



American Water Works Association
Pacific Northwest Section

SUMMER 2025

WATER *matters*

The Official Magazine of the
Pacific Northwest Section – AWWA



American Water Works Association
Pacific Northwest Section

Annual Conference *Recap*

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Stronger Together

When I joined AWWA and the Pacific Northwest Section (Section) nearly 25 years ago, I started like many of you – volunteering on committees, getting my ‘feet wet’ in various roles. I certainly didn’t picture myself becoming Chair all those years ago.

But as I’ve learned: if you stay in enough meetings and nod at the right times, somebody will eventually put you in charge! All kidding aside, it’s truly an honor to be stepping into this role.

Like many of you, I initially joined AWWA and the Section for professional development – to build skills, maintain certifications, and stay informed on industry trends. But what really kept me coming back, and what ultimately led me here to becoming Chair, were the people. It was the relationships. The mentors and peers who took the time to say, “Come join me. How can I help? What do you need?” Those moments made a lasting impression on me, and they’re what make this Section so strong.

I’m excited, I’m grateful, and most of all, I’m ready to get to work – with all of you, and with our Board.

It’s those personal connections – whether they come from long-time friendships or short-term committee assignments – that keep our community thriving.

I want to sincerely thank Nick Belmont for his outstanding leadership over the past year. He’s left big shoes to fill, but fortunately, I know I won’t be filling them alone. We have a dedicated Board, the leadership of our Executive Director, and a membership full of passionate, skilled professionals. I also want to thank my employer, Tualatin Valley Water District, for their support. And for understanding the value that Section engagement brings back to an organization.

Looking ahead, I believe our Section is in a strong position – thanks to the work of past Chairs, Boards, and volunteers – but we can’t stand still. Our industry continues to face challenges: aging infrastructure, evolving regulations to protect public health, workforce development needs, climate and population impacts to our water supplies, the list goes on.

The good news? Our Section has proven time and again that we meet these challenges best when we do it together – and when we learn from each other. In the coming year, I hope to focus on a few key priorities:

- Strengthening our support for the next generation of water professionals;
- Developing meaningful leadership and training opportunities for all Section members; and
- Building a culture that welcomes new voices, new ideas, and new passion into our community.

Because at the end of the day, this Section doesn’t belong to the Board or the Chair – it belongs to all of you. Your passion, your commitment, your expertise, and your involvement are what keep it strong.

I’m excited, I’m grateful, and most of all, I’m ready to get to work – with all of you, and with our Board. Let’s make it a great year ahead for the Section! 🚰

Warmly,
Joel Cary
Chair, PNWS-AWWA

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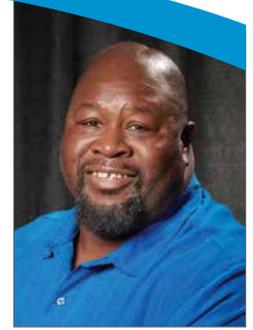
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Ensuring a Sustainable Future for the World of Water

As I write my last article as Association Director for the Pacific Northwest, I want to sincerely thank you all for trusting me with the opportunity to serve as your representative on the National Association Board of Directors. I have had the distinct pleasure of serving as a board member at both the section and association level for just over eight years and it has been truly one of the most rewarding and humbling experiences of my career in the water industry.

Looking back on the past few years I am proud to have been part of an association that had the vision of looking beyond the moment and began to try to ensure a sustainable future for the world of water. The Water 2050 campaign, which builds on the One Water Initiative, is one of the most important works that the board has been engaged in. This initiative lays a foundation and framework

for responsible water governance and use into the future to maintain this most vital resource. Water 2050 brought together diverse leaders from the water sector and beyond to explore challenges and opportunities focused on five specific categories: technology, economics, governance, sustainability and social demographics. The campaign is currently focusing on developing measurable strategies to put in place for each category.

The Board of Directors also took steps to fill some noticeable gaps on the board by adding young professional advisory positions and a Young Professional Director At Large to the Directors pool. With both moves the association took significant steps by adding the voices that will ultimately be leading the future of the water industry. I am especially pleased to see the growth of the Young Professionals Committee within the Section. The committee under the leadership of Cole Benak has seen a tremendous increase and their contributions and enhancement to our section have been immeasurable.

In legislative affairs, the Association continues to be active with critical rulings on PFAS/PFOA and LCRI compliance standards. The national association, while not challenging the safety concerns of PFAS and Lead and Copper, have challenged the methods used by the EPA to establish the contaminate levels and the timelines for compliance without regard for the effects on purveyors and ultimately customers. The Association demonstrated its commitment to being a leading authority in the industry, as highlighted in the Spring issue of *Water Matters*, which covered the legislative fly-in where nearly 200 delegates from 47 states held over 300 meetings with lawmakers on critical water-related issues. Concurrently with the fly-in, AWWA hosted the largest water week to date.

By the reading of this article ACE 2025 will have concluded and I look forward to hearing from the keynote speaker Kathryn Sorensen, Ph.D., the Director of Research at the Kyl Center for Water Policy at Morrison Institute, Arizona State University. Another highlight of the conference will be visiting with the international participants and leaders in attendance at the conference. As I bring my three-year term to a close as Association Director, I cannot express what an honor it has been to serve in this capacity for the Section. Being a member and being able to serve with such a great group of volunteers who sacrifice time and give so much has truly been a humbling experience. Thank you all again for allowing me this opportunity and I hope that I have served you well. 🙏

Sincerely,
James Dean

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expectancy in developed countries nearly doubled over the past 200 years, largely due to improved waste management resulting in healthier food and water.

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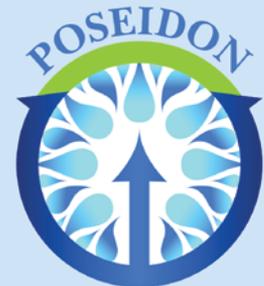
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Member Engagement and Development Committee (MEDC)

MEDC Purpose:

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

That's a Wrap! Member Engagement Success in Boise

It was great to be back together at the annual PNWS-AWWA Conference in Boise, ID May 7th – 9th. We officially transitioned our committee leadership and are excited to welcome **Tyler Clary** as the next incoming MEDC Chair and **Michael Neher** as the MEDC Vice Chair! MEDC had a great time connecting with Members at the **First-Timer's Meet and Greet Breakfast** and at the Membership Engagement Division Booth. The **Meet and Greet** provided an opportunity for first time attendees to network, learn how to get the most out of the conference experience, and how to get involved in PNWS committees. We had a great showing with over 40 first time attendees bright and early at 7:00 am. A special thanks to our volunteers for leading the breakout table activity.

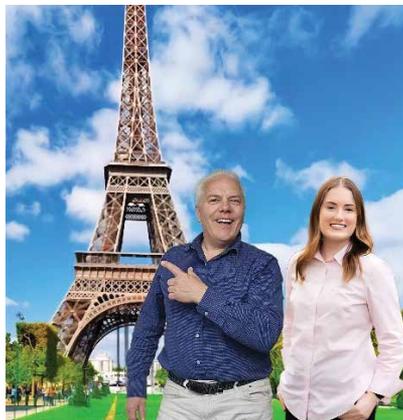


Mentors and mentees at the Member Engagement Division booth in Boise

Mentorship Program 2024-25 Draws to a Close

Thank you to all who participated in the 2024-25 Mentorship program. We had 22 pairs of mentor/protégé 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 in

June to officially close out the program year and gather feedback to improve the program for next year. If you are interested in learning more about the program for next year, feel free to contact our Mentorship program lead, Kyle Wong at kyle.wong@spwater.org.



Mentor/Mentee pair Doug Schlepp and Kate Bandettini in 'Paris'

MEDC is Recruiting!

The MEDC is looking for new members to join our committee to support our membership through the mentorship program, subsection coordination, and career fair and student engagement.



Mentor/Mentee pair Kyle Wong and Daniel Valencia

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, Tyler Clary at tclary@clarkpud.com, or visit us at: www.pnws-awwa.org/membership-groups/committees/membership-committee/. If you know of a fellow peer or colleague that is not a member and would like to join, they can find information on the AWWA website here: www.awwa.org/membership-volunteering/join.

Special Thanks to our MEDC Volunteers

First, a huge thanks to our outgoing board liaison **Chandra Hingston** for two years of dedicated service to the Division. We are excited to welcome Katie Dillon as our new board liaison. Thanks also to our current MEDC Committee Members:

Chris Young, Kyle Wong, Doug Schlepp, Michael Neher, Daniel Amador, Jorge Mirada, Clarisa Goheen, Damon Roth and Randy Black.

Interested in learning more about the MEDC?

Attend our next monthly call. We meet on the second Thursday **of the month from 12-1 pm.**

Contact Tyler Clary at tclary@clarkpud.com for the meeting invite. 📎

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).

New for 2025!

Section Committee Presentations

The YP Committee is engaging the various section committees to present monthly to share what they do, how they contribute to AWWA, and how individuals can get involved. Here is the tentative schedule of what to expect – make sure to attend to learn more!

