

# Ecosystem Recovery in Puget Sound: The Social Challenge



Presented at

Restore America's Estuaries  
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ARCHITECTS  
LANDSCAPE ARCHITECTS  
PLANNERS

# Objectives for Today's Session

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- Illustrate attempts of the Puget Sound Partnership to include the human dimension in ecosystem recovery
- Define the social challenge of ecosystem recovery in Puget Sound
- Provide an overview of the *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation* as a organizing framework
- Identify next steps and longer term vision

# The Human Dimension in Ecosystem Recovery

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- People are the problem and the solution
- Past efforts have shown that unless human dimension included in planning and implementation, recovery will not be successful
- Must explicitly acknowledge relationships between people and the environment
- Must be based on sound theoretical and applied social science

# A Legacy of Human Pressures on Puget Sound Ecosystem Health

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# We are still part of the problem....

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# ...And we are also part of the solution

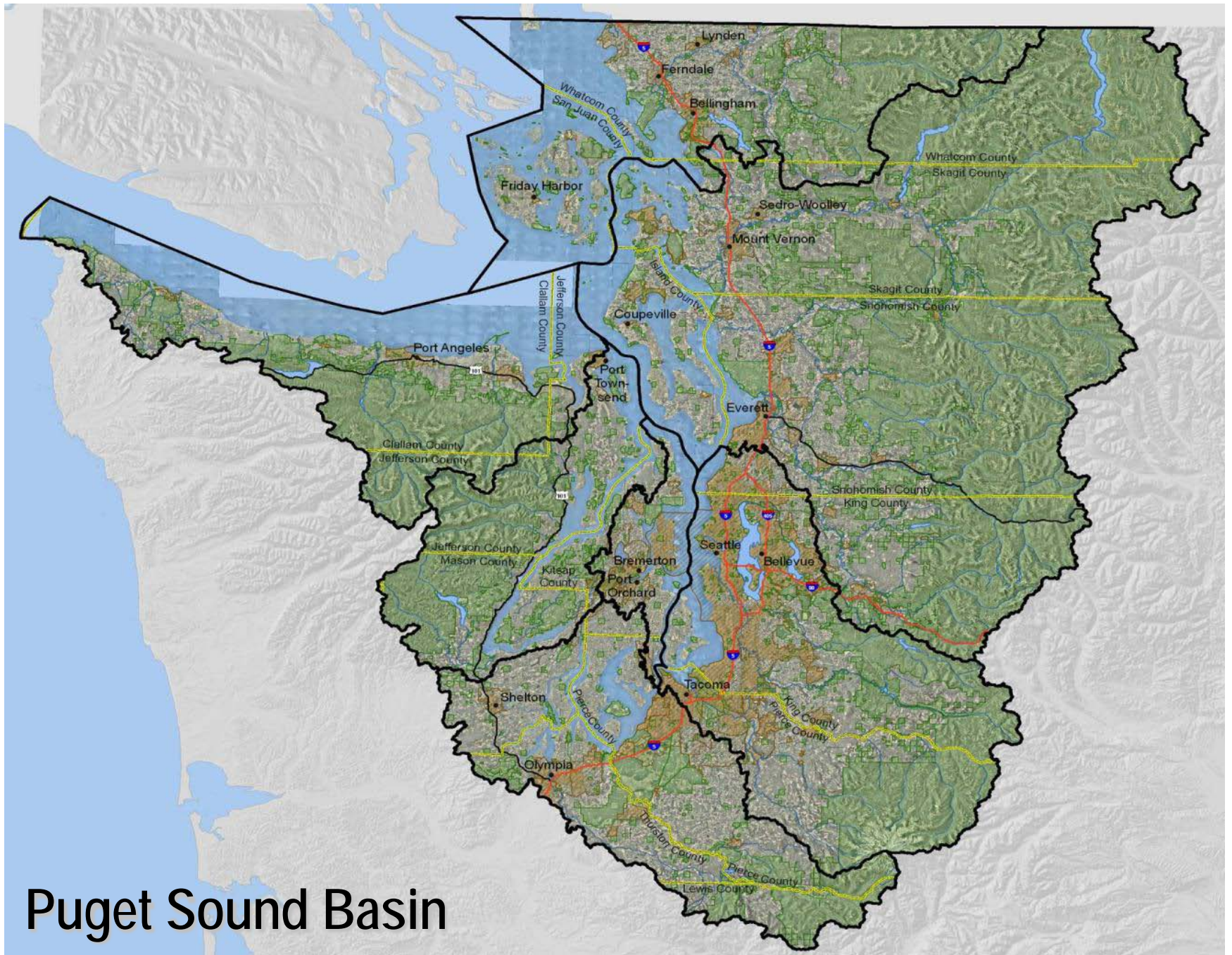
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# Use, Preservation, and Education

