



American Water Works Association  
**Pacific Northwest** Section

SUMMER 2024

# WATER *matters*

The Official Magazine of the  
Pacific Northwest Section – AWWA



PNWS-AWWA's  
**Annual Conference**  
May 1-3, 2024 | Spokane, WA **Recap**

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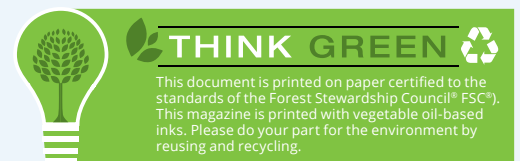
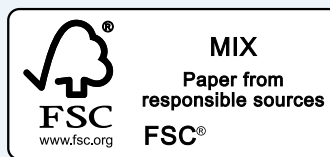
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## Entering a New Era

**G**ood afternoon! First, I want to extend a heartfelt thank you to our now Past Chair, Dan Sleeth, the work that you did for this Section over the past year was exceptional and really laid the groundwork for what I hope to accomplish in this coming year. I would also like to thank Michelle Cheek for her guidance, determination, and heart; you've shown and taught me a lot over this last year as well. Next, I would like to thank my family and my wife Maureen; you are our rock, and without the love and support you give each and every day to myself, our daughter Natalie, and son Finley, I wouldn't have been able to accomplish all that I have over these years. And last but not least, my employer, West Yost, I couldn't do what I do for this incredible Section without your support and backing.

Now, let me share my vision for the coming year. It begins with my journey through PNWS-AWWA, which I'd like to share with you today.

It all started in 2010 when Brad Phelps sat both me and Chris Young down and let us know if we wanted to be successful in the Pacific Northwest and truly immersed in all it had to offer, we needed to get involved in the Pacific Northwest Section of AWWA. For those of you who know Brad, you'll be able to sympathize with the fact that I wasn't about to say no to such a large man.

From there, it was off to the races, starting as a YP enjoying their many events like the YP Scavenger Hunt

Today, we enter a new era, and as with all new eras, it comes with its own set of challenges but also excitement and new opportunities.

at the Annual Conference, to spending time on the E&T Board, the PAC, then to the Board serving as the Trustee-At-Large, and finally today as your Section Chair.

Throughout my career, I've observed many other Sections across the country, and I have to say, this one is special. The people, the traditions, the sense of family – there's nothing quite like it. Because of this, it's something we must strive to preserve.

Today, we enter a new era, and as with all new eras, it comes with its own set of challenges but also excitement and new opportunities.

Randy Black, another inspiration and true friend of mine, got us ready for this new era with his 2020 Vision. His plan was an amazing start to strengthening our Section and water industry, bringing new professionals – operators, engineers, and other water-focused professionals – into our world.

But now it's our turn to show these people the value of membership.

My goal this year is to reinvest back into our people and our membership. But I need your help. We celebrated some wonderful

people at the Annual Conference, but I'd like to take it one step further. I'd like to ask anyone who is or has been involved with the Section (committee member, Subsection leadership, event planner, or anything else in between) to please pat yourselves on the back – I see you and recognize all the hard work that you've done for the Section.

Now, a call to action: To those reading this, please find someone and share the value of your service to this Section and the journey it has taken you on. Without this transfer of knowledge and guidance, how can we expect to pass the baton to the next generation of amazing volunteers and water professionals?

In closing, please remember that we, as the Pacific Northwest Section of AWWA, are a family, and as such, we must support each other and this Section to continue to keep the bond between us strong. As your new Chair, I want to say that I appreciate you all and am so very proud to serve you. 🙏

Thank you!

Nick Belmont  
PNWS-AWWA Section Chair

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# Engaging, Supporting, and Empowering Young Professionals


**G**reetings PNWS, By the time this article hits your desks, both the 2024 Section Conference in Spokane and the ACE 2024 Conference held June 10-13 in Anaheim will have already been held. At ACE, one of the highlights will be the keynote address delivered by the New York Times bestselling author Robyn Benincasa. Robyn is one of 2020's Top 50 Keynote Speakers on leadership, team building, and extreme performance, and I will highlight some of the aspects of her presentation in my next article.

The visiting Association Vice-President for the Section conference was Standards Council

Chair Sally Mills-Wright. Sally began her career as a Young Professional with the Pacific Northwest Section over 20 years ago and is now the Assistant Director of Water Production in the City of Dallas, Texas, which is currently the sixth largest water provider in the nation. Sally addressed the Section Board and PNWS members at the trustees meeting held during the Annual Conference and highlighted some areas I would like to touch on. As I mentioned, Sally began her career as a YP with PNWS and was able to take advantage of the YP program to help advance her career. The Association Board of Directors continues to demonstrate

its support for the future leaders of our industry by committing to having the YP's voice on the Association Board with a dedicated Director-At-Large position reserved for a YP. Sally also touched on the many volunteer opportunities available at both the Section and Association levels through the over 200 committees offered at both levels.

I led off the recap above simply because it underscores the importance of one of the most important initiatives the Association Board of Directors is currently working on, namely, Water 2050. The sustainability of this industry and the most valuable resource we all strive to protect will soon pass into the hands of future leaders and upcoming professionals of this and other organizations. As the Association Board continues to work through the details of the initiative to produce a guiding document with clear, actionable, and attainable goals, we as a Section can begin to complement this initiative by making sure that our YPs are engaged, supported, and empowered to share their input on the future of water resources. We need to look at not only those currently in the industry but also individuals still deciding on a career path by sharing our experiences and passion for serving and sustaining water for the future. Spreading the word about the many scholarship opportunities offered at the Association and Section levels is one way to encourage and show our students the value of a career in the water industry. As the Section's conduit to the Association, I invite anyone who would like further information on committee volunteer opportunities or available scholarships to feel free to reach out to me anytime.

As always, thank you for allowing me to serve as your Association Director. 

James Dean  
PNWS-AWWA Association Director



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### Reflections from the AWWA Fly-In: Advocating for Washington's Water Future

Beryl Fredrickson, PE, Chair, Washington State Water Utility Council Committee

As the moon cast its shadow over Washington, DC, during the solar eclipse, eight representatives from water purveyors throughout Washington State attended the AWWA Fly-In to advocate for critical water issues that affect communities, our state, and the nation. Our commitment to our state's water future empowered us to make a meaningful impact as we visited 11 of our 12-member state delegations in Congress.

Our group brought a wealth of experience and perspectives to the discussions with Washington State congressional members and their staff. We educated and informed members on five key topics:

**Low-Income Assistance Program:** We advocated for the *Low-Income Household Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP) Establishment Act*. S.B. 3830 would establish a permanent low-income water customer assistance program. The temporary LIHWAP program provided more than \$1.1 billion in water bill assistance to over 1.6 million households across the country, helping to prevent 150,000 potential service disconnections and restore service to 17,000 households. The temporary program expired in 2023 and has yet to be reauthorized or receive additional funding.

**Outcome:** Washington Congresswoman Kim Schrier joined Reps. Lori Chavez-DeRemer (OR-05), Eric Sorensen (IL-17), and Jenniffer González-Colón (PR-AL) in introducing the *Bipartisan LIHWAP Establishment Act* in the House to lower the cost of water and wastewater utility bills for millions of households.

**Liability:** The *Water Systems PFAS Liability Protection Act*, S.B. 1430, introduced by Senator Cynthia Lumis (R-WY), provides protections from PFAS liability under the *Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act (CERCLA)* for water and sewer systems complying with applicable laws and regulations. Currently, drinking water and wastewater systems face liability due to upstream polluters depositing chemicals in their supplies. This potential liability places an undue burden on water systems and their ratepayers, forcing them to pay potentially three times: once for installing, operating, and maintaining treatment technology to take out the PFAS, a second time for disposal costs, and potentially a third time for cleanup associated through third-party lawsuits. While the EPA may not target water or wastewater treatment systems directly with litigation, other potential parties could.