- **May** – Water Quality
- **June** – Utility Management
- **July** – Cross Connections
- **August** – Water Resources

If you are a committee member or have insight you would like to share, reach out to the contacts below!

YP Wednesdays

The hit virtual meetings from the Northwest Oregon Subsection are transitioning to the Section YP's! Brainchild of Emma Martin (Vice Chair), the YP Wednesdays speaker or panel topics include: career development, water quality, data analysis & visualization, women in water, engineering or source water protection projects, regulatory compliance, and capital improvement projects. This shift to the section level will broaden the focus of speakers and topics from predominantly Oregon-focused work to that of the PNW region, allowing YPs throughout the section to hear about work potentially impacting their local area. Meetings are held virtually on the first Wednesday of every month at 4 pm (PST). Join the YP Mailing List to receive invites for upcoming meetings!

Please reach out to Emma Martin at emma.martin@hillsboro-oregon.gov if you would like to be involved in YP Wednesday planning or presenting.

PNWS Conference 2025

Meet and Greet

The YP Committee hosted a meet and greet the evening of May 7th at the Section Conference at The Mode Lounge in Boise, ID for First Time Attendees and YP's. Sponsored by Carollo Engineers, the night was a hit! This was a great opportunity for YP's and First Time Attendees to get a soft introduction to the conference and events.

Look out for our Wednesday night event at next year's conference in Tacoma.

YP Scavenger Hunt

This year's Scavenger Hunt had YP's running all over downtown Boise attending different client sponsored events. There were 32 attendees, mixed with new YP's, those that had competed before, and first-time attendees. We were pleased to announce the winners at Gatsby, hosted by HDR, to the teams with Most Point, Best Water Promo, and Funniest Photo:



Most Points: MajikZ



Best Water Promo: H2-waah



Funniest Photo: Team Name Pending

Tacoma 2026

The YP Committee is interested in sponsoring a YP Track at the next PNWS Conference in Tacoma! If you are a YP or would like to present on a subject related to YP workforce development and learning, please reach out or submit an abstract when the call goes out in the next few weeks. Abstracts are typically due in early July.

Student Involvement

Are you a student or know of a student who would like to present their work in water at the next conference in Tacoma? Please submit an email of interest to Cole Benak. Student poster participants have the opportunity to receive funding to present at the Annual ACE conference, which will be held in Washington D.C. in 2026.

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

The YP Committee is composed of young professionals across the PNWS. Subsection liaisons connect their local AWWA communities with the section-wide YP Committee.

We are seeking YP Liaisons for the following subsections:

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

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

Need Funding Support?

The YP Committee’s 2025 budget was designed and approved to assist the PNWS YP Community in:

- **Hosting YP Events –** Want to host an event? The YP Committee can provide funding to purchase food, reserve an event space, purchase prizes and other necessities, and more!
- **Awarding Scholarships –** Want to get ahead? Funding is available for leadership or training events/ programs, conference attendance, etc.

Complete and submit a Funds Request Form on the YP Committee webpage for consideration!

Reach Out!

The YP Committee meets virtually every fourth Wednesday of the month. Make it your new year’s resolution to stop in and see what we’re up to! Please email Emma Martin, YP Chair, or Cole Benak, Past Chair, if you have questions or are interested in joining the YP Committee in any capacity. Have an event that you want to advertise to Young Professionals? Reach out to Claire Litsky, our Interim Communications Coordinator, to have us help with outreach! 📧

Emma Martin

emma.martin@hillsboro-oregon.gov

Cole Benak

cbenak@carollo.com

Claire Litsky

clitsky@cityoftacoma.org

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Water Conservation Committee

The Water Conservation Committee hosted an informal meeting on Wednesday, May 7th in Boise, ID at the PNWS-AWWA 2025 Section Conference. The meeting was an opportunity to connect with fellow members in person, share ideas, and enjoy the conference kick-off. It was refreshing to see our colleagues off the computer screen, albeit difficult to find them without a zoom waiting room!

The following day, meeting attendees reconvened during the conference program *Conservation Track*. Presenters from across the section offered diverse perspectives on program management, water loss, and innovation.

Mike Buettner from City of Bend elaborated on how AWWA Management Standards have been used to effectively structure and support the conservation program in Bend. Amy Meut from City of Hillsboro shared an overview of how Hillsboro is implementing water conservation programs from youth engagement to leak notifications. Mike Uthe of Mueller demonstrated emerging and successful leak detection technologies. Karen Pappas of HDR provided insight into a One Water Guidance Manual being developed with the Water Research Foundation. Lastly, Jason Van Gilder from the City of Middleton discussed a case study on how a community splash pad was optimized to a recycled water system. Thank you to all those who attended these sessions and enriched the presentations with your questions.

Stay tuned for an invitation to the next meeting in August! For more information about the PNWS Conservation Committee please contact Melissa Fatland at mfatland@bendoregon.gov. 📧



Brittany Contreras – Chair
brittany.contreras@hillsboro-oregon.gov
Danlyn Brennan – Vice Chair
danlyn.brennan@hdrinc.com
Melissa Fatland – Secretary
mfatland@bendoregon.gov

Utility Management Committee

The Utility Management Committee hosted 14 presentations at the 2025 Annual Conference in Boise, ID, with committee members moderating the entire Utility Management track. The track covered a wide range of topics, from regulatory updates to workforce development and effective utility management. Thank you to all the moderators and presenters who participated and shared their expertise. Next year, at the 2026 Annual Conference in Tacoma, WA, we aim to continue presenting topics that are top of mind for those in our industry and utility leaders.

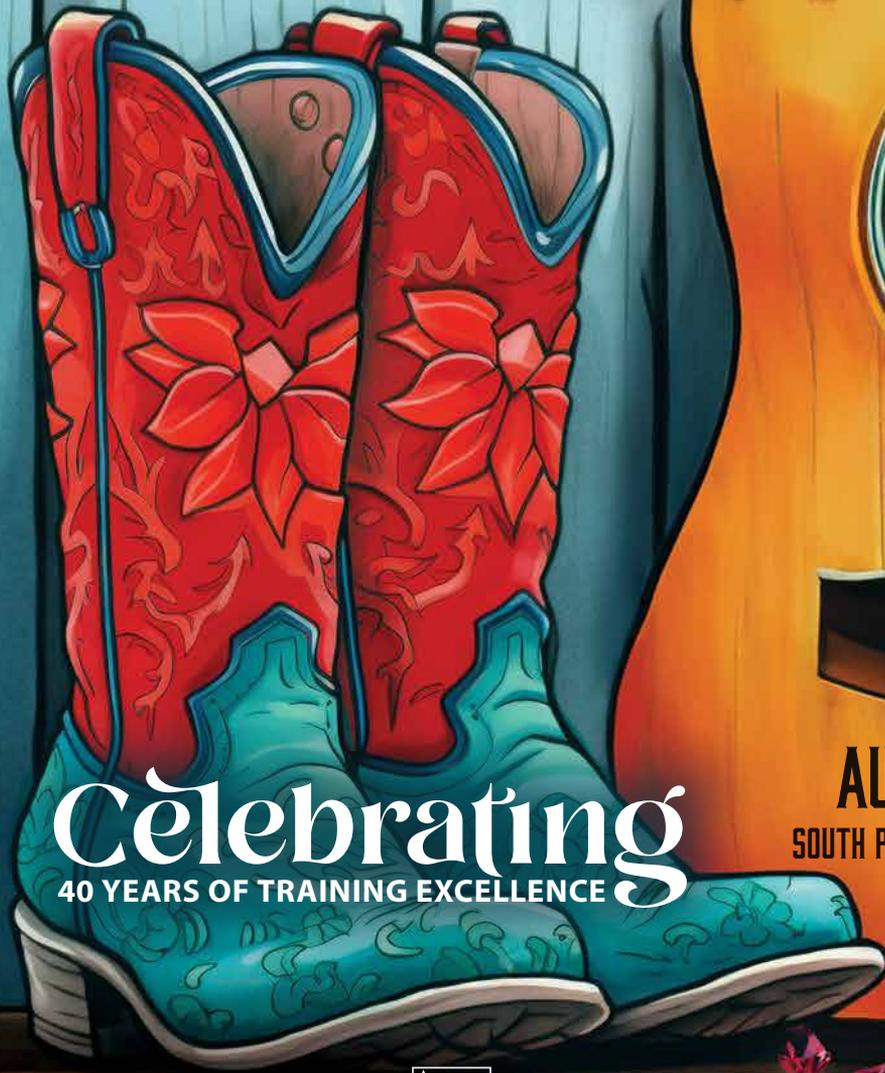
The Committee also met during the Conference to discuss plans for the 2025/2026 year. Our primary annual event is the January training event. The 2025 event focused on workforce development, and during our conference meeting, we discussed ideas for the 2026 event. Suggested topics included succession planning, Effective Utility Management (EUM), and PFAS funding. If you have a training event topic to share, would like to attend the training event, or are interested in joining our committee, please contact the Committee Chair, Joe Miller, at spinjoe@gmail.com.