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Puget Sound Basin

# Puget Sound Basin: Deceptive in its Beauty

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# Built and Natural Capital: Effects on Human Wellbeing

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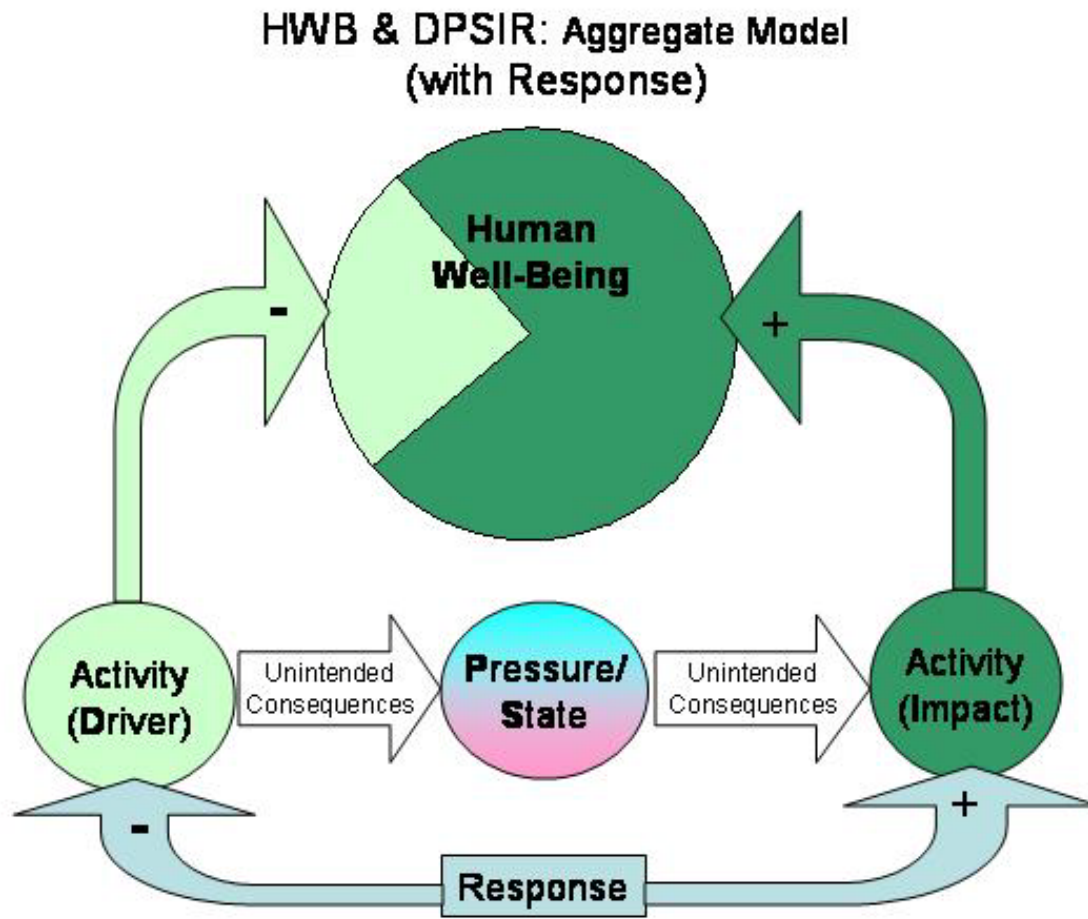


# Diverse Cultures

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# Human Well Being/DPSIR Aggregate Model with Response



# Ecosystem Recovery: *a Social Challenge*

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- 4.3 million Puget Sound residents
- Degradation & recovery both rooted in human well being
- Successful recovery requires a shift in the social paradigm and behavioral change
- Misperceptions of PS health; disconnect with personal actions; competing priorities
- Getting 1600+ existing organizations on board; aligning priorities, research agendas, and approaches