**Outcome:** Washington Representative Marie Gluesenkamp-Perez cosponsored H.R. 7944 with Rep. John Curtis (R-UT), a companion to the Senate bill. This marked a significant milestone,



as Rep. Gluesenkamp-Perez was the first Democratic member of Congress to sponsor such a bill. One week later, Rep. Gluesenkamp-Perez visited the PFAS pilot study site located in the City of Vancouver, WA, underscoring her commitment.

**Infrastructure Investment:** We advocated for full funding for the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF) and Clean Water State Revolving Fund (CWSRF) programs, along with the *Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)* program. According to the latest Drinking Water Infrastructure Needs Survey and Assessment by the EPA, drinking water systems alone will require \$625 billion in investment over the next two decades for infrastructure enhancement and upkeep. Continuous earmarking is depleting the revolving budget.

**Outcome:** Received feedback that these programs will likely continue at their current rate (underfunded) and earmarking will likely continue. As a sector, we have more work to do to secure adequate federal funding.

**Cyber Security:** We discussed opportunities to bolster training and technical support, allocate additional funding to enhance cybersecurity within the sector, and foster improved collaboration to ensure the accessible and timely sharing of threat information. Legislation is needed to establish the Water Risk and Resilience Organization (WRRO). This sector-driven entity would develop minimum cybersecurity standards for water systems and conduct regular audits with EPA's oversight.

**Outcome:** We advocated that more needs to be done, but we also suggested letting cyber technical experts guide water leaders while allowing water organizations to coordinate efforts.

**Utility Funding Dedication in Traffic Funded Projects:**

We asked for funding allocation for utility relocation costs related to culvert replacement and general traffic road work projects rather than requiring water purveyors to pay all of those costs from their capital budget as they supersede needed expenditures for system maintenance and improvement, and burden ratepayers with potentially further increases in unaffordable water rates.

**Outcome:** We provided information on the burden these major traffic projects carry, especially when they are unforeseen, uncoordinated, and financially unplanned, with utility managers in their service areas.

Ultimately, the AWWA Fly-In was not just a lobbying trip – it was a powerful reminder of our ability to effect change on a national level. As we returned home, we carried a renewed sense of purpose and determination to continue advocating for a safe, sustainable, and resilient water future for Washington, Oregon, and Idaho. We hope you will be

compelled to join us for AWWA's future Fly-Ins and join our advocacy for the drinking water sector. Your voice is needed. Thank you to those who attended the Fly-In Event from Washington State in 2024:

- Judi Gladstone: WASWD – Executive Director and WWUC Post Chair
- Beryl Fredrickson: City of Spokane – Senior Engineer and WWUC Chair
- John Roth: Clark Public Utilities – Water Quality & Production Manager and WWUC Vice-Chair
- Bowen Kendrick: Clallam PUD No. 1 – Water/Wastewater Systems Manager and WWUC Member
- Cole Benak: City of Vancouver – Senior Engineering Technician and AWWA Young Professional Leader
- Russel Olsen: Thurston County – District 2 Commissioner and WWUC Member
- Julie Parker: Thurston County PUD No. 1 – Assistant General Manager and WWUC Member
- Ellen Stuart: Seattle Public Utilities – Deputy Director for Drainage and Wastewater Management and WWUC Member

An additional thanks to Susan Saffery (Seattle Public Utilities – Director, Government Relations, and Legislative Affairs and WWUC Legislative Chair) for her support and experience. 

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## Conference Program Committee

**Build your Boise 2025 Technical Session Now! *The Deadline for Abstracts is July 31, 2024***

Although the 2025 Annual Conference is about a year away, it takes a year to assemble a program and get it approved for CEUs. The process began with a call for abstracts, which opened in mid-June. The deadline for submittal is July 31, 2024.

The way the program-building process works in our Section is that the Program Committee Chair and Vice-Chair are responsible for managing the abstract collection process, assembling individual sessions, drafting programs into a full conference schedule, and doing the paperwork necessary to obtain continuing education credit.

If a committee would like to see presentations about a specific topic, it is up to the individual committee to solicit speakers to submit abstracts on

We will populate the schedule, identify conflicting requests, and work with the Trustees and committees to resolve those conflicts.

that topic. I strongly encourage each of your committees to plan your tracks out now and work your networks to get topics for your proposed tracks submitted with your committee's name on them.

In early August, the Program Committee Chair and Vice-Chair will sort through the abstracts and send them out to the Trustees for review. Committees will have about a month to develop and submit their proposed sessions to us. During September,

we will populate the schedule, identify conflicting requests, and work with the Trustees and committees to resolve those conflicts. The draft program will be presented to the Trustees at the Fall Trustee meeting. We will then begin preparing the CEU application packages.

Go to the Conference Program Committee website to access the link to the abstract submittal form. Together, we can build another terrific conference in 2025! 📄



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## Engineering Committee

### Flip-Flap, Modulate, and Burp!

On March 19, 2024, the Engineering Committee organized a training event in Tualatin, Oregon, related to the design and operations of specialty control valves. Cimco-GC Systems was an excellent partner for this event and did an outstanding job presenting on a full array of valves. Training included more than a half day dedicated to pilot control valves, including a hands-on lab outdoors to witness their operation, and opportunities for attendees to tear down and reconstruct pilots and valve appurtenances. The training went on to cover air release valves, surge valves, and check valves as well.

More than 70 people attended the training! The City of Tualatin was a fantastic host; many of its employees even moved their personal vehicles to accommodate the large group of engineers and operators from Washington and Oregon. Thanks again to Cimco-GC Systems and the City of Tualatin for helping make this event a huge success!

### Presenting Excellence in Engineering

The winner for this year's Excellence in Engineering awards is – drumroll please...

#### Veolia Water Idaho for their Columbia Water Treatment Plant Expansion

Each year, the Engineering Committee solicits nominations for projects representing excellence in engineering. These projects demonstrate innovation, highlight sustainability, overcome unique challenges, and exemplify excellence in engineering. We received multiple submissions for outstanding projects this year. The judging panel unanimously selected the Veolia Water Idaho Columbia WTP Expansion Project. The Columbia WTP is a membrane filtration plant and has been in service for nearly 20 years. The project team could have continued a regular process of replacing membranes and expanding the plant to serve a growing population. The team took a longer view and overhauled the

membrane system, allowing them to significantly increase capacity without expanding the plant footprint, adding flexibility and ultimately achieving more at an overall cost far less than a traditional approach. Hats off to the team of Veolia Water Idaho, Carollo Engineers, and JC Constructors for an outstanding project. The award was presented to Steve Beard, Veolia Water Idaho's Project Manager, at the Annual Conference in Spokane.

This year, we only received applicants for the large product category. As you look forward to next year's call for nominations, please consider your projects in the planning and small project categories. Let's remember to celebrate the great things being accomplished in our industry!

### Committee Meeting Activities

The Engineering Committee met during the Annual Conference to elect officers for the following year. A big thank you to Taylor Stockton, this year's chair and now past chair, for his committee leadership. Officers for the next year include Greg Loscher from Bowen Collins & Associates as Chair, Dan Shafar from Jacobs as Vice-Chair, and Evelyn Choudhary with WSP as Secretary.

The Engineering Committee is looking ahead to potential summer site tours and next year's program. This year, we plan to set aside time during our monthly meetings for a new informal portion of the agenda, during which industry professionals and vendors can share technical updates or information. Come and attend our next meeting for even more updates!

### Committee Meeting Schedule

Engineering Committee meetings are held from 12 pm to 1 pm (PT) on the first Wednesday of each month. If you'd like to join the Committee, please reach out to Dan Shafar at [dan.shafar@jacobs.com](mailto:dan.shafar@jacobs.com).