Please stay tuned for announcements later this summer regarding the upcoming training workshop topic, date, and location! 📧

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Water Treatment Committee

Diverse Tour of Three Water Treatment Facilities in Boise, ID

By Tess Young and Julia Cummings

On a sunny Wednesday, May 7, water professionals from around the region gathered to tour three impressive facilities as part of the Water Treatment Committee's program at the PNWS Annual Conference & Exhibition. The pre-con event featured guided visits to the City of Boise's West Boise Water Renewal Facility, Veolia's Columbia Advanced Water Treatment Plant, and Veolia's Marden Water Treatment Plant. This year, 55 in-person attendees earned 0.5 continuing education units (CEUs) while exploring the diverse approaches to water renewal and supply in the Boise area.

The tour began at the **West Boise Water Renewal Facility** (WRF), a cornerstone of Boise's water infrastructure. Designed to treat an average of 18 million gallons per day (mgd) with a capacity of up to 40 mgd, the facility uses a comprehensive treatment process that includes screening, primary and secondary settling, disinfection, and solids handling. Recent upgrades have introduced ultraviolet (UV) tertiary treatment, enhancing effluent quality to near drinking water standards. This high-quality effluent is discharged into the Boise River, necessitating compliance with stringent nutrient limits for nitrogen and phosphorus.

The WRF is notable for its commitment to sustainability and resource recovery. Phosphorus is extracted from the waste stream to produce struvite, a valuable plant fertilizer. Anaerobic digesters convert solids into methane gas, which is utilized for heating and other operational needs within the facility. Dewatered biosolids are transported to the Twenty Mile South Farm for land application, supporting the cultivation of crops such as corn, alfalfa, and winter wheat. Additionally, the facility supplies reclaimed water to industrial customers, with future plans considering its use for irrigation or indirect potable reuse.



Everyone on the bus ready to see three awesome treatment facilities!



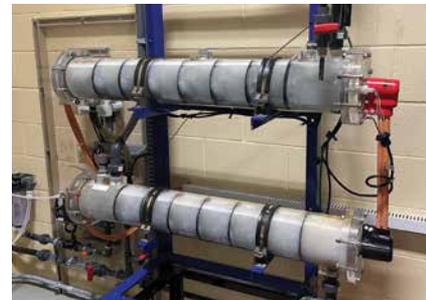
One half of our group touring a primary clarifier at WBWRF drained for maintenance.

The next visit was to **Veolia's Columbia Advanced Water Treatment Plant**, constructed in 2005 and recognized with the 2023 PNWS AWWA Large Project Engineering Award. The facility employs membrane filtration and on-site hypochlorite generation for disinfection, ensuring high-quality drinking water. In 2023, the plant underwent significant upgrades that expanded its capacity to treat up to 10 million gallons of water per day from the Boise River, enhancing its ability to meet the growing demands of the community.

The final stop on the tour was **Veolia's Marden Water Treatment Plant**, a 16 mgd conventional surface water facility that serves over 110,000 customers in the Boise area. Water is sourced from the Boise River and treated through gravity filtration. Veolia's licensed operators ensure continuous monitoring of water quality, adhering to best practices and regulatory standards to safeguard public health. The plant's long-standing performance and operator expertise



The other half of our group touring the aeration basins at WBWRF.



On-site sodium hypochlorite generation at Veolia's Columbia Water Treatment Plant.

highlight the importance of reliable, conventional treatment systems in maintaining public trust in water quality.

Thanks to the West Boise and Veolia operations teams for hosting these informative tours. The Water Treatment Committee, in partnership with the Water Science Division, looks forward to organizing additional facility tours throughout the year and during the 2026 Annual Conference. Plans are also underway for an in-person workshop on disinfection treatment in September 2025.

The committee's mission is to gather and share knowledge on water treatment facility design, operations, and their impact on system-wide water quality. For 2024–25, the committee is chaired by Ben Goeke (Calgon Carbon), Tess Young (Jacobs), Julia Cummings (Carollo), and Mac Gifford (Portland Water Bureau). Special thanks to Julia Cummings (Carollo) for organizing the West Boise WRF tour and Madeline Wyatt (Veolia) for organizing the tours of the Marden and Columbia Water Treatment Plants. 📷

D&I Committee

Raising the Bar Together: D & I Track Highlights from PNWS-AWWA 2025

By Kylie Bayer, D & I Committee Chair

The Diversity and Inclusion (D&I) track at this year's PNWS-AWWA Conference was informative, practical, and yes, fun. If you haven't attended one of these sessions before, consider joining us next year in Tacoma. Got a D&I topic you'd like to see – or present – at the 2026 conference? Email kylie.bayer@tvwd.org to help shape the track.

Community Engagement in Hillsboro

Tacy Steele (City of Hillsboro) and Isaac Estrada (Conсор) kicked off the track with a look at Hillsboro's community engagement efforts. They introduced the International Association of Public Participation's (iap2) spectrum of engagement and shared lessons from the city's successful Community Advisory Panel (CAP). The CAP helped guide water rate decisions while also increasing community awareness of rate structures. It was designed as a one-time initiative but left a lasting impact – one member even joined the Utility Commission. Thank you, Tacy and Isaac, for highlighting real-world engagement strategies we can all learn from.

Operator in Training at King County

Robert Tovar, Equity, Inclusion & Belonging Manager at King County, shared the success of the County's Operator in Training (OIT) Program. Created to address staffing needs and the retirement wave in wastewater operations, the OIT program offers paid on-the-job training for individuals with strong aptitude but no prior experience. Over 75% of participants have gone on to full-time roles. Robert emphasized shifting the mindset from preparing people for the workplace to preparing the workplace for

people. He reminded us, "By diversifying our workforce, we are raising the bar." Congratulations to Robert for receiving this year's D&I Committee Award and thank you for your leadership.

Leadership Lessons from Leadership Tomorrow

Mari Orama, Senior Consultant at Parametrix and a participant in the Leadership Tomorrow program, shared key takeaways from this Seattle-based leadership initiative. Her five messages struck a chord with attendees:

1. Let go to grow – delegation strengthens teams.
2. Lead together, succeed together.
3. Stop setting yourself on fire – burnout helps no one.
4. Progress over perfection – good enough is often just right.
5. Shift from 'I' to 'we' – lead with awareness and equity.

Thank you, Mari, for inspiring us to lead with intention and care.

Mentorship in Action

Henry Ricca, Senior Principal Engineer at Hazen and Sawyer, offered practical tips for being a strong mentor:

- Help mentees see the bigger picture and how their work fits in.

- Communicate often and clearly.
- Set realistic timelines and discuss priorities.
- Bring mentees along to meetings and events.
- Get out in the field and connect with operations teams.

Henry reminded us that supporting the next generation of water professionals is essential for a thriving industry.

TVWD's D&I Update

I wrapped up the morning sessions with an update on the Tualatin Valley Water District's D&I efforts. After conducting internal research to gauge employee understanding of D&I, we began shaping a strategy. However, in light of shifting federal guidance and executive orders, we've paused to await direction from our Board. Our goal remains to improve engagement and understanding while avoiding any hiccups in federal funding due to D&I-related compliance changes.

Thanks to everyone who attended and contributed to this year's D&I track. We're already looking forward to what 2026 will bring.

Interested in learning more about the D & I Committee? Reach out to Kylie Bayer, kylie.bayer@tvwd.org to be added to the monthly committee meeting that occurs the first Wednesday of the month. 



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- Hydraulic Modeling
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- Structural/Seismic Compliance
- GIS/Database Management

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Public Information Committee 2025 Excellence in Communication Awards

PNWS-AWWA Agencies Showcase Innovative Work in Communications, including Best-in-Show Winner, McMinnville Water & Light!

The Public Information (PI) Committee achieved success with its first biennial 'Excellence in Communication' award season. Utilities in the PNWS-AWWA Section submitted 30 examples of their best work from the previous two years (2023-24) in various communication categories including: Print, Digital, Audio/Video, a new category for Subsections, and a catch-all category for anything else called 'Wildcard.'

Awards were given out as part of the PNWS-AWWA 'Conference Kick-Off and Competition Night,' and almost all of the winning agencies were able to accept their awards in person. An awards table also showcased the winning entries throughout the conference and provided opportunities for other organizations to peruse ideas for inspiration. All submitting agencies were recognized on the Awards Display for their hard work and dedication to communication efforts.

This year's highest scoring entry was McMinnville Water & Light, in the category of 'Audio/Video Communications.' Their name will be added to the PI Traveling Best-in-Show Plaque for continued recognition in years to come. The Plaque has been 'travelling' since 2014, with over

a decade's worth of agencies listed who have scored the top prize for communication excellence.

Congratulations to the 2025 Winners. We look forward to seeing more communication excellence in 2027!

