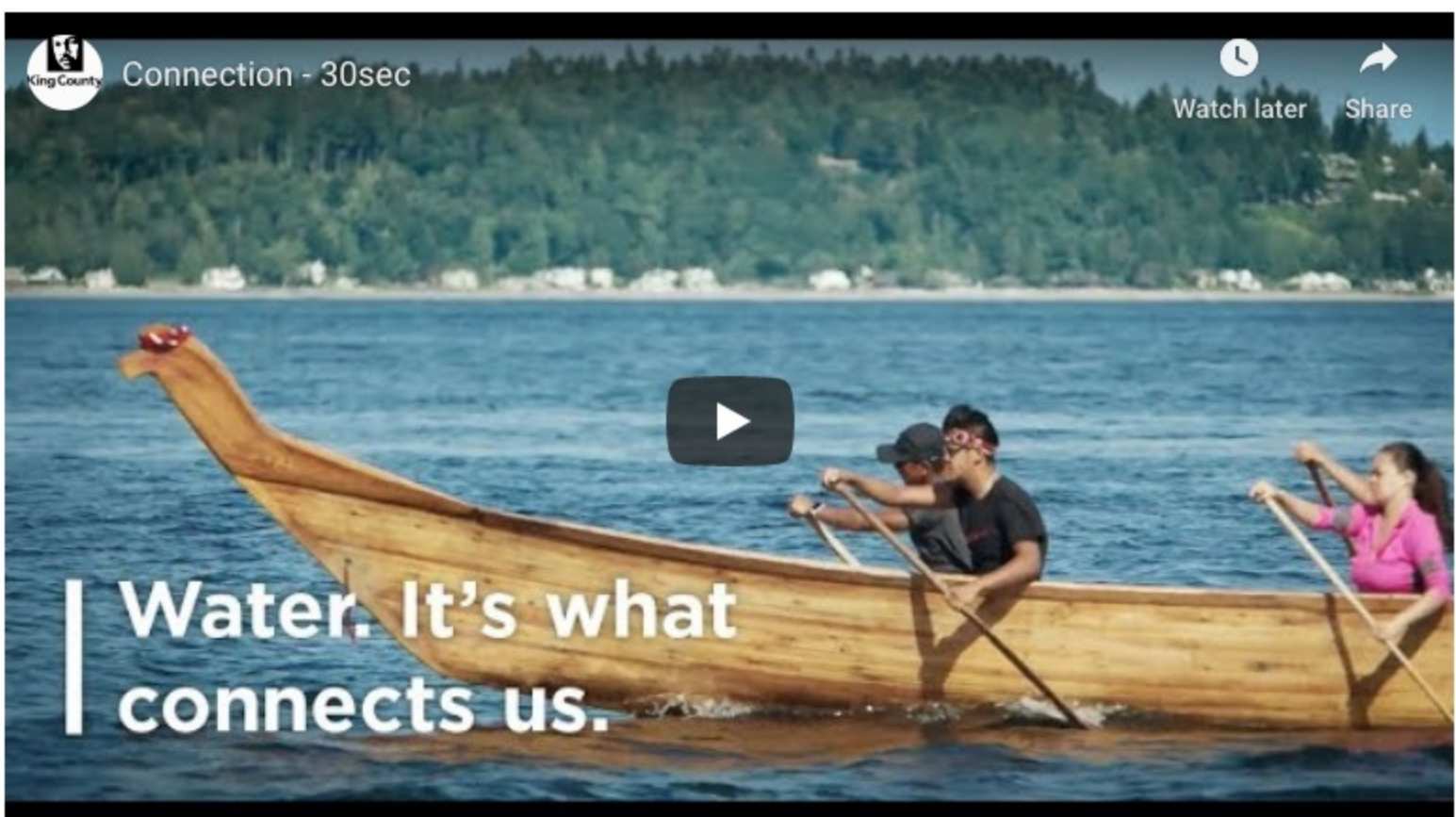
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Our health, safety, welfare, education, and economic and employment opportunities, as well as preservation of cultural and natural resources, are all connected to how we use and interact with our water.



Water quality is improving, and we have more to do.

In the 1960s, Lake Washington was too polluted for swimming. Now, it is one of the cleanest urban lakes in the country.



Then



Now

Data from the last 40 years shows:

Past improvements have improved water quality.