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## Member Engagement and Development Committee (MEDC)

**MEDC Purpose:** To support the Pacific Northwest Section of AWWA (PNWS) in the engagement, retention, and growth of membership.

**2020 Vision:** To align with AWWA's strategic initiative for a sustainable future by bridging young talent with the water industry.



Membership Division Booth at the Conference with MEDC members Chris Young and Joanie Stultz and Water Information Technology Committee Chair Jeremy Djajadi.

### That's a Wrap – Member Engagement Success in Spokane

It was great to be back together at the annual PNWS-AWWA Conference in Spokane, WA, May 1-3, 2024. We officially transitioned our committee leadership and are excited to welcome **Doug Schlepp** as the next incoming MEDC Chair! MEDC enjoyed connecting with Members at the First-Timers' Meet and Greet Breakfast and the Membership Division Booth. The Meet and Greet provided an opportunity for first-time attendees to network and learn how to get the most out of the conference experience. We had a great showing with over 60 first-time attendees bright and early at 7:00 am. And special thanks to our 21 Table Leads for the breakout table activity.

### Mentorship Program 2023-24 Draws to a Close



Mentor/Mentee pair Mike Grimm and Danlyn Brennan meet up at the Annual Conference in Spokane.

Thank you to all who participated in the 2023-2024 Mentorship program. We had over 20 pairs of mentor/mentee pairs participate this year. Mentor pairs met about once a month over the past six-month period, with sessions on various career development topics. We met for a Mentorship Round-up on May 29, 2024, to officially close out the year and gather feedback to improve the program for next year. **Watch for application links for the next 2024-25 program.** If you want to learn more about this program for next year, please contact our Mentorship program team, Kyle Wong, at [kyle.wong@spwater.org](mailto:kyle.wong@spwater.org) with any questions.



Eddy, the AWWA water droplet spreading joy at the Annual Conference.

### MEDC is Recruiting!

The MEDC is looking for new members to join our committee! With the leadership transition, we are developing new committee roles and are looking for new recruits. Open roles include Vice-Chair, Secretary, and program roles to support our Mentorship program, Subsection coordination, career fair, and student engagement.

### Need help with reaching your

**Subsection members?** Let us know! We can pull member lists that are specific to your subsection and renewal date to outreach specific members. Please reach out to the MEDC Chair, Doug Schlepp, at [dschlepp@rh2.com](mailto:dschlepp@rh2.com), or visit us at [www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/committees/membership-committee](http://www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/committees/membership-committee).

If you know of a fellow peer or colleague who is not a member and would like to join, they can find information on the AWWA website at [www.awwa.org/membership-volunteering/join](http://www.awwa.org/membership-volunteering/join).

### Special Thanks to our MEDC Volunteers

Thanks also to our current MEDC Committee Members: **Chris Young, Joanie Stultz, Kyle Wong, Natalie Reilly, Doug Schlepp, Mehrin Selimgir, DeEtta Fosbury, and Randy Black**, who are supported by our Trustee Liaison to the Membership Division, **Chandra Hingston**.

**Interested in learning more about the MEDC?** Attend our next monthly call. We meet on the second Friday of the month from 12 pm to 1 pm. Contact Doug Schlepp at [dschlepp@rh2.com](mailto:dschlepp@rh2.com) for the meeting invite. 📅

## Oregon Water Utility Council

Kari Duncan, OWUC Chair


The Oregon Water Utility Council (OWUC) has been active on several fronts in 2024 during the short Legislative Session. Key areas of focus included frequent legislative engagement as bills were being developed, introduced, and debated; informing policymakers about topics affecting water utilities; and outreach for rulemaking and budget development activities by various state-level agencies, including the Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD) and the Oregon Health Authority (OHA). OWRD and OHA regularly attend OWUC's monthly meetings, providing an excellent forum for discussing these matters that impact Oregon water utilities.

Topics that OWUC is tracking in 2024 include the OWRD Groundwater Allocation Rules amendments, which set

more stringent standards for new groundwater rights permits in the state, the Governor's housing goals and activities of the Housing Policy Advisory Council (HPAC) that have included proposals to change or delay the collection of system development charges (SDCs) under some circumstances. OWUC has also been tracking the implementation of funding programs such as the *Bipartisan Infrastructure Law* (BIL) funds, as well as new regulations that have recently been introduced by the EPA and will be promulgated by the Oregon Health Authority, including the *PFAS Rule* and *Lead and Copper Rule Revision* (LCRR) and *Lead and Copper Rule Improvements* (LCRI).

Three Representatives of OWUC, 2023/24 Chair Kari Duncan of

Rockwood Water PUD, Secretary Rebecca Geisen of Portland Water Bureau, and Association WUC member Mike Grimm from West Slope Water District attended the 2024 AWWA Washington, DC Fly-In. They successfully met with members and staff for all seven of the Oregon delegation to discuss national and state priorities for drinking water providers. Topics discussed included advocacy for the Willamette Reallocation, Infrastructure Funding, PFOS/PFOA regulation, Cybersecurity, and the Low-Income Housing Water Assistance Program (LIHWAP). Several bills were introduced and/or supported because of the Fly-In visits, including bills related to Cybersecurity, LIHWAP, and PFAS – CERCLA exemption for water providers.

OWUC is working on a 2024/25 officer succession plan that will be updated on the website. 



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## ORWARN Committee

Gina Johnson, ORWARN Board Secretary

### ORWARN Webinar – Save the Date!

ORWARN, in partnership with CISA and EPA, is offering its membership another exciting training opportunity. This virtual cybersecurity tabletop exercise will be designed for water and wastewater utilities and is scheduled for July 17, 2024. Watch for more information soon, but mark your calendars now to save the date!

### ORWARN Website

Please remember to keep your organization's information up to date on the website. If you need help logging in or have questions, please email [info@orwarn.org](mailto:info@orwarn.org). One of the Board Members will respond.

This virtual cybersecurity tabletop exercise will be designed for water and wastewater utilities and is scheduled for July 17, 2024. Watch for more information soon, but mark your calendars now to save the date!

### Membership

ORWARN's membership continues to grow. We have up to 178 members and associate members. If you know of a utility that is not yet a member of ORWARN, please ask them to contact us at [info@orwarn.org](mailto:info@orwarn.org) for more information. 📧



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## Washington Water Utilities Council

Beryl Fredrickson, PE, Washington Water Utility Council Chair

The Washington Water Utilities Council is composed of over 120 members who benefit from attending our detailed monthly meetings. We cover intrinsic topics like proposed contaminate regulations, new legal decisions, new legislation, new policies, new resources, funding opportunities, and most importantly, purveyors share how they respond to those topics. We receive the latest information directly from the Department of Health, Department of Ecology, and Department of Commerce, as well as critical key speakers. Large and small public and private water utility districts, water municipalities, and legal representatives from all over the state continue to share lessons learned and experiences serving Washington's diverse and cherished population and its environment. WWUC is able to bring together critical information on increasing requirements for water purveyors and water system management teams. Become a member and attend virtually and/or in person. Please contact the WWUC's



Chair, Beryl Fredrickson. Current contact information can be found at [www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/committees/washington-water-utilities-council](http://www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/committees/washington-water-utilities-council). 

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## RENTALS AVAILABLE

## Water Conservation Committee

Cody Scoggins, Chair

The Water Conservation Committee held its winter meeting on Tuesday, February 27, 2024. In this meeting, we discussed winter weather trends in the Pacific Northwest and received water supply updates from each of our attending members. The Committee also discussed winter forecasting and its implications for the summer season and potential conservation programming.

We just returned from the 2024 PNWS Section Conference, held in Spokane from May 1-3, 2024. The Conservation track at the conference included a three-hour technical session with presentations from five water conservation professionals and a pre-conference session focused on 'Water Efficiency Solutions for Commercial Properties.' The Committee was able to get a group of conservation professionals together during the May 1 Competition Night to network and discuss updates from their utilities.