2025 Excellence in Communication Winners

Best in Show

McMinnville Water & Light
Emergency Water Response Trailer Video

Print Communications:

McMinnville Water & Light
Career Handouts

Digital Communications:

Regional Water Providers Consortium
Multilingual Emergency Water Shut-off Toolkit

Photography

Willamette Water Supply Program
Willamette Water Supply Project

Audio/Video Communications

Eugene Water & Electric Board
McKenzie Watershed Emergency Response Spill Drill

Integrated Communications Campaign

City of Lacey
Source Water Protection Week



Rainbow Water District

75th Year Anniversary Celebration Campaign

Internal Communications

Thurston PUD
Lead Service Line Inventory Communications Plan

Mason County PUD 1

2025 Strategic Plan

Subsection

PNWS-AWWA Cascades to Coast
Best Tasting Water Video

Wild Card

Eugene Water & Electric Board
Truck or Treat Event

Submitted by: *Tacy Steele,*
tacy.steele@hillsboro-oregon.gov

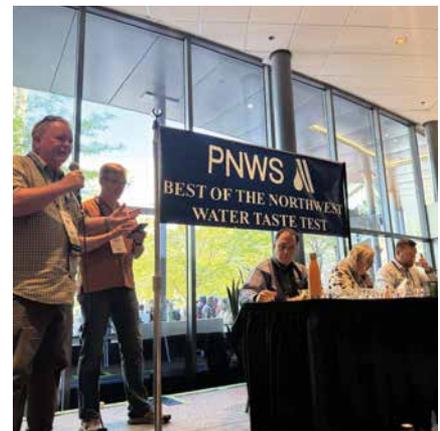
Water Quality Committee

This year's water quality track at the conference delivered a compelling blend of education, and innovation while encouraging connection within the section! The track had insightful presentations covering a wide range of topics – from ensuring compliance with the Lead and Copper Rule Improvements (LCRI) to preparing for upcoming regulatory changes in the Pacific Northwest.

The Water Quality Committee hosted the Best Tasting Water Competition. The competition was fierce with over 45 utilities competing in their local

subsection competitions, sending the 10 subsection winners to compete for the Best in the Northwest! After the judge's careful deliberation, The City of Spokane won the competition from the Inland Empire Subsection by a single point and will compete for the Best of the Best at ACE25 in Denver this June.

If you are interested in joining the water quality committee leadership to plan next year's water quality track and The Best of the Northwest Taste Test, feel free to reach out to the Chair, Aaron Duke at aduke@hazenandsawyer.com.



VALVE SELECTION 101

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Scholarship Committee

E&T Fund – The Source

The *PNWS Education and Training Fund* (E&T Fund), unmatched amongst the AWWA Sections, was first conceived in the early 70's by Gene Seibel and Bob Wubbena to support those interested in pursuing a career in the water industry through higher education. The first scholarship was given to Ron J. Wagner in 1970. Initially, the scholarships funds were collected and distributed each year. To provide predictability, a lasting legacy, and ensure that future generations could benefit from the donor's generosity, a trust fund was established in the late 70's. Initial seed money was obtained by standing at the door of the Spring Conference Convention Hall with collection plates. In the late 80's dedicated memorial funds were established, and fund management was transferred to Morgan Stanley. Since its inception, the fund has grown to more than \$2 million dollars.

Named scholarships are established with a minimum of \$10,000, proceeds from contributions less than that are distributed under the E&T Fund. In addition to the twelve memorial scholarships, five subsections and a committee have established named scholarships. These support the distribution of a dozen or more awards, more information about the memorials and scholarships can be found on the Section website www.pnws-awwa.org/careers/scholarship-application. Additionally *Craig Kelman and Associates*, publishers of *Water Matters*, and the Northwest Washington (NWWA) Subsection, offer direct funding of annual scholarships outside of the E&T Fund.

Scholarship – The Recipients

This year the Scholarship Committee, through these generous donations, was able to award \$61,500 in scholarships to fifteen individuals as follows:

Luis Campos*, \$6000

Allen A. Alsing Memorial, attending Clackamas Community College pursuing Associate's Degree in Water & Environmental Technology

Mya Schlepp*, \$5000 *Chris Uber, Allen A Alsing, and Alan Jones Memorials with E&T Fund*, attending University of Washington pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Engineering

Tyler Kleinsasser*, \$5000 *NWWA Subsection Direct Scholarship*, attending University of Washington pursuing Master's Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering, Engineering Management

Jennifer Hooper*, \$5000 *Southern Oregon Subsection Scholarship*, attending University of Washington pursuing a PhD in Civil and Environmental Engineering

Josh Gottlieb*, \$4500 *Inland Empire and Pacific Northwest Section Scholarships*, attending Portland State University pursuing a Master's Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering – Water Resources

Tracy Gerhart*, \$4000 *Southwest Idaho Subsection and Legacy Scholarships*, attending Clackamas Community College pursuing Associate's Degree in Water & Environmental Technology

Stefany Zelepuz*, \$4000 *Alan Jones Memorial, with the Past Chairs and Wubbena Family Scholarships together with the E&T Fund*, attending University of Washington pursuing a Master's Degree in Integrated Social Sciences – Public Policy

David Seelye*, \$4000 *John Aho Memorial, with the Lower Columbia Subsection and NWWA Subsection Scholarships together with the E&T Fund*, attending Clackamas Community College pursuing Associate's Degree in Water & Environmental Technology

Donavan McMartin*, \$4000 *Ron Heinke, Cynthia Driscoll, Kather Merry and Skiles/Pettie Memorials with the King County Subsection Scholarship*, attending Clackamas Community College pursuing Associate's Degree in Water & Environmental Technology

Wen-Qiang Zheng*, \$4000 *One Water – PNWS Designated Fund with the South Sound Subsection Scholarship*, attending Portland State University pursuing a Master's Degree in Civil and Environmental Engineering – Water Resources

Lawland Kubi, \$4000 *James Doane Family Memorial and E&T Fund*, attending Boise State University pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Policy and Administration

Kachinga Siliwimba, \$3000 *NWWA Subsection Scholarship*, attending Boise State University pursuing a PhD in Data Science (Hydrology)

Caitlin Lien, \$3000 *Bill & Teddy Beckman Memorial*, attending Oregon State Institute of Technology pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Civil Engineering

Finley Taylor, \$3000 *Archie Rice Memorial and E&T Fund*, attending Oregon State University, pursuing a Bachelor's Degree in Environmental Engineering

Adib Altallal*, \$3000 *Craig Kelman and Associates Direct Scholarship and E&T Fund*, attending Georgia Southern University pursuing a Master's Degree in Public Administration

Congratulations to all who received awards. Out of the fifteen scholarships, two recipients are pursuing a PhD, six a Master's, three a Bachelor's and four an Associate's degree. The Committee has made a concerted effort to support operator's pursuit of further education. If you know of an operator who is considering continuing education, please let them know about this opportunity for financial support.

**Denotes AWWA Membership, which is beneficial in the review and award of these scholarships. All AWWA members who applied this year, received an award.*

Scholarships – Future Opportunities

The committee awards scholarships annually to university and community college students assisting them in completing degree programs in fields of study relevant to future work in the drinking water profession. Student's entering their first year of school in pursuit of an Associate's degree together with those entering their Junior year or higher in pursuit of a Bachelor's, Master's or PhD are eligible to apply.

Applications are accepted January through February of each year, email Jason Branstetter scholarship@pnws-awwa.org.

E&T Fund – Donation(s)

You can donate through the E&T Fund to any scholarship or create your own. Don't forget about Corporate Matching Funds, if your employer provides such a benefit. Currently, the path to general donations begins here: www.pnws-awwa.org/store/donate and your contribution will ensure these



Left to right: Joel Cary, Adib Altallal, Lawland Kubi, Tracy Gerhardt, Kachinga Silwimba, Nick Belmont.

scholarships always have the means to continue providing much-needed funds to worthy college students entering the water works profession. Payments are accepted via Pay Pal or credit card.

Are you considering creating a named scholarship? Take advantage of corporate matching annually and double your impact. Reach out to Tom Keown thomas.keown@covingtonwater.com to set up targeted donation(s) or establish a Named Fund. If you,

your group, or employer donate \$10,000 or more, lump sum or over a period of time, the proposed draft of information needed is as follows:

Named Fund
Named for
If a Memorial - Individual History and Relationship/Significance to PNWS and the Water/Wastewater Industry as a whole
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Washington Water Utilities Council

AWWA Fly-In Brings 200 Water Professionals to D.C.

Water and wastewater professionals from across the nation made their way to Washington, D.C. in early April for the annual Water Matters Fly-In. The American Water Works Association participants joined 200 other national water organization advocates.

Water Week Policy Forum

During the Fly-In, participants attended the **Water Week Policy Forum**, sponsored by the National Association of Clean Water Agencies (NACWA), Association of Metropolitan Water Agencies (AMWA), AWWA, Water Environment Federation (WEF), Water Research Foundation (WRF), WaterReuse Association, and the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) also presented.