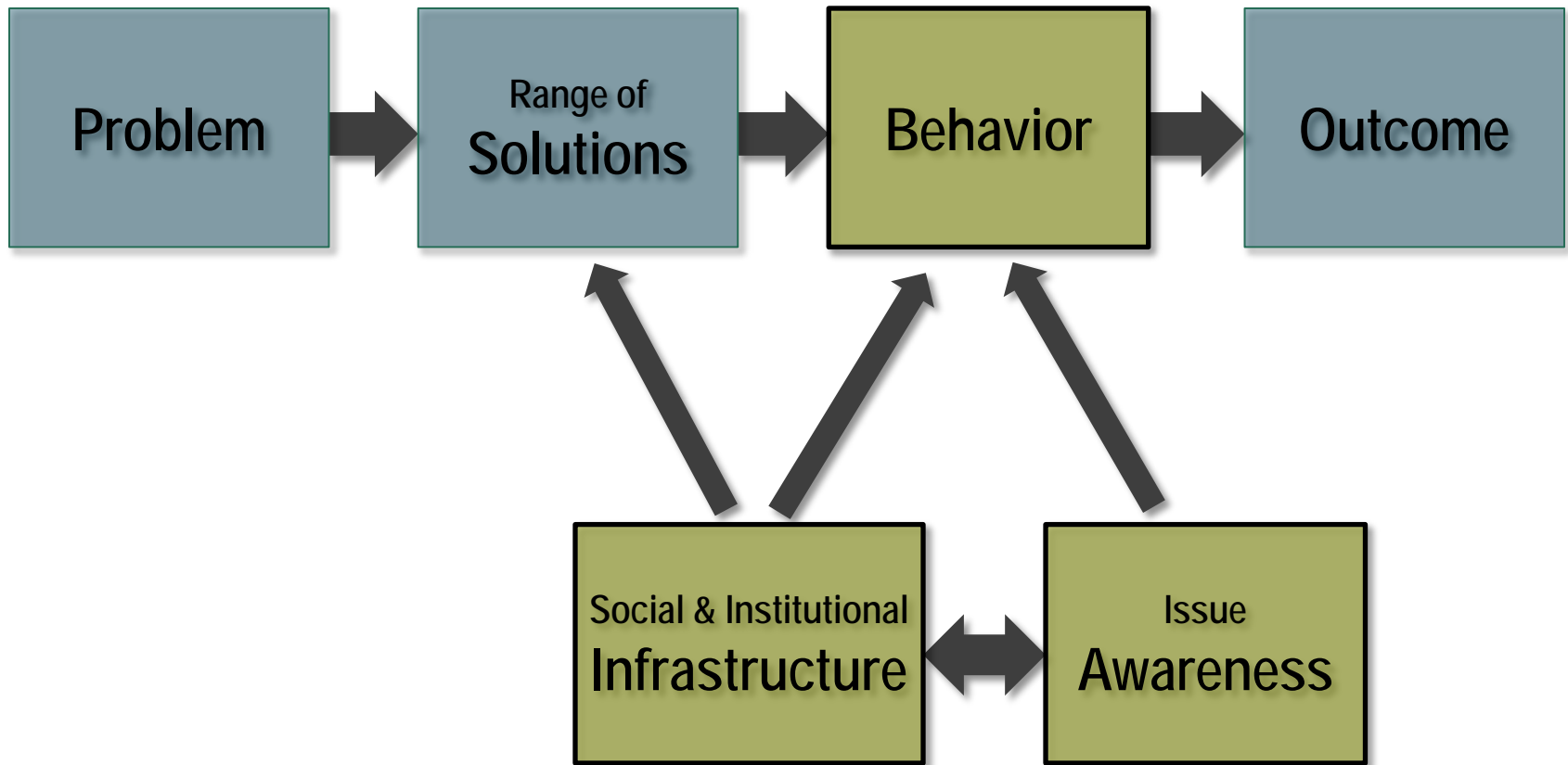
# Puget Sound Partnership Goals

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1. Healthy people supported by a healthy Puget Sound
2. The quality of human life sustained by a healthy Puget Sound
3. Puget Sound species and the web of life thrive
4. Puget Sound habitat is protected and restored
5. Puget Sound rivers and streams flowing at levels that support people, fish and wildlife and the environment
6. Puget Sound marine and fresh water are clean

# PSP Action Agenda Section E.4: Social Strategies

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## Awareness and Understanding

*Puget Sound Starts Here* broadcast media extension  
*Puget Sound Starts Here* social media / lifestyle linkage  
Localize *Puget Sound Starts Here* – communications toolbox  
Place-based youth education - program support  
Local engagement programs – implementation grants

