

Clean Water Plan: 2020 Urban League Questionnaire Summary

Introduction

This document provides a summary of responses to a 2020 community questionnaire conducted by The Urban League of Metropolitan Seattle (Urban League). This feedback was collected from May 2020 to June 2020 by the Urban League as part of the Clean Water Plan's Community-Based Organizations (CBO) Partnership pilot program. Urban League is one of six CBOs partnering with the King County Wastewater Treatment Division to engage historically underrepresented communities in informing the development of the Clean Water Plan. Urban League empowers African Americans, as well as other diverse underserved communities, to thrive by securing educational and economic opportunities.

This questionnaire was based on a 2019 public questionnaire conducted by the Clean Water Plan. Both questionnaires focused on people's relationship with Puget Sound, rivers, lakes, and streams, and what's important to them when thinking about the future of our waterbodies. CBO partners like Urban League were welcomed to modify the questions to make the content and message relevant to their community members. Urban League created a [video](#) about the Clean Water Plan where viewers were directed to the questionnaire at the end of the video. In addition to the video, the Clean Water Plan has a designated webpage on Urban League's [website](#) where the questionnaire was also advertised. The questionnaire was completed by 143 participants.

The goals and objectives of the Urban League questionnaire to understand their community's clean water priorities were met. The questions and a summary of the responses are provided in Appendix A.

Note: the 2020 and 2019 questionnaires represent community input to inform the Clean Water Plan development process. They are not considered scientific, statistically significant surveys.

Key takeaways

Key takeaways from the 2020 community questionnaire conducted by the Urban League include:

- Keeping utility rates affordable was the second most frequently cited priority
- The top 3 favorite ways to enjoy the waters around the Puget Sound were: scenic observation, swimming, and travelling on ferries or boats.
- What's working well:
 - Respondents agreed that efforts led by local government to fight climate change are working well.
 - Respondents agree that the water for swimming and other recreational water activities is clean.
- What needs to improve:

- Respondents most frequently cited, “clean water for swimming and other recreation” as needing improvement.
- The second most frequent response was that orca, salmon and wildlife health needs to be improved.
- Priorities:
 - Protecting water quality was the top priority.
 - Protecting against climate change.

Engagement feedback

Engagement feedback collected as part of the 2020 community questionnaire conducted by the Urban League include:

- Social media was the most common way respondents learned about the Clean Water Plan.
- The best way to continue the Clean Water Plan conversation is via social media, while text messages were the least preferred.
- Sending emails and holding public meetings/workshops were also the third most popular response.

Appendix A

Summary of responses to 2020 Urban League Questionnaire and similar questions within 2019 Clean Water Plan Questionnaire, listed in order from most to least responses. Note that questions asked through the Urban League questionnaire were not a one-to-one match to those asked by the Clean Water Plan in 2019. Color matching shows similar answers.

Table 1.
How do people enjoy Puget Sound and the rivers, lakes, and streams?

Urban League Questionnaire (2020) ¹	Clean Water Plan Questionnaire (2019) ²
Scenic observation	Appreciation of wildlife
Swimming	Looking at or being beside water
Traveling on ferries or boats	Travel on regional ferries
Activities near water (ex: camping)	Swimming
Aquatic wildlife observation	Beachcombing
Spiritual/cultural appreciation	Spiritual or cultural connection
Water sports	Boating
Fishing (recreation)	Working with water
Fishing (as food source)	Fishing (for food)
Other (responses included: floating)	Fishing (for sport)
	Other (responses included: gardening activities, diving, wetlands exploring and water sport competition)

Note: Color matching is to show similar answers

¹ Question: What are some of your favorite ways to enjoy the Puget Sound rivers, lakes, and streams? (Participants could select more than one answer.) 143 participants.

² Question: How do you enjoy Puget Sound and the rivers, lakes, and streams in our region? Select all that apply. (Participants could select more than one answer.) 328 participants.

Table 2.

What is working well in Puget Sound and our rivers, lakes, and streams?

Urban League Questionnaire (2020) ¹	Clean Water Plan Questionnaire (2019) ²
Public efforts are being made in our city to fight climate change.	Sewage system treat waste before returning water to the environment
The water designated for swimming and other recreational water activities is clean.	Clean water for swimming and other recreation
Our county does a good job at keeping harmful bacteria from water on the sidewalks and in the roads away from our clean water supply.	Contaminated sediment cleanup projects
Dirty or contaminated water from sewage is treated and made clean before returning to the community.	Stormwater system manage pollutants in the water that runs off streets, parking lots, and other surfaces when it rains
It is safe to eat fish and shellfish that come from the Puget Sound.	Regional and local efforts to fight climate change
I do not agree with any of the above statements.	Safety of eating fish and shellfish
The orca, seals, and other aquatic wildlife who call the Puget Sound home are healthy and have a safe environment in our waters.	Orca, salmon, & wildlife health
	Other (responses included: Loop BioSolids and the RainWise project. Several of the other responses articulated that none of these efforts are working well)

Note: Color matching is to show similar answers

¹ Question: Which of the following statements about our Puget Sound rivers, lakes, and streams would you agree with? (Participants could select more than one answer.) 143 participants.

