

Nature's Scorecard

2019 UPDATE

HOW WELL ARE PUGET SOUND CITIES & COUNTIES
PROTECTING OUR WATERS BY USING GREEN
SOLUTIONS WHEN PLANNING FOR GROWTH?

SCORECARD RUBRIC

We scored cities and counties based on guidelines published by the Department of Ecology for complying with the stormwater permits. These criteria are easy to implement and critical to protecting our waterways.

Softening our footprint: Limit hard, waterproof surfaces that create stormwater by using more landscaping, narrower walkways, and taller buildings.

Building with care: Protect native plants and soils during construction to allow rainwater to soak into the earth.

Improving filtration: Require permeable pavements where feasible, supporting vehicles and pedestrians while allowing rainwater to pass through to the soils below.

Growing the right trees: Plant native trees—like cedars and firs—that are adapted to our climate and filter pollutants out of rainwater.

Maintaining buffers: Protect critical areas such as shorelines and wetlands with buffers of native vegetation that slow and clean polluted stormwater runoff.

Stormwater runoff is the biggest source of toxic pollution to Puget Sound. Polluted stormwater harms salmon, orcas, and people, causes beach and seafood harvest closures, and impacts our environment, economy, and health.

The Clean Water Act requires cities and counties to manage their stormwater runoff to protect water quality, and Washington sets standards for stormwater management in statewide permits. Starting in 2012, these permits required 83 Puget Sound municipalities to update their local development regulations to make low impact development (LID) the “preferred and commonly used approach” by the end of 2016.

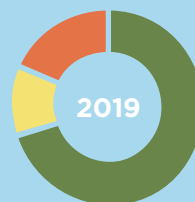
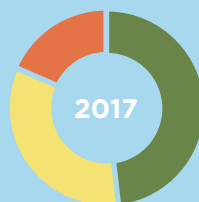
LID uses or mimics nature, filtering stormwater into the ground to remove pollutants, reduce urban flooding, and make our communities more livable, walkable, and resilient. In the face of climate change and a rapidly growing population in the Pacific Northwest, we need a low-impact approach to development.

We created Nature's Scorecard to hold our communities accountable for protecting our waterways by complying with Washington's statewide stormwater permits. This final Scorecard represents the culmination of our work since 2017 with municipalities on their LID code updates.

BIG PICTURE

Over 70% of Puget Sound cities and counties made meaningful progress on LID requirements since 2012.

In 2017, half of Puget Sound's cities and counties were missing the mark. Continued advocacy from community members and the hard work of willing municipalities has resulted in a 20% increase in the number of high-scoring places in 2019. The remaining 28% still have a long way to go.



15%

38%

47%

2019

16%

12%

72%

no progress

minimal progress

meaningful progress

Nature's Scorecard

- P** in progress
- ✓ new checkmark!
- ★ green star (existing)
- ★ green star (new)

WHAT'S A GREEN STAR?

Green Stars were awarded to cities and counties that went above and beyond the permit requirements and truly embraced LID in their codes. These champions are creating livable, resilient communities that will protect our waterways for generations to come.

We are thrilled to welcome four new green star cities this year!

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Municipality	SOFTENING OUR FOOTPRINT	BUILDING WITH CARE	IMPROVING FILTRATION	GROWING THE RIGHT TREES	MAINTAINING BUFFERS
Algona		✓			✓
Anacortes					✓
Arlington		✓		✓	✓
Auburn	✓				✓
Bainbridge Island	✓	✓	✓		✓
Bellevue	✓	✓		✓	✓
Bellingham	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Black Diamond	✓	✓			✓
Bonney Lake	✓	✓		✓	✓
Bothell	✓		✓	✓	✓
Bremerton	✓		✓	✓	✓
Brier	✓	✓		✓	✓
Buckley	✓	✓	✓		✓
Burien	✓	✓		✓	✓
Burlington	✓		✓	✓	✓
Clyde Hill	✓				
Covington	✓	✓		✓	✓
Des Moines		✓		P	✓
Dupont	✓				✓
Duvall	✓				✓
Edgewood	✓		✓	✓	
Edmonds	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Enumclaw	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Everett	✓	✓		✓	✓
Federal Way	✓	✓		✓	✓
Ferndale	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Fife		✓	✓	✓	✓
Fircrest	✓			✓	✓
Gig Harbor	✓	✓		✓	✓
Granite Falls	✓				✓
Issaquah	✓	✓		✓	✓
Kenmore	✓	✓	✓		✓
Kent	✓		✓	✓	✓
King County	✓	✓		✓	✓
Kirkland	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Kitsap County	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lacey	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lake Forest Park	✓	✓		✓	✓
Lake Stevens	✓	✓		✓	✓
Lakewood	✓				✓
Lynden	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Lynnwood	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓

Municipality	SOFTENING OUR FOOTPRINT	BUILDING WITH CARE	IMPROVING FILTRATION	GROWING THE RIGHT TREES	MAINTAINING BUFFERS
Maple Valley	✓	✓		✓	✓
Marysville	✓	✓		✓	✓
Medina	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mercer Island	✓	P	✓	✓	✓
Mill Creek	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Milton		✓		✓	✓
Monroe	✓	P	✓	✓	✓
Mount Vernon		✓		✓	✓
Mountlake Terrace	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Mukilteo	✓	✓	✓		✓
Newcastle	✓	✓	✓		✓
Normandy Park	✓	✓			
Oak Harbor	✓	✓		✓	✓
Olympia	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Orting	✓				✓
Pacific				✓	✓
Pierce County	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Port Angeles	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Port Orchard	✓	✓	P	✓	✓
Poulsbo		✓		✓	✓
Puyallup	✓	✓	P	✓	✓
Redmond	✓	✓		✓	✓
Renton	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sammamish	✓	✓		✓	✓
SeaTac		✓	✓	✓	✓
Seattle	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Sedro Woolley				✓	✓
Shoreline	✓	✓		✓	✓
Skagit County		✓			
Snohomish (City)	✓	✓		✓	✓
Snohomish County	✓	✓	✓	✓	✓
Snoqualmie	✓	✓	✓		✓
Steilacoom	✓	✓			✓
Sumner	✓	✓	P	✓	✓
Tacoma		✓	✓	✓	✓
Thurston County	✓		✓	✓	✓
Tukwila		✓	✓	✓	✓
Tumwater	✓	✓	✓		✓
University Place	✓		✓	✓	✓
Whatcom County	✓			✓	✓
Woodinville	✓	✓		✓	✓

This project was privately funded by individual donations to Puget Soundkeeper and Washington Environmental Council. No public funds were used. Evaluating how cities and counties incorporated LID is a Near-Term Action in the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda.

WHAT'S NEXT?

This Scorecard tracks our region's progress on LID for new development. But in order to recover our waterways and protect salmon, orcas, and people, we must also address polluted stormwater from previously-developed areas—often built before modern stormwater controls were required. Our future depends on fixing mistakes of the past by retrofitting existing development to better manage stormwater and prevent pollution. Starting in 2019, Washington's statewide stormwater permits will require cities and counties to plan for retrofits.

Learn more & take action at NaturesScorecard.com