## Practices and Behaviors

Identify/prioritize target practices  
Science analysis of target practices  
Market research / analysis / regional integration  
Stewardship - program support  
Target practice diffusion - implementation grants  
Enhance model stewardship programs - implementation grants

## Social & Institutional Infrastructure

ECO-Net management and services – Local coordination funding  
ECO-Net capacity building - training and technical assistance  
PartnerWeb / MySound – Communications portal  
Citizen Action Training School  
Sound Behavior and Quality of Life Indices  
Ecosystems service valuation

# How are Species and Ecosystems Doing?

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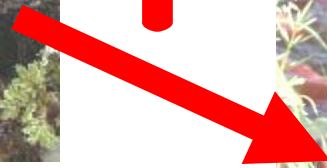


# Are Our Actions Leading to Desired Impacts?

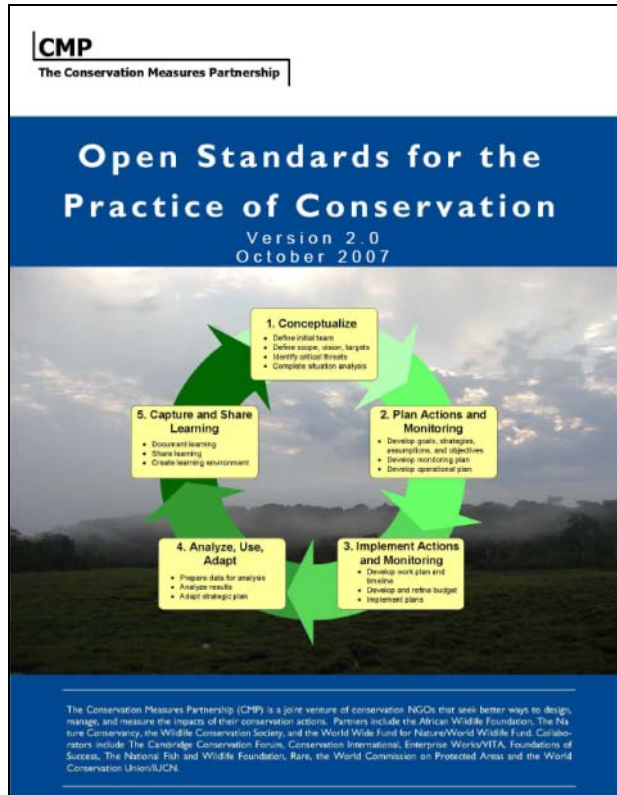
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# Conservation Measures Partnership's *Open Standards for the Practice of Conservation*



- Developed by leading orgs & agencies
- Draws on many fields
- Open source
- Provides a common language, terms, definitions
- Used around the world
  - Lakes Ontario & Huron
  - State Wildlife Agencies
  - Swedish National Parks
  - Donor Funding Programs
  - Academic Training
  - Puget Sound Partnership

[www.conservationmeasures.org](http://www.conservationmeasures.org)

# Conservation Practitioners Must Be Able To...

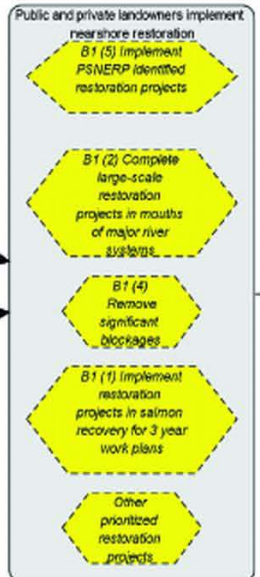
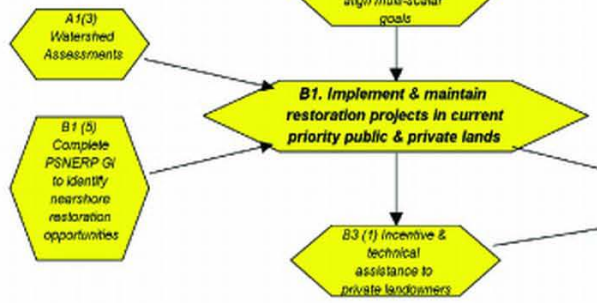
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- Assess status of ecosystem
- Select the interventions that have the highest returns on investments
- Measure the impact of and improve effectiveness of actions
- Convince managers, donors, and supporters that results are credible
- Learn from one another in a systematic fashion