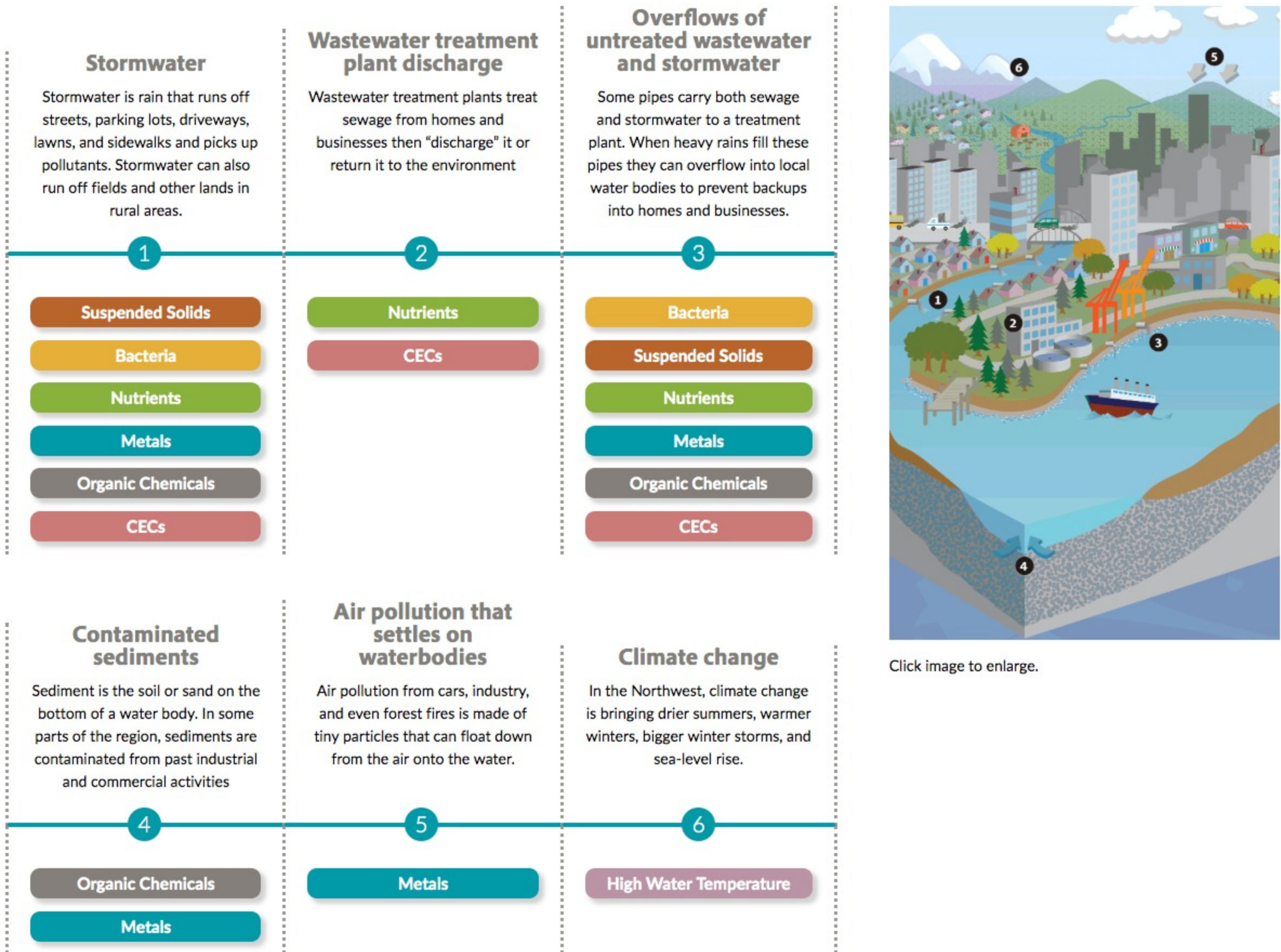
- ✓ Less bacteria that can make people sick.
- ✓ Fewer nutrients that can cause toxic algae blooms.
- ✓ More dissolved oxygen for fish to breathe.

There is more to do to achieve water quality goals.

- Water temperature is getting warmer, which is worse for fish.
- Water does not always meet state standards for bacteria and dissolved oxygen.
- Historically contaminated sediments need to be cleaned up or contained.

How do pollutants get into water?

These pathways transport pollutants into Puget Sound, rivers, and lakes in our region and negatively impact water quality.



Click image to enlarge.

Pollutants can have harmful impacts on our waters, aquatic life, and health.

Bacteria	Bacteria from animals or humans can make people sick.	
Nutrients	Nutrients, like nitrogen and phosphorus, are fertilizers for plants, but can cause algae blooms that decrease dissolved oxygen and harm fish, shellfish, and aquatic life as well as make waters unswimmable.	
Suspended Solids	Suspended solids, like sediment, silt, and sand, can carry pollution, settle to the bottom, and smother habitat for fish, shellfish, aquatic life, and small animals.	
Metals	Heavy metals, like arsenic, copper, lead, and mercury, can harm fish, shellfish, and aquatic life and cause human health problems.	
Organic Chemicals	Organic chemicals, like phthalates from plastics, PBDEs from flame retardants, chlorinated pesticides, and banned industrial chemicals called PCBs, can sicken people, fish, shellfish, and aquatic life.	
Contaminants of Emerging Concern (CECs)	Little information is available on the potential impact to people, fish, shellfish, aquatic life, or wildlife from contaminants of emerging concern, including medicines, personal care products, and plastic microfibers.	
High Water Temperature	Warm water has lower levels of dissolved oxygen for fish, shellfish, and aquatic life to breathe and can result in an increase in algal blooms along with a number of other ecological effects.	