The Water Conservation Committee is currently working to coordinate the summer meeting, which will include a tour of the new Willamette Water Supply

The Committee also discussed winter forecasting and its implications for the summer season and potential conservation programming.

Program Treatment Plant in Sherwood. Stay tuned for more information on this event!

For more information about the PNWS Conservation Committee, please contact Chair Cody Scoggins at [cody.scoggins@medfordwater.gov](mailto:cody.scoggins@medfordwater.gov), Vice-Chair Brittany Contreras at [brittany.contreras@hillsboro-oregon.gov](mailto:brittany.contreras@hillsboro-oregon.gov), or Secretary Amy Meaut at [amy.meaut@hillsboro-oregon.gov](mailto:amy.meaut@hillsboro-oregon.gov).



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## Water Quality Committee

### Conference Recap

This year, the Water Quality Committee hosted a new regulatory track at the Section Conference. This track was well attended, and audience members discussed how useful the presentations were! A big thank you to the administrators from Washington, Oregon, and Idaho for sharing their current hot topics with us. We are hoping to make this a recurring track, especially now that several new water quality-related regulatory changes are on the horizon.

We also hosted the Best Tasting Water Competition and were happy to have winning water samples from most Subsections. The competition was dedicated to the memory of Stephen Booth (pictured on right), who organized, judged, and led several Best Tasting Water Competitions for the PNWS. During this year's competition, Chris McMeen kept the audience engaged while the judges, Sally Mills-Wright, Dan Sleeth, and Bob Klein, were hard at work. The competition was fierce! Congratulations to the

**Northeast Sammamish Sewer & Water District** from **King County Subsection** for the Best in the Northwest



in 2024! They will be entered in the Best of the Best Competition during ACE24 and will also have an opportunity to compete for the People's Choice award! Good luck – we would love to have the Best of the Best title in the PNWS this year!



It is with deep sadness that we learned about our colleague Stephen Booth passing away unexpectedly on March 12, 2024, in Salt Lake City, Utah. Stephen was an active member of the PNWS Water Quality Committee and National AWWA Taste and Odor Committee for years and an avid supporter of the Best Tasting Water Competition. Stephen earned his PhD in civil engineering from the University of Waterloo, Ontario, Canada, and worked with Carollo Engineers, Kennedy Jenks, Brown and Caldwell, and Confluence Engineering Group LLC during his industry tenure.

Stephen was an accomplished engineer, project manager, and researcher who made invaluable contributions to improving water quality and protecting public health in communities throughout the Pacific Northwest. But more importantly, he was a tremendous human being and friend to all – kind, loyal, caring, and compassionate. He will be dearly missed.

To honor Stephen, Confluence Engineering Group LLC (where Stephen worked from 2012-2022) will be creating a scholarship in his name through the PNWS-AWWA Education and Training (E&T) fund. Details will be released soon if you or your organization would like to contribute to this fund. Look for an announcement in an upcoming Pacific Northwest Section e-Newsletter that will include details on how to contribute.

If you would like to share a memory of your time working with Stephen, please send a note back to [virpi@confluence-engineering.com](mailto:virpi@confluence-engineering.com), and she will compile them for his family. 🙏

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## Water Treatment Committee Record-Breaking Tour of the Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility

Mac Gifford and Tess Young

The Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility is Spokane's oldest and largest water treatment facility. Thanks to the \$125 million of recent upgrades to add tertiary treatment, it is also the most state-of-the-art. On Wednesday, May 1, water professionals from around the region gathered to tour this impressive facility. This was organized by the Water Treatment Committee in conjunction with the PNWS Annual Conference & Exhibition. With over 70 in-person attendees, conference organizers anecdotally believe it is the most well-attended conference tour in the organization's history. Attendees earned half a day of CEU credits.

The treatment facility can recycle up to 150 million gallons of wastewater per day. With the recent upgrades adding tertiary treatment, it treats the wastewater to near drinking water standards. The historic facility has traditional wastewater treatment, which includes screening, primary and secondary settling, disinfection, and solids handling. Of particular interest to drinking water treatment professionals, it additionally includes tertiary treatment referred to as Next Level Treatment. This includes membrane filtration to remove heavy metals, PCBs, and phosphorus. This \$125 million expansion was commissioned in 2021.

The facility beneficially recovers nutrients, energy, and water. The facility has won several awards for operations and maintenance excellence and beneficial use of biosolids. Solids are land applied and immediately tilled into nearby farmland, making the nutrients available for future food production. Anaerobic digestors reduce solids to methane gas. The methane gas is used for heating and other operations throughout the rest of the facility. Finally, the water is treated to near drinking water standards. For now, this water is discharged to the Spokane River but could be used for irrigation, purple pipe non-potable reuse, or someday even indirect potable reuse.

Along with the tour, attendees participated in a discussion forum about the future of water reuse in the Pacific Northwest. The questions included what role water reuse



*New membrane skids provide tertiary treatment, referred to as Next Level of Treatment, to reduce nutrients and pollutants of water released to the river.*

has in increasing water supply resilience in the Northwest, how should education and outreach be conducted to build public support, and what regulatory framework should be applied (wastewater or drinking water regulations, water or wastewater operator certification, etc.).

Following this success, the Water Treatment Committee and others in the Water Science Division hope to organize more tours throughout the year as part of the 2025 Annual Conference. They also plan to organize a workshop focused on membrane treatment, intended to be held in person in September 2024. Overall, the mission of the committee is to gather and disseminate knowledge regarding the operation and design of water treatment facilities and the impact of the treatment facility on water quality in the entire water system. The Riverside Park Tour was organized by Tess Young (Jacobs, [tessora.young@jacobs.com](mailto:tessora.young@jacobs.com)). In 2023-24, the Water Treatment Committee was chaired by Mac Gifford (Portland Water Bureau, [mac.gifford@portlandoregon.gov](mailto:mac.gifford@portlandoregon.gov)), Ben Goeke (Calgon Carbon), Tess Young (Jacobs), and Brian Rowbotham (Stantec). Huge thanks go to Spokane City's staff for hosting the tour! 🙌



*A mallard duck decides which side of the secondary clarifier to swim in at the Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility.*



*Tess Young, EIT, PhD (Jacobs Engineering), presents on the Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility, including water treatment and reuse principles.*



*The City of Spokane Wastewater Department staff lead a tour of the Riverside Park Water Reclamation Facility.*

### Young Professionals Committee

The Young Professionals (YP) Committee hosts events that foster valuable leadership skills, provide opportunities to grow technical knowledge to enhance careers in the water industry, and encourage networking between seasoned professionals and YPs. Young professionals have been in the water industry for less than ten years.

The YP Committee meets virtually on the fourth Wednesday of each month at 2:00 pm (PST).

#### Scavenger Hunt Success

The Annual YP Scavenger Hunt at the Section Conference in Spokane was a great success, with over 45 participants! Young professionals adventured through the host city, traveling from one sponsored venue to the next, competing to earn points and connect with other YPs, industry professionals, and AWWA representatives. Prizes were awarded to the team that earned the most points, displayed the best water promo, and exhibited the most humorous photo.

Congratulations to the Water JERCs for earning the most points, team Last Drop for the most humorous photo, and Hot Dam for their water promo!



The Scavenger Hunt would not have been possible without our incredible sponsors, who hosted the venue stops for the YPs and submitted creative clues for the game!

The 2024 venue hosts were HDR and Consor, and partner sponsors included Ductile Iron Pipe Research Association, Jacobs, and West Yost; Brown and Caldwell was a patron sponsor. Thank you for supporting young professionals in the water industry!