EPA leadership presented **five new policy pillars** introduced under the direction of the new administrator, Lee Zeldin:

EPA's Five Pillars:

1. Clean Air, Land, and Water for Every American
2. Restore American Energy Dominance
3. Permitting Reform, Cooperative Federalism, and Cross-Agency Partnership
4. Make the United States the Artificial Intelligence Capital of the World
5. Protect and Bring Back American Auto Jobs

These priorities mark a departure from previous EPA leadership, which emphasized climate change mitigation, air quality, water protection, sustainable development, and enforcement of environmental laws.

Notably, while water reuse was not listed among the five pillars, EPA leadership acknowledged its growing importance, particularly in leveraging advanced technologies to support all five goals.

The EPA also addressed ongoing work on **Waters of the United States (WOTUS)**. On August 29, 2023, the EPA and the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers issued a final rule amending the 'Revised Definition of 'Waters of the United States' in response to the Supreme Court's **Sackett v. EPA** decision. Currently, 24 states and the District of Columbia are implementing the rule, while the remaining 26 states are following the pre-2015 regulatory framework in alignment with the Sackett decision. The EPA is working to finalize the WOTUS definition during the current administration.

Congressional Meetings

Washington State/Washington Water Utility Council (WWUC) was well represented by a group of seasoned, highly engaged, and informed water professionals, including:

- **Lauren Adler and Jerrod Davis**, City of Tacoma
- **Clark Halvorson**, Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts



- **Tom Keown**, Covington Water District
- **Heather Pauley**, Kitsap PUD and Washington Public Utility Districts Association
- **Susan Saffery and Ellen Stewart**, City of Seattle
- **Beryl Fredrickson**, City of Spokane

The group conducted meetings with staff from **nine congressional offices** and notably secured an in-person discussion with **Representative Dan Newhouse (District 4)** – a meeting initially scheduled at the staff level. Due to scheduling constraints during a very busy season, Senate meetings were regrettably canceled or unable to be scheduled. Other Washington utilities met with Delegation members, carrying and reinforcing our messages.

Federal Water Policy Priorities

The WWUC representatives delivered a clear, united message on Washington state and national water utility priorities with congressional representatives and staff, firmly advocating for increased investment and protections for water systems of all sizes. Key federal asks included:

- **Full funding of the State Revolving Funds (SRFs):** Requested \$3.25 billion each for the **Drinking Water SRF** and **Clean Water SRF**, as well as \$65 million for the **Water Infrastructure Finance and Innovation Act (WIFIA)**. The WWUC representatives also urged Congress to halt the diversion (approx. 50%) of SRF funding through congressional earmarks. These funds are essential for addressing aging infrastructure, inflation, potential tariffs, PFAS treatment, addressing culvert-related utility relocations, maintaining access to financial tools such as Municipal Bond tax exemptions, and ensuring continued access to critical programs like BRIC (Building Resilient Infrastructure and Communities) without financially burdening water systems – especially for smaller and disadvantaged utilities.
- **Support for the PFAS Liability Protection Act (H.R. 1267):** This bipartisan bill would ensure that **PFAS manufacturers and polluters** – rather than local water systems – are held responsible for cleaning up environmental contamination. Some lawmakers expressed skepticism, pushing back that



not all PFAS compounds are classified as hazardous. The WWUC representatives followed up by providing scientific documentation and agency research underscoring the complexity and long-term uncertainty associated with the more than 10,000 PFAS compounds. Concerns were also raised about the necessity of EPA's 2024 strict PFAS regulations, despite evidence that some manufacturers have long known about the potential harms.

- **Support for the Water Risk and Resilience Organization Establishment Act (H.R. 2594):** This legislation would establish **minimum cybersecurity standards** for the water sector with (WRRO) support and oversight. The WWUC representatives shared real-world examples of cyber threats in Washington and Idaho, which were met with verbal support and acknowledgment of increasing threats.
- **Preserve the Federal Municipal Bond Tax Exemption:** Earlier this year, before the delegation's trip to D.C., news began to spread about the possible elimination of the Municipal Bond Tax Exemption funding authority. This is a longstanding federal investment tool, since the Revenue Act of 1913, that tax exempt municipal bonds are used to help fund infrastructure projects at reduced taxpayer and ratepayer costs. The WWUC representatives referenced a study by the University of Chicago detailing state- and district-level savings for essential services like water and sewer systems, schools, airports, and hospitals. Representatives from Washington State, including

Newhouse, Strickland, Schrier, and Gluesenkamp Perez, were commended for signing a **'Dear Colleague' letter** in support of maintaining the tax exemption.

- **Support for a Permanent Low-Income Household Water Affordability Program:**

Recognizing the ripple effect of inflation, regulatory costs, and the looming possibility of reduced federal support, the WWUC representatives stressed the importance of establishing a permanent affordability program under the **Department of Health and Human Services**. While this request may be deferred for future discussions, its importance and impact were underscored in every meeting.

Closing Reflections

The WWUC representatives represented its constituents with clarity, professionalism, and purpose – pressing federal lawmakers to act decisively on the funding and policies needed to protect the nation's water infrastructure. As federal priorities evolve, the message remains the same: safe, affordable, and resilient water systems are non-negotiable for public health, economic growth, and environmental stewardship. 🌊

Beryl Fredrickson, PE and WWUC Chair
 bfredrickson@spokanecity.org

Engineering Committee

Committee Meetings Schedule

Join our growing committee! If you have an idea for engineering-related learning or industry collaboration, please reach out to one of the officers directly, or join our next meeting to discuss the idea and hear about other learning opportunities in-process. Our monthly meetings are the first Wednesday of each month, Noon – 1:00 pm over Teams.

Boise Conference Success

Our engineering sessions were nearly full, and the presentations were engaging and interesting, covering a diverse range of topics. The Engineering Track sessions ranged from fundamentals to project delivery methods to hydraulic modeling and design examples. There was standing room only for some sessions. Look for the presentation materials in the conference proceedings for more details. The Engineering Committee thanks all the presenters, moderators, and other volunteers for making it a great conference! See the list of new officers elected at the conference at the end of this article.



Engineering in Excellence Awards

The engineering committee presented the award winners for the 2025 Engineering in Excellence Awards. These awards recognize excellence in engineering for water supply, treatment, conveyance, and planning projects. Persons, agencies, consultants, contractors, and water utilities who have recently completed a water project for a water supply utility or agency in Idaho, Oregon or Washington.

This year's Large Project (>\$8M construction) winner was Water Station 5! The project was for the City of Vancouver. The engineering team was from Jacobs and the contractor team was Rotschy Inc. The City's 5.3-acre site, Water Station 5, lies on a major City thoroughfare, operating as a water facility since the early 1940's. The original use was a federally operated water system which was developed to serve worker housing and the Kaiser Shipyards industrial area along the Columbia River. The new facility provides the City's water customers with a proud statement of resilience and commitment to the community in constructing handsome and functional infrastructure, which will provide water in the event of a significant disaster. The project highlighted overcoming construction challenges with sequencing, seismic resiliency, and promoted sustainability by salvaging timbers from a previous 1945 reservoir.

This year's Small Project (<\$8M construction) winner was Pikes Peak Reservoir. The project was for the City of Bellevue. The engineering team was from Consor and the contractor team was Harbor Pacific Contractors, Inc. This project replaced an aging seismically deficient reservoir with a new resilient reservoir in Bridle Trails State Park. The project saved the City millions of dollars by combining two pump stations into a single new pump station. The project also incorporated creative control valving and a new reservoir supply strategy that improves water quality and system resilience.

Thank you to all of our Engineering in Excellence applicants. We look forward to next year's submissions.

Looking forward to Tacoma 2026!

We are looking forward to the conference next year in Tacoma, Washington. We are interested in building tracks that align with your interests! Contact a committee member with your related or other theme, presentation, or presenter ideas.

New Officers

Greg Loscher – Past Chair

Bowen, Collins & Associates
Phone: (208) 939-9561
gloscher@bowencollins.com

Dan Shafar – Chair

Jacobs
Phone: (503) 736-4383
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Evelyn Choudhary – Vice Chair

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Phone: (913) 458-6103
choudhary@bv.com

Jesse Fields - Secretary

Tetra Tech
jesse.fields@tetrattech.com 





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Headquartered in Valencia, CA, with over 60 years of experience and 14 locations covering Washington, Oregon, Idaho, California, Nevada, Utah, Arizona and Texas, HASA leads the way in implementing best-in-class technologies. HASA's long and respected reputation providing superior water treatment products is known throughout water treatment industries including energy and power, agriculture, food processing, paper and pulp mills, water and wastewater treatment plants and more.

HASA's latest innovation delivers 15.5 wt% high strength low salt (HSLs) sodium hypochlorite to high throughput users of sanitation products. Read on to discover the benefits of using HASA's superior HSLs product. Users can expect lower operational costs, more consistent usage, less wear and tear on processing equipment, and fewer deliveries, leading to lower administrative and freight costs over time.

INTRODUCTION

The Tryon Creek Wastewater Treatment Plant (TCWTP) located in Lake Oswego, Oregon historically used 12.5 wt% traditional sodium hypochlorite for disinfection of its secondary treated effluent. From August 1, 2024, through September 12, 2024, TCWTP partnered with HASA to conduct a trial using HASA's 15.5 wt% HSLs sodium hypochlorite to observe the financial and operational impacts to their wastewater treatment process.