Who protects water quality in the region?

King County and other local governments help manage:

- ▶ Wastewater facilities that transport and treat sewage from homes and businesses.
- ▶ Stormwater facilities that protect waterways from pollutants that run off streets, parking lots and other paved surfaces.

State agencies and local governments manage initiatives that achieve other goals related to water safety and quality.

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Key Trends Shaping Our Future

King County is facing critical—and expensive—decisions that will affect the region's water quality. We all have important decisions to make, so we're reviewing current and future trends, and talking to experts in the field and community members who see and experience changes in our region each day.

Click the photos below to learn more about the key trends that we are considering as we develop the Clean Water Plan.

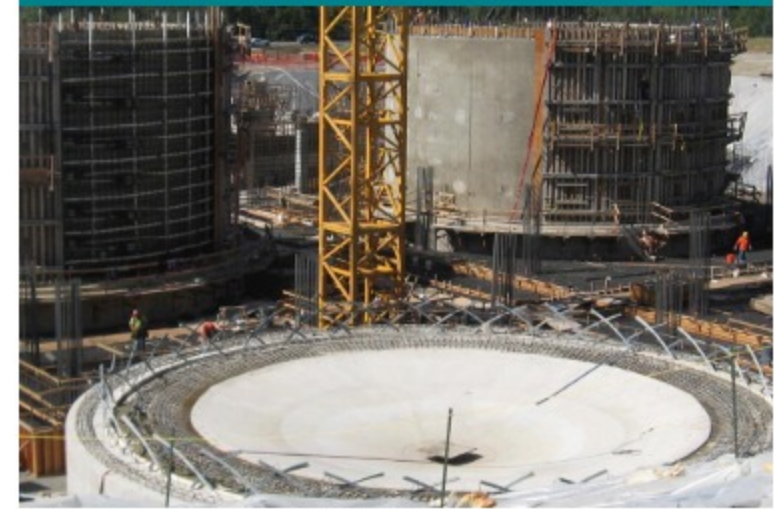
+ Water Quality Protections



+ Environmental Indicators



+ Funding and Financing



+ Population Growth



+ Aging Infrastructure



+ Regulatory Requirements



+ Climate Change



+ Technology



+ Other Trends

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We are committed to a fair and inclusive planning process. We will aim to break down barriers to involvement and hear from all people—including longtime participants in water quality discussions as well as new voices.

Help us start the conversation by completing the questionnaire on this page.

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Please share your thoughts below; providing input should take only a few minutes.



What is the ZIP code for where you live?

How do you enjoy Puget Sound and the rivers, lakes, and streams in our region?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- | | |
|--|--|
| <input type="checkbox"/> Swimming | <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing (for sport or recreation) |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Fishing (to feed myself or my family) | <input type="checkbox"/> Boating |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Spiritual or cultural connection | <input type="checkbox"/> Appreciation of wildlife |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Beachcombing | <input type="checkbox"/> Travel on regional ferries |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Working with water is my occupation | <input type="checkbox"/> Looking at or being beside water |
| <input type="checkbox"/> Other | |

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In your opinion, what's **working well** for Puget Sound and our rivers, lakes, and streams?
SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- ☐ Clean water for swimming and other recreation
- ☐ Safety of eating fish and shellfish
- ☐ Orca, salmon, and wildlife health
- ☐ Sewage systems treat waste before returning water to the environment
- ☐ Stormwater systems manage pollutants in the water that runs off streets, parking lots, and other surfaces when it rains
- ☐ Regional and local efforts to fight climate change
- ☐ Contaminated sediment cleanup projects (example: Duwamish River cleanup)
- ☐ Other

In your opinion, what **needs to improve** for Puget Sound and our rivers, lakes, and streams?
SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- ☐ Clean water for swimming and other recreation
- ☐ Safety of eating fish and shellfish
- ☐ Orca, salmon, and wildlife health
- ☐ Sewage systems treat waste before returning water to the environment
- ☐ Stormwater systems manage pollutants in the water that runs off streets, parking lots, and other surfaces when it rains
- ☐ Regional and local efforts to fight climate change
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- ☐ Other

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King County is undertaking this large planning effort because it is facing critical—and expensive—decisions that will affect the region's water quality. We all have important decisions to make, so we're reviewing several current and future trends as we develop the plan. A trend is something that is developing or changing as we look into the future.