#### Young Professionals Conference Track

The Young Professionals Committee hosted a half-day YP track at the Annual Conference, covering themes related to the YP perspective, employee lifecycle, career development, and leadership growth. The track was met with positive feedback and encouragement not only from YPs but also from seasoned industry professionals. The Committee plans to host another YP track at the Section Conference in Boise, ID, next spring.

If you are interested in speaking or are willing to help the YPs find presenters, please contact Claire Litsky at [clitsky@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:clitsky@cityoftacoma.org).

#### YP Liaisons – Help Spread the Word!

The YP Committee is comprised of young professionals across the PNWS. Subsection liaisons connect their local AWWA community with the section-wide YP Committee. Several active YP liaisons are hitting it out of the park:

- Emma Martin and Danlyn Brennan of Northwest Oregon Subsection have been doing an incredible job hosting both in-person events and virtual YP Wednesdays, a monthly speaker series for YPs to learn from seasoned professionals and gain industry exposure. The events are promoted and open to all YPs. Contact Claire Litsky to be added to the YP distribution list.
- Cody Scoggins has been doing a fabulous job hosting training and social events in Southern Oregon, including a recent river float and clean-up!

Currently, the following Subsections do not have YP Liaisons:

- Northwest Washington
- Central Washington
- Blue Mountain
- Cascade to Coast
- Eastern Oregon

If you are interested in representing your Subsection, supporting/hosting local events, and fostering YP outreach and involvement, please reach out!

#### Get Involved!

The YP Committee is looking for members to join its Board to help plan events, connect with students, and manage social media content. This is a great leadership opportunity for resume and career development! Please email Claire Litsky ([clitsky@cityoftacoma.org](mailto:clitsky@cityoftacoma.org)), Cole Benak ([cole.benak@cityofvancouver.us](mailto:cole.benak@cityofvancouver.us)), or Annabel Irwin ([annabeli@sagegeotechnical.com](mailto:annabeli@sagegeotechnical.com)) if you have questions or are interested in joining the YP Committee in any capacity. 





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## City of Issaquah, WA – 8 Years of Operating a PFAS Removal Facility

In 2015, sampling data collected at the City of Issaquah's Gilman Well No. 4 showed high concentrations (400 to 600 ng/L) of per- and polyfluoroalkyl substances (PFAS). Soon after these results were discovered, the City retained HDR to assist in implementing a treatment system. Within 77 calendar days of the City Council's selection to pursue treatment, the team had designed, built, and commissioned the new facility. The system uses granular activated carbon (GAC) housed in two vessels (lead/lag) for PFAS reduction. The system went online in 2016, and PFAS concentrations have remained below the proposed and now implemented State Action Levels and Federal Maximum Contaminant Levels. The GAC has provided many years of reliable service, efficiently removing PFAS compounds. The GAC is scheduled for media changeout this summer. In preparation for removal, the City completed a testing regime.



It confirmed that typical disposal methods for GAC materials were applicable – meaning that no intensive and costly disposal methods are required.

## The Importance of Public Outreach During Utility Projects



Residential water and wastewater utility projects are vital to shaping our communities. They can transform neighborhoods, strengthen economies, and enhance the quality of life. These projects sustain our daily lives, but people only pay attention to them if they disrupt life's usual flow. Servicing, replacing, or upgrading these systems can pose challenges, especially during construction. Effective community outreach helps promote transparency and inclusivity, where community members feel involved and respected. This also helps prevent project delays and negative public perception.

One of the most important aspects of any utility project is providing clear, concise, and consistent information to affected communities. This communication helps build positive relationships with the public and reduces concerns and negative reactions. A key strategy to achieve this includes developing effective messaging that translates complex engineering, construction, and technical concepts into language that is easy for the public to understand.

It's also important to consider the project's impact on community members beyond the immediate vicinity of the project site. For example, are there any adjacent trails or public walkways that may connect neighboring communities? By considering these factors, you can ensure that your outreach efforts are inclusive and address the needs of all relevant stakeholders.

Through proactive communication, agencies can inform residents about project timelines, potential disruptions, and safety measures. This transparency provides a sense of ownership and reassurance, alleviating concerns and minimizing uncertainties. Depending on the scale of a project, public outreach activities may include:

- Attending community or organization meetings
- Posting neighborhood and project site signage
- Delivering project information and construction mailers
- Communicating with neighborhood Homeowners Associations (HOAs)
- Hanging door fliers
- Hosting community focus groups
- Conducting door-to-door or coffee chat meetings
- Updating websites with clear and easy-to-access project information

Agencies can bridge the gap between stakeholders, project implementers, and the community by ensuring timely and well-coordinated public outreach efforts. Effective outreach empowers residents and community members to actively participate in growing their communities by fostering awareness, cooperation, and trust. Understanding the community you serve is vital to the success of your project. To learn more about how PACE can assist with public outreach activities for your next utility project, visit us at [www.paceengrs.com](http://www.paceengrs.com).

## Flow and Function: Facets of Large Pumps, Motors, and Variable-Frequency Drives

Jennifer Murphy, PE, CSE & Ty Tadano, PE

Are you looking to optimize the flow and function of your large drinking water or flood protection pump? Proper design and installation of pumping equipment can streamline and prevent operations and maintenance issues, increase longevity, and reduce capital and operating costs. When it comes to large pumps, motors, and variable-frequency drives (VFDs), some components have an outsized impact.


Pulling large pumps and motors with 200 to 2,500 horsepower (HP) requires heavy equipment and service downtime and, in some cases, can cost upward of \$100,000. To avoid this, here are five recommendations:

1. **Permanently lubricated vs. grease lubricated:**

'Permanently lubricated' bearings don't exist. Instead, they are sealed bearings with long-lasting lubrication. They are intended to last longer than the pump service interval but won't last forever. Rather than take chances on a premature bearing failing due to lubrication degradation, specify grease-lubricated bearings to avoid pulling a pump solely to replace a failed 'permanently lubricated' bearing.

2. **Open vs. enclosed line shafts:** Open line shafts are common for clean water applications, but even clean water may have some particulates that can damage bearings over time. In areas that may have ultra-fine particulates, consider an enclosed line shaft with filtered water for lubrication.

3. **Threaded vs. keyed couplings:** Threaded couplings have the potential to be unthreaded if there is reverse flow down the pump column. Discharge control valves or check valves can fail, as can seals, allowing air in and causing water to quickly drain and backspin the pump. Provide keyed couplings to ensure the shaft never unthreads itself.
4. **Shaft Grounding Rings:** Large motors may have a charge build-up between motor shafts and frames. When these discharge across bearings it degrades lubrication and damages the bearings. Shaft grounding rings are inexpensive insurance against unwanted currents that damage bearings. They should be provided for all VFD-powered motors and larger motors, even when not powered by VFDs.
5. **NEMA MG-1:** Motor manufacturers can label any motor as 'VFD-rated,' but motors that meet NEMA MG-1 have been tested and manufactured to the specific requirements that are known to work with VFDs. Specify NEMA MG-1 motors to ensure the motor will be long lasting with the VFD application.

We hope these tips will help you to avoid headaches down the road and keep your pump in service! 

## Thank you to our sponsors of the PNWS-AWWA Annual Conference!

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PNWS-AWWA's  
**Annual Conference**  
May 1-3, 2024 | Spokane, WA **Recap**

## **Spokane Comes Through With Another Great Annual Conference!**

This year's Annual Conference in Spokane was a great success and a long time coming. Full of new and returning attendees, the event was a wonderful time full of networking, activities, and the reminiscing of old and new friends in the industry. Here are a few highlights from this year's conference.

The conference opened Wednesday with four concurrent pre-conference sessions on Water Efficiency Solutions, Math for Operators, Water Supply and ASR Permitting, and PFAS Treatment, two off-site tours, and an afternoon Seismic/Resilience Planning course. Sessions continued through Thursday and Friday offering 132 individual topics to choose from. The Spokane Convention Center rooms were full of knowledgeable speakers and engaged attendees.