RESULTS

Typical sodium hypochlorite usage at the TCWTP during the same period in previous years averaged 134 gallons per day (GPD). After switching to HASA's 15.5 wt% HSLs, chemical usage averaged 85 GPD, using 36.6% less throughout the duration of the trial. This immediately highlighted a key benefit of using HSLs sodium hypochlorite by meeting process demand with less chemical consumption. HASA's HSLs product is guaranteed at a minimum of 15.5 wt% concentration at time of delivery, but would typically land between 15.5 wt% and 16 wt% strength upon delivery at a user's location.

In addition to using less product, TCWTP also observed that usage throughout the trial was more consistent. During the same length of time in 2023, nitrite levels averaged 2 mg/L with erratic and elevated sodium hypochlorite usage. Throughout the trial with HSLs sodium hypochlorite, nitrite levels also averaged 2 mg/L but less sodium hypochlorite was required, and levels stayed significantly more consistent, ultimately increasing operational efficiency.

Degradation of HASA's HSLs sodium hypochlorite was also tracked weekly throughout the trial. The TCWTP sodium hypochlorite tanks reside in an unenclosed area, with increased exposure to outdoor elements such as temperature swings and direct sunlight. Temperature combined with product quality are two of the most impactful aspects affecting sodium hypochlorite degradation. HASA's HSLs sodium hypochlorite was delivered to the TCWTP at 15.70 wt% and tested at 10.66 wt% at the conclusion of the trial, 43 days later.

FINANCIAL IMPACT

During the trial, TCWTP used 4,792 gallons of HASA's 15.5 wt% HSLs sodium hypochlorite. In 2023 during the same time frame and under similar conditions, TCWTP used 7,448 gallons of traditional 12.5 wt% sodium hypochlorite. The overall savings equates to approximately five less truck loads per year at TCWTP. These results are completely scalable, and would be more pronounced at wastewater treatment plants requiring larger volumes of sodium hypochlorite on an annual basis.

KEY TAKEAWAYS

The trial was a success, and users of HASA's 15.5 wt% High Strength Low Salt product can expect:

- Decrease in operational costs and increased efficiency
 - Significantly fewer truckloads delivered required to meet demand
 - More consistent usage with a higher strength and low salt product
- Added benefits of a low salt product
 - Slower degradation, more product delivered per delivery compared to traditional sodium hypochlorite
 - Reduction in chlorate, perchlorate and oxygen formation
 - Less overall wear and tear on pumps, valves, injectors and drip systems
 - Less salt added to soil for agricultural operations
 - Better formulations for compounding with other chemicals

TO LEARN MORE

Contact HASA, Inc., 3401 Industrial Way, Longview WA 98632, at 360-578-9300 and info@hasa.com. 



Welcome to the PNWS-AWWA's Annual Conference Recap

May 7-9, 2025 | Boise, ID



After a nine-year hiatus, Boise shines brightly hosting the Section Conference!

Talk about a stay out! May 2016 was the last time PNWS AWWA's annual conference took place in Boise and the wait was worth it. With the pandemic first cancelling in 2020 and then postponing in 2021, Boise is finally back in rotation to host our Annual Conference.

Full of new and returning attendees eager to participate, the event was an educational time full of networking, activities, and reminiscing with industry friends. Here are a few highlights from this year.

The conference opened Wednesday with three concurrent pre-conference sessions and tours on Water Treatment, Water Information Tech and Distribution. Sessions continued through Thursday and Friday offering 152 individual topics to choose from. The Boise Centre rooms were full of knowledgeable speakers and engaged attendees, asking questions and applying the content to their local operations.

Over 100 attendees kicked off their conference Wednesday morning at the Warm Springs Golf Club, just outside of downtown on the Boise River. Golfers had a great time playing in the sunshine, vying for first, second or third place, Longest Drive, or Closest to the Pin.

Back at the convention center, the Wednesday evening Competitions took place on The Grove, with hundreds of attendees watching the Pipe Tapping, Hydrant Hysteria and Meter Madness competitions. Inside the Boise Centre, the Best Tasting Water contest took place, with decisions for Excellence in Engineering and Excellence in Communication being awarded.

Sponsors and vendors filled the vendor hall on Thursday for an all-day convention. Spots sold out quickly this year and the vendor hall was full! The silent auction ran throughout the conference, offering an array of PNWS specialties 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 Boise's unique features. YPs visited several spots across downtown, including the Basque Block and Freak Alley, enjoying the hunt and the great weather.

Attendees participated in many award presentations and recognition events throughout the conference, with the Friday Awards luncheon concluding with the passing of the gavel from Section Chair Nick Belmont to Incoming Chair Joel Cary. Thank you Nick, for your commitment to excellence over the last year. Post lunch included competition in TopOps. All competitors enjoyed their time in the spotlight and the camaraderie with the other teams – good luck in representing PNWS well at ACE!

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, Ken Lykens, Board Members and supporting organizations like Veolia for supporting such a valuable event. See you next year in Tacoma!

PNWS-AWWA's
Annual Conference Recap
 May 7-9, 2025 | Boise, ID



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Conference Awards

As 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.

SUBSECTION ADVISORY COUNCIL AWARDS

Are presented to individuals who have done an outstanding job promoting subsection activities and provides an example of what involved participation looks like at the local subsection level in our three states.



Cody Scoggins – Southern Oregon Subsection

As chair of the Southern Oregon Subsection, Cody is a driving force in fostering professional development, particularly among Young Professionals via career fairs and training events. He actively assists with all the subsection events including their annual golf tournament, short school and Young Professionals cornhole tournament; all of which help build community and raise crucial funds.

Beyond the water sector, Cody serves as Secretary of the Southern Oregon Landscapers Association, organizing community volunteer events and promoting sustainable water practices. Cody embodies dedication and leadership. His work inspires others and drives meaningful progress in the water industry.

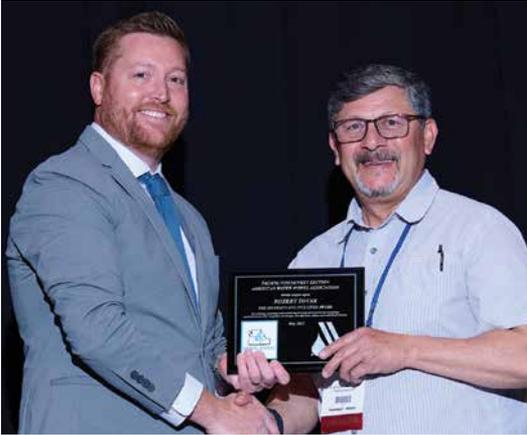


Shantel Broussard – South Sound Subsection

For over a decade, Shantel Broussard has been a cornerstone of the South Sound Subsection, demonstrating unwavering dedication and exceptional leadership. Her journey, spanning roles from PAC Liaison, Water for People and South Sound Subsection President, reflects her commitment to the organization. Shantel's impact is evident in her successful coordination of key events like Wheels for Water and the annual golf tournament.

Beyond her formal positions, Shantel tirelessly manages vital tasks, including CEU submissions, training coordination, and technical support for hybrid meetings. At Tacoma Water, Shantel's passion for apprenticeship programs and recognition shines through, as she nurtures the next generation of water professionals. Her extensive involvement with AWWA, including her leadership in the PAC and silent auction, further underscores her dedication to the water industry. Shantel's tireless efforts and positive influence make her an indispensable asset.

Congratulations to all Winners!



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 **Robert Tovar**. Robert is the Program Manager for King County Wastewater's Equity Racial and Social Justice Program and an active member of the PNWS Diversity and Inclusion Committee. In addition to overseeing overall wastewater division efforts, he has been responsible for developing numerous initiatives ranging from an equity and social justice employee forum to required training for new employees. He approaches his work with rigor and compassion – holding himself and the organization accountable to equity goals while being powerfully inclusive in bringing others into the conversation.



The Powell-Lindsay Award

The Powell-Lindsay Award is presented to someone whose exceptional service to the section is unparalleled. This award is presented annually at our conference to volunteers who have given many, many years of service to our industry and association. Selected by the past five recipients of this award, this year's honoree is certainly worthy.

Our recipient came to our section 15 years ago with a rich history of volunteerism and fundraising. They are a recipient of the Golden Acorn award which is given by the local PTA to volunteers in recognition of dedication and service to children and youth. If that wasn't enough our awardee in 2003 started a fundraising guild for the Seattle Children's Hospital that has raised over \$1.5 million for uncompensated care.

However, after joining our section is when this year's recipient really found a home for her distinctive skill set. She began her involvement on the planning committee for the 2010 conference in Tacoma where she saw several opportunities to not only raise funds for our local charities but also the section. She created the section's first sponsorship package with platinum, gold and silver levels that we still use today. A past Water For People Committee Chair and Philanthropy Advisory Council Chair she created the Wine For Water fundraiser that we use today along with its sibling the Beer for Water fundraiser.