The trends will be used to explore how King County can best protect regional water quality. Here are some of the trends that have been identified:

- ▶ Pollution still enters our water bodies through a number of pathways.
- ▶ Orca and salmon populations are declining.
- ▶ The cost of living and the cost of doing business here are rising. This increases the cost of water pollution control projects.
- ▶ The number of people who live here continues to grow.
- ▶ The region's wastewater pipes, pumps, and treatment plants are aging and needing more maintenance or replacement.
- ▶ Regulations may require higher levels of wastewater treatment.
- ▶ Climate change is bringing higher sea levels, more rain in winter, and warmer temperatures. Warmer water is worse for fish.
- ▶ New technologies continue to emerge and may change how we treat water.

Are there other topics or trends you'd like us to consider in our planning, and why are they important?

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Over the next few decades, our region will spend billions of dollars on protecting water quality. This will impact infrastructure, beaches, fish, jobs, seafood, and wildlife for future generations.

King County will consider the region's priorities throughout the process to develop the Clean Water Plan. Some of the priorities we have heard through initial conversations are listed below. Which **one** of these is most important to you?

- ☐ Protect water quality in rivers, lakes, streams, and Puget Sound
- ☐ Protect public health
- ☐ Keep sewer and stormwater rates affordable
- ☐ Proactively prepare for climate change
- ☐ Protect species like orca and salmon
- ☐ Avoid sewage system failures by upgrading aging pipes, pumps, and treatment plants
- ☐ Invest in water pollution control upgrades and new technologies
- ☐ Ensure benefits and impacts of investments are distributed equitably

Why is this priority most important to you?

What other priorities would you like us to consider as decisions are made about regional water quality investments?

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Our Clean Water Plan needs to reflect the range of opinions from people in the region. We aim to break down barriers to involvement and hear from all kinds of people, including longtime participants in water quality issues and new interested parties.

What are the best ways to continue the clean water conversation with you moving forward? *SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.*

- ☐ Public meeting/workshop
- ☐ Online meetings and activities
- ☐ Presentations at community group meetings
- ☐ Social media
- ☐ Email
- ☐ Online news site or blog
- ☐ Webpage
- ☐ Mail, such as postcards or newsletters
- ☐ Text messaging
- ☐ Other (please specify)

Please give us your email address if you are interested in future updates.

First Name:

Last Name:

Email:

Do you have suggestions for our team on community events, programs, or organizations to which we should reach out?

Is there anything else you'd like to tell us?

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Please tell us a little bit more about yourself so that we can understand how inclusive our outreach has been.

What is your age?

- ☐ 19 or younger
☐ 20–24
☐ 25–34
☐ 35–44
☐ 45–54
☐ 55–64
☐ 65 or older
☐ I'd rather not say

Do you have a disability?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- ☐ Mobility
☐ Vision
☐ Hearing
☐ Cognitive
☐ None
☐ Other
☐ I'd rather not say

Do you consider yourself to be...

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- ☐ African American or Black
☐ American Indian or Alaska Native
☐ Asian or Pacific Islander
☐ Hispanic, Spanish, or Latino
☐ White/Caucasian
☐ Biracial/multiracial
☐ Something else
☐ I'd rather not say

What gender do you identify as?

- ☐ Female
☐ Male
☐ Non-binary
☐ I'd rather not say
☐ Optional self-identification

What is your current housing situation?

- ☐ Rent single-family home
☐ Rent apartment, room, duplex, or dorm
☐ Own single-family home
☐ Own condominium, co-op, or duplex
☐ Stay with friends or family
☐ Without housing
☐ Other

How did you learn about the Clean Water Plan?

SELECT ALL THAT APPLY.

- ☐ Email
☐ Web
☐ Social media
☐ Friend
☐ My employer
☐ An organization I'm involved with
☐ Other

Are you an employee of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks?

- ☐ Yes ☐ No

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Clean Water Plan
Making the right investments at the right time

King County
Department of Natural Resources and Parks
Wastewater Treatment Division

Contact us:

Kelly Foley Kruse
CleanWaterPlan@kingcounty.gov
(206) 477-8621

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Clean Water Plan

Making the right investments at the right time

Welcome

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Your input will help the region make the right investments at the right time for the best water quality outcomes. We will use people's input to develop a plan that helps guide future actions. We'll share what we hear with the King County Executive and Council, who are responsible for making final decisions.



Here are a few ways to stay involved with the Clean Water Plan:

- ▶ [Join our email list](#) for updates on the plan and invitations to engagement activities.
- ▶ [Read more about the project.](#)
- ▶ [Tour a wastewater treatment plant.](#)
- ▶ Contact cleanwaterplan@kingcounty.gov to:
 - ▶ Invite us to meet with your group.
 - ▶ Let us know the best way to reach you! We aim to break down barriers to involvement and hear from all kinds of people.

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