Over 100 attendees kicked off their conference Wednesday morning at the Prairie Falls Golf Club, 25 miles east of Spokane. The weather was cold, and the wind was blowing, but this didn't stop these contenders from having a great time trying to win a team, individual, or raffle prize.

Back at the convention center, the Wednesday evening competitions took place on the riverside lawn. The **Best Tasting Water** contest took place, with Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water voted the winner. As attendees watched the **Tapping, Hydrant Hysteria**, and **Meter Madness** teams compete, they were able to enjoy an array of snacks and beverages.

A great showing of sponsors and vendors filled the vendor hall on Thursday for an all-day convention.

The silent auction ran throughout the conference, offering excellent gifts for attendees to place bids and benefit the PNWS-AWWA's philanthropic efforts, including **Water For People**, **The Water Equation**, and the **Education & Training Fund**.

Thursday evening concluded with the **Young Professionals Scavenger Hunt**, a night of opportunities for new individuals to learn about the Section and network with other water professionals, all while exploring downtown Spokane.

Attendees participated in various award presentations and recognition events throughout the conference, with the awards luncheon to witness the passing of the gavel from **Section Chair Dan Sleeth** to **Incoming Chair Nick Belmont**. Thank you, Dan, for all your work over the last year.

This successful event was made possible through the support of many. A huge thank you to the committees, vendors, sponsors, speakers, volunteers, and attendees. We also want to thank our AWWA conference Visiting Dignitary, Sally U. Mills-Wright, Board members, and supporting organizations.

**See you next year in Boise!**

# Annual Conference

PNWS-AWWA's **Recap**





# Conference *Awards*

**A**s part of our Annual Conference, we present awards to our extraordinary group of volunteers at our Annual Awards Luncheon. Below are this year's recipients.

We kicked off the luncheon by presenting the **Subsection Advisory Council Awards**. There are three of these awards this year. They are presented to individuals who have done an outstanding job promoting subsection activities and provide an example of what involved participation looks like at the local Subsection level in our three states.

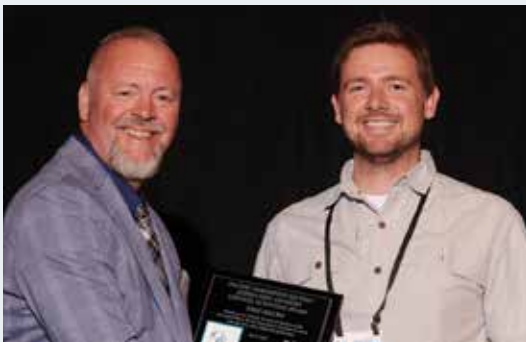


## **Laura Oxsen – Northwest Oregon Subsection**

A long-time Subsection member, Laura served as a Subsection officer from 2017 to 2022. As we know, one of those years was during the pandemic. Engaging members during this time was not easy, yet she seemed to enjoy the challenge of engaging members in a world experiencing shutdown. She led many virtual coffee breaks in 2021 to compensate for canceled monthly meetings.

Laura's organizational skills are top-notch. In her five years on the Subsection Board, she organized the Google Drive for better workflow and left every position she held better than she found it. She is now the interim Activities Chair for the Subsection, coordinating all the competitions in advance of our conference in Spokane.

Laura now serves on the Section's Education and Training Fund Board, which oversees our scholarship fund.



## **Eric Delbo – Inland Empire Subsection**

A dedicated Subsection member, Eric sponsors annual training for operators and produces the Subsection's monthly newsletter. Since he began his work on the Subsection Board, Eric has helped transition the Inland Empire to the Square platform, which has made communication with local water agencies more successful.

Eric takes an active role in all the Subsection networking events. He is now part of the Section's Young Professional Committee and helped organize the YP Scavenger Hunt.



## **Caren Sleeth – King County Subsection**

As the Chair of the King County Subsection, Caren implemented the first working budget for the Subsection. This allowed them to set guidelines for events, including their annual golf tournament, which led to accountability for King County Subsection and all its endeavors.

Caren also led the charge in getting the Subsection to its first-ever named scholarship by securing funds through their new budgeting process to eclipse the \$10,000 mark. Finally, she took on the task of updating the Subsection bylaws, which are scheduled to be approved by the Section Board at their fall meeting.

### The Diversity and Inclusion Award

The purpose of this award is to recognize an individual, group, or organization that has created, promoted, and maintained diversity and inclusion by establishing an environment that recognizes, encourages, and effectively utilizes each individual's talents.

I am pleased to present this year's award to **Tacoma Water**. With support from Tacoma Public Utilities executive leadership and the Water Senior Leadership team, Tacoma Water established an Equity Committee in 2021. Members of the committee were volunteers from every section in water. The Committee established a vision of being an anti-racist utility where diverse leadership, inclusive practices, and equitable outcomes empower all to deliver life-sustaining value to the community. With that vision in mind, they developed the macro goals of having (1) diverse leadership to ensure equitable experiences and (2) inclusive practices informed



by those closest to the pain to ensure equitable outcomes. They named and prioritized the micro goals, developed a work plan, and continued making strides to complete the work.



### The Pioneer Award

The Pioneer Award is presented to a young professional who displays outstanding qualities in leadership, technical expertise, and community involvement. Young professionals are individuals with less than ten years of experience in the industry.

Our 2024 Pioneer Award recipient finds ways to not only make connections for their own growth and exposure, but they are also passionate about connecting others to the water industry and developing opportunities to learn together. Their intentionality in collaborating and thinking about the future of our industry makes them strong team members and committee members.

Throughout their time with the PNW Section, they have found multiple opportunities to present to their peers and experts in the field, displaying strong leadership and confidence in their technical expertise.

This engineer is an expert in water systems planning, operations, and hydraulic modeling for water distribution systems. They lead complex field data collection programs to support understanding of system operations and then use this experience to teach the next generation of engineers. This passion and desire to share are also seen through their engagement with students and youth at the Portland

Children's Clean Water Festival or with future operators through the Hired 2 Operate internship program.

This young professional is a key resource for Carollo Engineers. Our 2024 Pioneer Award recipient is **Natalie Reilly**.



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### The Heart and Soul Award

The Heart and Soul Award is an award that the Section Chair gets to select. This award recognizes outstanding service and exceptional devotion by either a member or an organization in the activities of the Section. Recipients of this award often put in many hours of behind-the-scenes contributions to make our section great.

This year's Heart and Soul recipient has a rich history of tackling projects head-on. If there is a need, they jump right in and get things done regardless of the difficulty. A licensed operator since 2010, our recipient was offered an interim administrator position for three months in 2017. Before that year was over, he had accomplished so much for the district that he was named permanent district administrator.

As a Subsection President, our recipient has an amazing talent for matching volunteer skill sets with the job opening. As one fellow Subsection officer points out, "he has this amazing ability to see the skills in an individual that they didn't even know they had." This allows him to bring new blood into the Subsection so initiatives are not dropped. For example, he couldn't find anyone to learn Constant Contact, but he had a volunteer familiar with The Square. So Constant Contact was immediately dropped, and The Square was now the new tool for Subsection communication.



This typifies his great job taking over as President of the Subsection, moving on from the past and creating more opportunities for our members now and into the future.

Please join me in congratulating **Branden Rose**, Inland Empire Subsection's President, as this year's Heart and Soul Recipient.



### The Powell-Lindsay Award

The Powell-Lindsay Award is presented to someone whose exceptional service to the section represents the extraordinary service of W.H. Powell and Alexander Lindsay. It is the highest honor that our Section bestows upon a member.