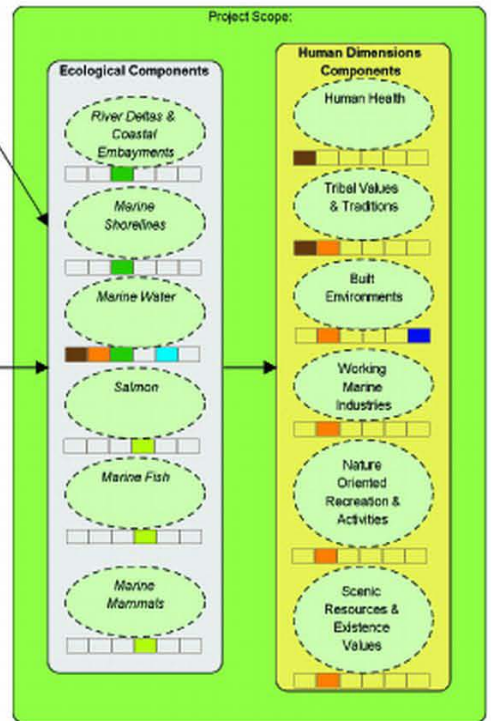
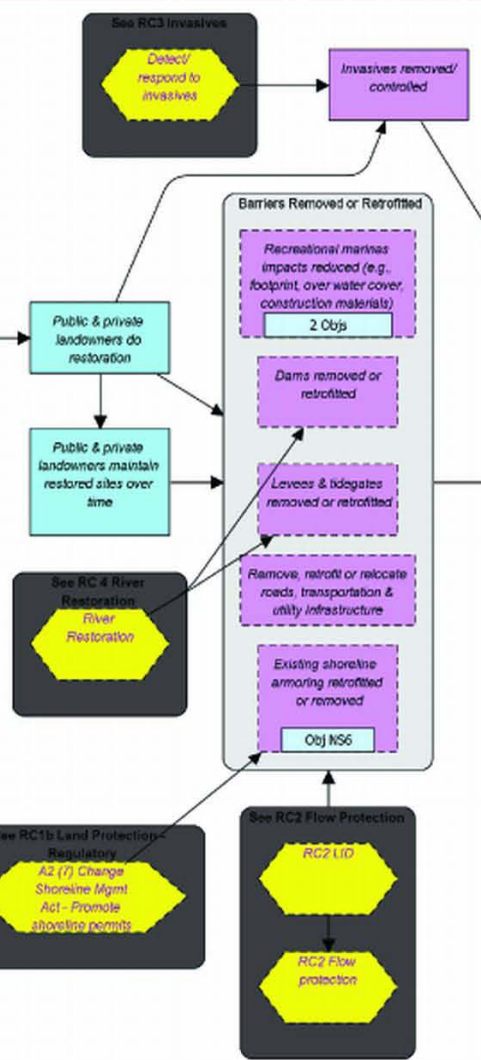
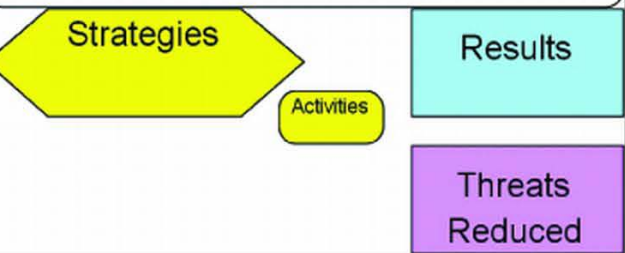
Develop, Support & Coordinate Efforts

Restoration & Enhancement of Ecosystems, Habitats, & Processes

Scientific Assessments



KEY



# PSP Social Science Needs

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## ■ Social Capital

- Trust and communication networks that enable people to get things done
- Correlation to health, well-being, social issues, environment
- Regional/subregional patterns
- Correlation to specific practices and demographic variables

## ■ Diffusion of Innovations

- How innovations (behaviors) spread across human populations

## ■ Stakeholder Value Assessment

- Ecosystem Service Valuation

# Social Science Needs...continued

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## ■ Stages of Change

- Market research
- Processes of change individuals experience as they adopt new behaviors
- Dominant model in health behavior change

## ■ Behavioral Economics

- Problem analysis, psychology integration
- Public choice, decision architecture

# Conclusion

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- PSP statutory language is not enough to successfully include human well being in ecosystem recovery
- Open Standards framework captures the ecological and human dimensions of ecosystem recovery – prioritizes understanding what is/is not working
- Need a social strategy based on sound social science (including ecosystem service valuation, institutional analysis, behavioral change analysis, and decision theory)
- Ongoing commitment needed for adaptive management
- Need funding

# Thank You

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