In 2017 she joined the associations MAC Council, which is one of six councils in AWWA, representing service providers in the water industry. Becoming chair of this council allowed her the opportunity to MC the annual Water Industry Lunch at ACE as well as join both the AWWA Board and the board's Executive Committee.

Over these past 15 years she has been the recipient of the Kenneth J. Miller award for Water For People; the Lechner Award and the Heart and Soul Award. Currently completing her term as President of the

Lower Columbia Subsection this year's recipient is truly one of the most positive people you will ever meet. Please join me in congratulating **Kristin Kihs** of HDR as this year's recipient of the 2025 Powell-Lindsay award.



The Pioneer Award

The Pioneer Award is presented to the Young Professional displaying outstanding qualities in leadership, technical expertise and community involvement. Young professionals are individuals with less than 10 years' experience in the industry.

Our 2025 recipient exemplifies exceptional leadership and a strong commitment to community service and technical expertise. They actively seek opportunities not only for their own growth and development, but also to connect others to the water industry, fostering collaboration and planning for the future.

This dedicated leader isn't afraid to say yes. Challenges that may intimidate others actually empower them to work diligently, voice new ideas, and drive engagement. When tasked with training others on a complex, multi-level initiative, they not only took ownership but also ensured the information was presented in a well-informed, engaging, and accessible manner.

This Young Professional has not only brought fresh energy and passion to their immediate subsection but has also strengthened engagement across the entire Pacific Northwest YP community. They have actively contributed to growing our Section YP Committee by 400% in the past three years.

Our recipient is a key resource for Carollo Engineers. Our 2025 Pioneer Award is presented to **Cole Benak**.



The Heart and Soul Award

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.

These awards are about more than contributions or committee hours. They're about celebrating the kind of people who brings warmth, passion, and a deep sense of purpose to everything they do. People who don't just show up – they lift others up. People whose spirit and energy truly reflect the heart of our Section. Our first recipient is a connector, a motivator, and someone who never hesitates to roll up his sleeves and help make things better, whether it's through a training event, a golf tournament, or a volunteer project.

He has helped elevate the Southern Oregon Subsection's golf tournament into something much bigger than just a fundraiser – it's a celebration of community. And this year, he also stepped up to take on a new challenge as the newest member of our Education and Training Fund Board, expanding his impact beyond his home subsection and into the broader work of our Section. He leads by example.



He embodies everything of what it means to be part of PNWS. Please join me in celebrating this year's first Heart and Soul Award recipient **Cody Scoggins**.

This second award reflects the incredible collective impact of one organization. Despite being smaller than some of the big agencies in the room, this one organization led from the front. Over the past year, their staff has served in the following roles:

- Past Chair of the Section
- Chair of the Education & Training Fund Board
- Chair and Western Coordinator of the Subsection Advisory Council
- Chair of the Publications Committee
- Past Chair of the King County Subsection
- Secretary of the King County Subsection

Their commitment didn't just support our Section – it strengthened it. So, it's with gratitude and admiration that I present the second Heart and Soul Award to **Covington Water District** and the six incredible individuals who brought that commitment to life: **Tom Keown, Dan Sleeth, Caren Sleeth, Amerika Stodola, Jessica Breden, and Chris Guest**.



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.

This year's recipient started their career in the ditch with an underground utility contractor and then as an equipment operator for a water district in the Pacific Northwest. Recognizing this individual's leadership ability and skills, they were promoted within the district and eventually became the General Manager. Committed to providing safe drinking water, our recipient oversaw the implementation of chlorination and cross connection control programs at the district. The person was also instrumental in establishing the district as a regional water provider to multiple systems in the State of Washington. He was also among the first in the state of Washington to address the challenges of PFAS/PFOA in source water. As a leader with the Regional Water Cooperative of Pierce County in Washington, he encouraged the (then) inactive South Sound Subsection of PNWS-AWWA to become the thriving, active Subsection it is today. He was a past president of the Pierce County Regional Water Association and worked through the AWWA Washington Water Utility Council on legislation related to Washington Water Rights.

He has served on the PNWS Board of Directors as Washington Trustee, Board Chair, Association Director

and as Vice President of the American Water Works Association. He was a PNWS Powell-Lindsay Award winner in 2021. In 2024, after his retirement from a 40-year career at Lakewood Water District, he was awarded the Lifetime Achievement award by the Washington State Department of Health. Only semi-retired, when not attending Spring training in Arizona, he now works for RH2 Engineering as a Utility Resource Specialist. He is a fabulous husband to his wife Tina, dedicated father of daughters Linsey and Amanda, and loving grandfather. His volunteer service includes roles as a Board member of the Lakewood Community Foundation, President of the Western Washington Basketball Officials Association, President of the Clover Park Rotary, Mentor, Basketball Referee and creator of one fine Martini. Some of us may know this individual by 'Biggins', 'The Ref', or 'Friend', and now we all know our 2025 George Warren Fuller Award Recipient as **Randy Black**.

The Lechner Award

The Lechner Award recognizes a Service Provider Member who has demonstrated exemplary service to the drinking water community and to AWWA's mission and goals. Service provider members include manufacturers, consultants, and vendors.

This year's recipient has 40 years' experience in water, wastewater, groundwater, and irrigation projects as well as SCADA and control systems in both Oregon and Washington. Our recipient has led seminars for AWWA, ASCE, and ANSI/Hydraulic Institute. He has been on advisory committees for OHA and Oregon DEQ. He has been on AWWA standards committees for Horizontal and Vertical Pumps and Submersible Pumps and has written exam questions for NCEES. Between 1980 and 2019,

he presented over 60 times at water works schools in Newport, Clackamas, Albany, and Springfield. To date he has over 350 professional papers, articles and lectures to his credit.

In the past 30 years he has been an active member of ACES, AWWA, National Rural Water Association, Oregon Association of Water Utilities, National Society of Professional Engineers, ASCE, APWA, National Ground Water Association, AAEEES and the International Code Council. He is a past board member, Chapter President, State Vice President and State President of the Professional Engineers of Oregon.

Since 2004, he has owned and operated his own consulting engineering firm and continues to be an active part of our water community. Please join me in a round of applause as we recognize this year's John Lechner recipient **Ed Butts** from 4B Engineering and consulting. 

Subsection Advisory Council

As Nick Belmont passed the Section Chair's gavel to Joel Cary, the Subsection Advisory Council (SAC) also changed things up. Amerika Stodola moved to the SAC Vice-Chair position, while Bill Reynolds (affectionately referred to as 'North Bill') stepped into the spotlight as SAC Chair. We're still on the hunt for SAC Secretary to keep correspondence and information organized. The terms don't usually rotate this quickly but we're finding that short terms allow us to serve PNWS by showcasing new ideas and good practices, without the risk of burnout. Teamwork makes the dreamwork! We're looking forward to ringing in the new term with renewed vigor, focusing on improvements and efficiencies.

Speaking of 'teams', have you met the rest of our squad? The people that make it all happen seamlessly. This group is always busy promoting competitions and right now, getting ready for ACE in Denver.

Top Ops is run by Bill Reynolds ('South Bill') from Tacoma, and he hosted a nail-biting competition in Boise. Skagit PUD's 'Chloramine Machines' Mark Edwards, Riley Smith and Matt Walker walked away the winners and will head to ACE to compete with the rest.

Meter Challenge, run by Chris Hicks from Tacoma, surprised no one when Carlos Camacho, (also with Tacoma Water) took the win. Carlos has previous experience at ACE and will compete again this year. REPRESENT!

Tapping, recently taken over by Ray Foster with Spokane, was a huge success. Ray jumped in with both feet late in the game and delivered a great show. Boise's Tapping event will send three teams to compete in ACE this year.

Tacoma's 'Grit City Grind' Women's Tapping; Sarah Degidio, Jessa Messer, Sami Pielak and Brandon Corey will return for another year, 'Veolia Water Idaho'; Logan Brundy, Chase Coles and Tristen Pylican and TJ Boren will compete as our section winner. Finally, Tacoma's Men's Tapping Team Anthony Chappell, Mike McMaffrey,



Zach Shoemaker and Josh Yandle will also head to ACE.

Hydrant Hysteria is run by Pat Everham and had a *fantastic* assist this year by Ryan Withers at RH2. Ryan kept us entertained with heart pounding competition that even the Security Guard couldn't walk away from! Lake Meridian's returning National Champs Wesley King, Connor Nichols and Jeffrey Greer are headed back to ACE. Side note- and his lovely new bride Serena. Tacoma's Women's Hydrant team 'T Town Hysteria' Erika Geske, Jennifer Routh and Troy Newman will also attend with City of Vancouver's 'The Stubborn Port Caps' headed up with Nathanael Bambilla, Jared Caldwell and Nick Kujava.

Ryan Murphy with Tacoma recently stepped up as the **Gimmicks & Gadgets** coordinator. While this is a tough program to breathe life back into, Ryan is always up for the challenge and even happy to give speeches to those willing to listen. All you Operations Managers, Utility Directors and GM's watch out – we're hoping YOU can rally the troops to begin submitting their gimmicks. This year we'll focus on networking with utilities and reaching out to Subsection boards to ensure they are spreading the word.