Today's award recipient has been involved in the Section for decades, winning the Heart and Soul and SAC Activities Awards. They served on numerous committees, including Training Coordination, Customer Service, Distribution, Program, Utility Management, Scholarship, and an ad hoc committee to update the Rules of Procedure. They spearheaded the effort to develop the new charter for the Education and Training Fund. This person has a long and storied association with the Inland Empire Subsection, including a term as President,

making it look so easy and fun that their spouse got involved in the Subsection leadership, too.

Our recipient started their water career where some of the best utility executives do, in the ditch, or to be more precise, repairing the ditch. They took a cut in hourly pay as a warehouse worker to get a job with benefits and a pension at the city on the Grounds Maintenance crew, repairing sod that had been thrashed and trashed by water crews. Rising through the municipal utility ranks, he vaulted right over the Water Superintendent position formerly held by Alexander Lindsay and landed as the Director of Water & Hydroelectric Services and Wastewater Maintenance at the City of Spokane.

Having served as a Trustee and Section Chair and collecting a Fuller Award, he was not content with just fishing and golfing in retirement. He 'unretired' enough to take up a side job as a Water Resource Consultant, continuing a line of work begun as a member and past president of the Idaho Washington Aquifer Collaborative. This person has mentored many employees and volunteers over the years and has been instrumental in growing new PNWS leaders. In 2020, the Washington State Department of Health presented him with a Lifetime Achievement Award in recognition of his service and impact on the waterworks industry in Washington state.

What could be more fitting than this award, named in part for a renowned Spokane Water Superintendent, to be presented in Spokane to **Dan Kegley**? Please join me in congratulating Dan as the 2024 recipient of the Powell-Lindsay Award.



### The Operators Meritorious Service Award

The Operators Meritorious Service Award is an award that is presented annually to individuals who are:

- In continuous compliance with all public health standards in treated drinking water
- Outstanding contribution to plant maintenance
- The development of new and or modified equipment or significant process modifications for more efficient treatment
- Special effort in training operators
- Special acts not directly related to treatment
- Consistently contribute to the operations and maintenance of distribution systems

**Kris Graf from the City of Spokane** has worked for the City for over 16 years as a Water Quality Analyst.

Over this time, she has collected and analyzed over 30,000 coliform bacteria samples. What makes this remarkable is the very low number of repeat samples that have been collected. The City has not had any confirmed coliform detections during her time with the city.

Record-breaking snowfall, smoke, heat, and COVID-19 did not break Kris' string of sample collection and analysis.

She trained backup sample collectors in case COVID-19 sidelined her, which, luckily, it never did. She calibrates, cleans, and services all analyzing equipment throughout the City's 50 coliform sampling locations. Kris even assists the Subsection with their annual truck rodeo. One would be hard-pressed to find an employee more dedicated to providing safe drinking water to customers.

### The George Warren Fuller Award

The George Warren Fuller Award is the highest award given by AWWA. It is bestowed on individuals for:

- Distinguished Service in the Water Supply Field;
- Brilliant diplomatic talent; and
- Constructive leadership as characterized by the life and work of George Warren Fuller.

The 2024 George Warren Fuller Award winner is a person who has served many years in leadership roles for Pacific Northwest utilities. Working with elected Boards to ensure utilities sustained and continued improvement has been a key element of their career. Our awardee has been a mentor, coach, and advocate for coworkers, managers, operators, and consultants, so much so that they received the Oregon Award for outstanding service leadership in safe drinking water.


Our recipient has a long, rich history of service to the water industry, serving at the highest levels of AWWA, the State of Oregon, and other associations.

Examples include:

- President of Special Districts Association of Oregon and Chair of the SDAO Water Committee
- Oregon Drinking Water Advisory Committee Member
- Oregon Water Utility Council Member for over two decades
- AWWA Water Utility Council Vice-Chair
- PNWS Board of Trustees

Their professional involvement has focused on policy, governance, and political involvement. Consistently attending the annual AWWA Fly-In to meet with the Oregon Congressional Delegation, our award winner worked with former Senator Merkley's office on key WIFIA funding in support of the water industry in Oregon.

He is an avid traveler, occasional golfer, and very dedicated husband, parent, and grandparent. He is a big Beaver Believer and Portland Timbers supporter. He is the General Manager of Clackamas River Water.

Ladies and gentlemen, please congratulate **Todd Heidgerken**, the 2024 George Warren Fuller Award Winner. 



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## King County Subsection

Summer is officially here! The sun is shining, and the flowers are in full bloom. The King County Subsection is looking for new ways to serve our members this year and continue getting people involved in our amazing Subsection. We encourage you to get involved and come meet the awesome people who make up our industry!

### Events

The 12th Annual **Water Olympics** was held on March 21, 2024, at Formula Brewing in Issaquah, WA. Attendees enjoyed good conversation, food, beverages, and competitions. Along with the best-tasting water competition and meter challenge, hydrant hysteria was back after a three-year hiatus.

Thank you all for participating and attending! Thank you to all of the sponsors: Badger Meter, Brown & Caldwell, Consor, Core and Main, David Evans & Associates, Ferguson Water Works, Gen Pac, Hach, HD Fowler, HDR, M&H Company, PACE, RH2, Romac, Stantec, Sybis, and Victaulic Infrastructure for supporting this King County Subsection-AWWA event. This event wouldn't have happened without their support!



**Meter Challenge:** With the weather cooperating, the Meter Challenge was held outside this year for spectators to enjoy. First place went to **AJ Akimoff** with Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water District. Congrats to AJ, and good luck at the PNWS Annual Conference in May. It's time to start practicing for next year!

**Hydrant Hysteria:** This year, attendees watched three teams compete in hydrant

hysteria. The winning team was the **Lake Meridian Water District**, which consisted of Connor Nichols, Wesley King, and Coach Jeff Greer.



### Best-Tasting Water Competition:

We had a total of six contestants submit water samples. The KCSS had two winners, one for best overall and one for best-treated water system. The Best Tasting Water Overall went to **Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water District! Covington Water District** took home the trophy for Best Tasting Water for treated systems.

A special thank you to **Cheryl Capron, Joanie Stultz, and Pat Kohlbrenner**, our wonderful judges. They represented various parts of the water industry and judged water samples from each contestant's distribution system.



For questions about King County Subsection competitions, please contact Ted Stonebridge at [tstonebridge@northbendwa.gov](mailto:tstonebridge@northbendwa.gov) or 425-888-7693.

### PNWS Annual Conference

The 2024 PNWS-AWWA Section Conference was held in Spokane, WA, from May 1-3, 2024, marking a convergence of water professionals across the Pacific Northwest. Against the scenic backdrop of Spokane's landscape, attendees delved into diverse workshops, presentations, and discussions, highlighting innovative solutions and best practices to ensure the sustainability of the region's water systems. From the keynote address to interactive sessions, participants engaged in lively exchanges, fostering collaboration and knowledge-sharing. This conference underscored the collective commitment to advancing water stewardship in the Pacific Northwest and beyond.



Our very own King County Subsection President, PAC Treasurer, and PNWS Audit Committee member, **Caren Sleeth**, CPA, Finance Manager for Covington Water District, was awarded the SAC Subsection Activity Award at the 2024 PNWS Spokane Conference for continued hard work and dedication in streamlining guidelines and accountability for Board meetings and events. Caren's dedication to PNWS-AWWA is inspiring. Caren encourages term accountability and budget implementation. Congratulations, Caren!



### King County Subsection

#### What We Are Looking Forward To 28th Annual KCSS Golf Tournament

The 2024 PNWS-AWWA Charity Golf Tournament is officially scheduled for September 20, 2024, at the Auburn Course in Auburn, WA. Look out for the save the date and registration information. We are so grateful for the presence and support of our membership for a great cause! We invite you to consider sponsoring the golf tournament because this event would not be possible without our sponsors. Last year, we had such a blast with our themed holes and fun challenges. We hope you can join us this year!