² Question: In your opinion, what’s working well for Puget Sound and our rivers, lakes, and streams? Select all that apply. (Multiple choice with write-in box for “Other.”) 328 participants.

Table 3.

What can be improved for Puget Sound, and rivers, lakes, and streams in the region?

Urban League Questionnaire (2020) ¹	Clean Water Plan Questionnaire (2019) ²
Cleanliness of water for swimming and other aquatic recreational activities.	Orca, Salmon, and wildlife health
Safety of environments meant for orca, seals, and other aquatic life who call the Puget Sound home.	Stormwater systems manage pollutants in the water that runs off streets, parking lots, and other surfaces when it rains
Treatment of pollutants and other harmful bacteria found in dirty wastewater before it returns to the community.	Safety of eating fish and shellfish
Our efforts to fight the impacts of climate change to the Puget Sound.	Regional and local efforts to flight climate change
Handling of fish and shell fish intended for us to eat from catch to table.	Sewage systems treat waste before returning water to the environment
Safety of waters where low-income people fish.	Contaminated sediment cleanup projects
None of the above.	Clean water for swimming and other recreation
Other (responses included: The taste of chlorine, impact on our utility bills, and a comment, “The Tacoma city and Washington state government needs to take action and address the pollution in our waters. I cannot plant vegetables in my garden because I'm afraid of contamination. Governor Jay Inslee: Stand with the Protectors of the Salish Sea and declare climate emergency!”)	Other (responses included: suggestions to look at boating and fishing restrictions, remove swamp ponds, stop using concrete, and remove homeless encampments that are near water bodies and water sources)
All of the above	

Note: Color matching is to show similar answers

¹ Question: What do you think should be improved about the rivers, lakes, and streams in the Puget Sound region? (Participants could select more than one answer.) 143 participants.

² Question: In your opinion, what needs to improve for Puget Sound and our rivers, lakes, and streams? Select all that apply. (Multiple choice with write-in box for “Other.”) 327 participant

Table 4.

What regional priority is most important to you?

Urban League Questionnaire (2020) ¹	Clean Water Plan Questionnaire (2019) ²
Protecting our water quality through pollution control	Protect water quality in rivers, lakes, streams, & Puget Sound
Keeping utility rates affordable	Avoid Sewage system failures by upgrading aging pipes, pumps, and treatment plants
Preparing for climate change	Proactively prepare for climate change
Replacing old pipes, pumps, drains, and treatment plants	Protect species like orca and salmon
Protecting wildlife species	Ensure benefits and impacts of investments are distributed equitably
Educating the community on public health	Protect public health
	Invest in water pollution control upgrades and new technologies
	Keep sewer and stormwater rates affordable

Note: Color matching is to show similar answers

¹ Which of the following priorities would you like to see King County invest in first? (Participants could only select one answer.) 143 participants.

² Question: 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? (Multiple choice, select one.) 320 participants.

Table 5.
How did you learn about the Clean Water Plan?

Urban League Questionnaire (2020) ¹	Clean Water Plan Questionnaire (2019) ²
Social media	Social media
Urban League	Email
Word of mouth	My employer
King County website	Web
Other (responses included: King County Clean Water Plan CBO Partnership, Crystal Barquet, Seattle Queer Jobs)	Other
	Organization I'm involved with
	Friend

Note: Color matching is to show similar answers

¹ Question: How did you first hear about the Clean Water Plan? (Participants could only select one answer.) 143 participants.

² Question: How did you learn about the Clean Water Plan? (Multiple choice, select all that apply. Write-in box provided for "Other.") (Participants could select more than one answer.) 336 participants.

Table 6.
What is the best way to continue the conversation?

Urban League Questionnaire (2020) ¹	Clean Water Plan Questionnaire (2019) ²
Social media (posts, stories, etc.)	Social media
Surveys/giveaways	Email
Public meetings/workshops	Public meeting/workshop
Email newsletters	Webpage
Website updates	Presentations at community group
Digital presentations	Online meetings and activities
Physical mailings (posters, etc.)	Online news site or blog
Text messaging	Mail, such as postcards or newsletters
Ads on tv or Youtube	Text messaging
	Other (responses included: television and radio advertisements, community festivals, and college and university campus outreach, as well as partnerships with community-based organizations)

Note: Color matching is to show similar answers

¹ Question: What is the best way to continue the conversation and raise awareness about the Clean Water Plan moving forward? (Participants could select more than one answer.) 143 participants.

² Question: What are the best ways to continue the clean water conversation with you moving forward? Select all that apply. (Multiple choice, select all that apply.) (Participants could select more than one answer.) 319 participants.