#### New Members

Welcome new members! If you are a new member of the King County

Subsection, we would love to get you connected and learn more about your interests. Join us at one of our quarterly in-person lunch meetings to learn more. If you are interested in attending any of these meetings, reach out to the Subsection's Secretary, Beth Mende, at [emende@kingcounty.gov](mailto:emende@kingcounty.gov).

#### Future Training

The subsection is committed to offering classes to help our members meet their CEU requirements. The goal of the Board is to offer at least four classes within the calendar year. Look out for further announcements and registration information. For questions about classes, whether that's an idea for a class, a suggestion for speakers, or general information about training and CEUs, please contact our

Program Director, Chris Guest, at [chris.guest@covingtonwater.com](mailto:chris.guest@covingtonwater.com) or 253-867-0947.

#### KCSS Board Transitions and Recruitment

Board transitions will take place this summer, and we are looking for new members to get involved on the KCSS Board. Our Board is looking for a Program Director for Education and Training. This person would be responsible for coordinating and executing KCSS training programs to keep members involved and allow opportunities to earn CEUs. Please reach out to Beth Mende at [emende@kingcounty.gov](mailto:emende@kingcounty.gov) if you are interested in becoming a KCSS Board member.

### Northwest Oregon Subsection

#### Scholarship Opportunity!

The NW Oregon Subsection AWWA Scholarship was created to encourage education and training in the field of water quality, supply, and treatment. Eligible candidates meet the following criteria:

1. Full-time student (not receiving tuition reimbursement from an employer).
2. Undergraduate student enrolled in an Associate or Baccalaureate degree program.
3. Oregon resident or enrolled in an Oregon college/university.

This scholarship will be awarded as a one-time grant. All applicants will receive a one-year NW Oregon AWWA student membership and a one-year subscription to *Journal AWWA*. For more information and to apply, please contact Rodrigo Prugue at [rprugue@gsiws.com](mailto:rprugue@gsiws.com).

#### John Aho Memorial Water for People Golf Tournament – 30th Annual NW Oregon Subsection Golf for Water

The WFP Committee of the NW Oregon Subsection of the PNWS-AWWA invites

you to the Annual Golf Tournament on Friday, July 19, 2024. Proceeds from this event will benefit both the John Aho Scholarship Fund and Water For People. The tournament includes pre-round range balls, a cart, lunch, and prizes. Registration opens at 7:00 am, with a shotgun start at 8:00 am. If you're interested in helping with this event and/or want to sponsor, please contact Justin Ford at [justin.ford@consoreng.com](mailto:justin.ford@consoreng.com). Gather your four-person team and scan the QR code to register:



#### Thank you to our Past President, Kyle Arnhart

After the Section Conference, the Subsection officers transition into their new positions in May. Kyle Arnhart, Senior Water Utility Technician at

the City of Tigard, has completed his commitment and is now Past President. We appreciate Kyle's dedication and the countless hours he has contributed to the Subsection's leadership! Our 2024 Officers are Andrew Wentworth, President; Dawn Nolan, Vice-President; DeEtta Fosbury, Treasurer; and Eric George, Secretary.

#### Get Involved

Are you looking to get more involved? The Subsection is seeking volunteers for the Safety and Education Committee, Waterworks School Committee, IT Committee, and for the Incoming Subsection Officer position (May 2025). Please contact Andrew Wentworth at [awentworth@pnws-awwa.org](mailto:awentworth@pnws-awwa.org) if you're interested in these opportunities or would like to discuss other ways to participate.

## Northwest Washington Subsection

Hello, and happy summer! It's hard to believe we're almost halfway through 2024. The end of 2024 also means the end of another CEU cycle. The Northwest Washington (NWWA) Subsection has a great line-up of upcoming workshops to help meet your training and CEU needs. Please check out the list below and continue to check the PNWS training calendar for details.

### Training

The NWWA Subsection hosted three workshops and the Western Washington Short School and Trade Show (co-hosted with PNCWA) during the first half of 2024. Workshop offerings so far this year included the very popular Day with the Department of Health (DOH), San Juan Island Operators Workshop, and Basic Waterworks.



We have a full slate of training opportunities already planned or in development for the second half of 2024, including:

- Math for Operators and P&ID – Fall 2024
- Pump Station O&M – Fall 2024
- Water Distribution – Fall 2024
- Water Treatment – Fall 2024
- Basic Waterworks for Water Board Officers and Managers – Fall 2024

The NWWA Subsection is committed to providing high-quality, affordable training. The complete training schedule will be posted to the PNWS Section website at [www.pnws-awwa.org/training/training-opportunities](http://www.pnws-awwa.org/training/training-opportunities) and shared via Constant Contact. For training-related questions, please contact our Program Co-Chairs, Jeff Lundt and Eric Schey, at [jeff.lundt@pnws-awwa.org](mailto:jeff.lundt@pnws-awwa.org) and [eschey@kingcounty.gov](mailto:eschey@kingcounty.gov).

### Events

In March, the NWWA Subsection hosted our Annual AWWA Competition Night, which followed the day with the DOH workshop. **Joe Schibert** (City of Anacortes) won the Meter Challenge, **Skagit PUD's Judy System** won the Best Tasting Water Competition, and the **Skagit PUD team** won the Top Ops competition. We are excited to announce that the **Skagit PUD team** also won the Top Ops competition at the PNWS Conference in May and traveled to Anaheim in June to compete at ACE. Congratulations to the **Skagit PUD team**, and thank you for representing our Section!



In June, we also hosted a facility tour of Skagit PUD's Judy Reservoir, followed by a networking happy hour at Farmstrong Brewing in Mount Vernon. Nick Leininger coordinated with Bellingham Technical College faculty to provide this fun opportunity for students to connect with water professionals. The event was a huge hit, and we hope to offer another facility tour/happy hour in Fall 2024.

The NWWA Subsection is pleased to announce that we will host our second annual "Waves for Water" fundraiser on August 28, 2024. We hope you can join us for breathtaking views of the Swinomish Channel and Deception Pass aboard the

M/V Rosario, along with a delicious, freshly prepared cracked crab and roast chicken dinner and a selection of Northwest beer, wine, and spirits. Registration will open in late spring/early summer. Space is limited, so register early!

Please continue to check our website for details at [www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/subsections/northwest-washington-subsection](http://www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/subsections/northwest-washington-subsection). For event-related questions, please contact our Subsection Secretary, Bridget August, at [baugust@geoengineers.com](mailto:baugust@geoengineers.com).


### New Members

If you are a new member of the NWWA Subsection, we would love to connect with you! Please contact our President and New Member Chair, Nick Leininger, at [nrleininger@cob.org](mailto:nrleininger@cob.org).

In addition to Nick, we encourage new and existing members to contact any of our Subsection officers if you want to learn more about the Subsection and get involved. We would love to have you join us! Our current Board is:

- **President and New Member Chair:** Nick Leininger, City of Bellingham
- **Vice-President:** Kenneth Packard, HDR
- **Treasurer:** Mark Semrau, Skagit PUD
- **Secretary and PAC Liaison:** Bridget August, GeoEngineers
- **Director:** Don Ranger, Alderwood Water & Wastewater District
- **Director:** Bob Hubbert, Seattle Public Utilities
- **Director:** Culley Leman, Cascadia Water
- **Past President:** Dave Price, Carollo
- **Program Co-Chair:** Jeff Lundt, King County Wastewater Treatment Division
- **Program Co-Chair:** Eric Schey, King County Wastewater Treatment Division

### Monthly Meetings

The NWWA Subsection holds monthly virtual meetings, and we would love to 'see' you there! To be added to the monthly meeting invite, please contact our Subsection Secretary, Bridget August at [baugust@geoengineers.com](mailto:baugust@geoengineers.com). 



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