Subsection Activity Awards

Congratulations to our amazing SAC Award Recipients. We awarded two

this year, one from Western Washington and one from Oregon. Our well-deserved recipients are Shantel Broussard with the South Sound and Cody Scoggins with Southern Oregon. Start thinking of your own Subsections next year. Do you have a contributor that stands out among the rest? Take notes and get a list going. Save it up for next year.

Competitions

PNWS Contacts

SAC Chair: Bill Reynolds (PACE)

SAC Vice Chair: Amerika Stodola
amerika.stodola@covingtonwater.com

SAC Secretary: *Open Position!*
Please let us know if you are interested.

Hydrant Hysteria: Pat Everham
teverham@ci.richland.wa.us

Meter Challenge: Chris Hicks
chicks@tacoma.gov

Pipe Tapping: Ray Foster
rfoster@spokanecity.org

Top Ops: Bill Reynolds (Tacoma)
breynolds@tacoma.gov

Gimmicks & Gadgets: Ryan Murphy
rvmurphy@tacoma.gov

Opportunities to Participate

Want to attend SAC meetings?

Interested in joining SAC?

Feel free to reach out at

amerika.stodola@covingtonwater.com.

For more information, please visit

www.pnws-awwa.org/member-groups/committees/subsection-advisory-council. 

Oregon Water Utility Council

The Oregon Water Utility Council continues to meet monthly on the third Thursday of each month (10 am – 1 pm) to monitor legislative efforts, public policies, and regulations on behalf of Oregon water utilities. Each month OWUC member utilities engage with one another, hear from League of Oregon Cities and Special Districts Association of Oregon, and receive updates from state agency representatives from Oregon Health Authority (OHA) and Oregon Water Resources Department (OWRD). Please reach out to Adam Denlinger, Chair, at adenlinger@srwd.org if you'd like to learn more about OWUC or to get involved.

2025 AWWA Fly-In

Several OWUC member utilities participated in the AWWA Fly-In Washington DC on April 7-9th. This year's Fly-In was the most well attended according to AWWA with over 800 water professionals converging on the nation's capital.

Meetings with legislative representatives focused on several areas of concern for AWWA:



- Infrastructure Funding – fully fund the Drinking Water State Revolving Fund (DWSRF)
- PFAS Protections – support the Water Systems *PFAS Liability Protection Act*
- Cybersecurity in the Water Sector – support a collaborative approach to cybersecurity
- Low Income Assistance – support a permanent low-income program for water

Rebecca Geisen (then OWUC Chair), Mike Buettner (Vice Chair), and Mike Grimm (national WUC representative) attended on behalf of OWUC. Several other OWUC members also attended the Fly In to advocate for water topics specific to their water utility and region.

2025 Legislative Tracking

SB1153 – Public Review of Water Rights Transfers

OWUC spent much of the legislative session tracking SB 1153 which focuses on water rights transfers and public reviews. This bill was concerning to municipal water providers as it required a new layer of public review process for all water rights transfers across the state, most likely increasing the amount of time for routine and day-to-day transfers when backlogs already exist. SB 1153 also included provisions for a tribal review process that were generally well-received and supported, with guidance, by OWUC member utilities.

A special thank you to Special Districts Association of Oregon and Oregon League of Cities for their



support in navigating one of the busiest legislative sessions in Oregon's history.

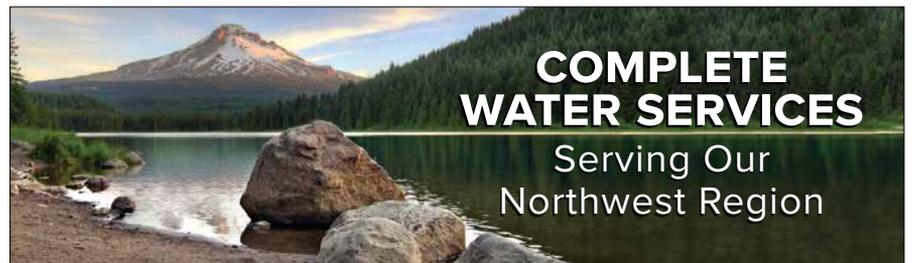
OWUC Officer Update

Adam Denlinger of Seal Rock Water District stepped in as new Chair of OWUC at the monthly OWUC meeting on May 22, 2025. Adam takes over for long time water champion and OWUC superstar Rebecca Geisen of Portland Water Bureau. Thank you, Rebecca, for your many years of service to OWUC and the Oregon water world! You will be missed!

Mike Buettner (City of Bend) steps into the Vice Chair role. As of this writing, OWUC is still seeking a secretary – treasurer volunteer. If you drink water, please consider getting involved.

OWUC Fall Meeting – Oregon Coast

OWUC tries to meet in person on a semi regular basis. The September meeting will take place along the Oregon Coast the week of September 18, 2025. Block your calendars now. We'd love to see you in person later this year. 



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Portland, OR | 503.227.1885
Seattle, WA | 206.684.6532



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Northwest Oregon Subsection

Chapter Ending, Chapter Beginning

Summer marks the return of warm weather (sometimes too warm), the school year ending, the start of a new fiscal year, and the changing of the guard on your local AWWA leadership teams. The Northwest Oregon subsection leadership is also experiencing change with Andrew Wentworth graduating from his role as President and sliding into the role of Past President. Dawn Nolan, DeEtta Fosbury, and Eric George have also all progressed into new roles of President, Vice-President, and Treasurer. We welcome Nichole Mehr as our Incoming Officer and Secretary for 2025-2026.

Thank you to the city of West Linn and McMinnville Water and Light for hosting lunch meetings and some fierce competitions so far this in

2025. Congratulations to the winners: Portland Water Bureau (Best Tasting Water) and Tualatin Valley Water District (Meter Challenge & Hydrant Hysteria). Thanks to all the competitors and we hope to see you again in 2026!

NW Oregon Heads to Boise

It was great to reconnect with so many folks both from the Northwest Oregon Subsection and others across the region at the Section Conference in Boise, ID this past May. Congratulations to subsection member Joel Cary for picking up the mantle as Section Chair. We know you'll lead us well, just as Nick Belmont did. Thanks to all the volunteers for leading such a great group of water professionals.

Looking Ahead

The next subsection events include lunch meetings at Tualatin Valley Water

District, the city of Carlton, and Sunrise Water Authority as well as a control valve training at the city of Oregon City and Short School at Clackamas Community College (see below). Make sure to keep an eye out for YP events, too. And did someone say [John Aho] Golf Tournament?

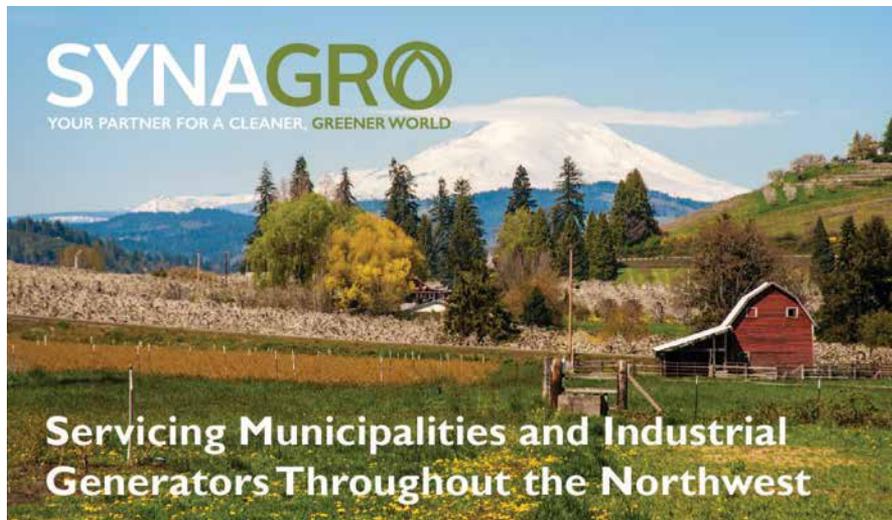
If your organization is interested in hosting or sponsoring a lunch meeting or other event, please reach out to DeEtta Fosbury at dfosbury@pnws-awwa.org.

Schoooooool's out for summer, Schoooooool's out forever

Not quite, Alice Cooper. There won't be any tests or homework, but Waterworks School (Short School) is scheduled for July 15-17 this year at Clackamas Community College. Come earn CEUs by listening to great presentations and trainings from local experts. And don't forget about the Vendor Fair! We'll see you there!

Getting Involved

Currently, the subsection is recruiting volunteers! Have an interest in helping with competitions, have a unique or fun idea, or just want to lend a hand? If so, please reach out to Dawn Nolan at dnolan@pnws-awwa.org to discuss ways to get more involved. 🙋



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Northwest Washington Subsection

Hello and happy summer! It's hard to believe we're almost half-way through 2025. The end of 2025 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

Recap:

The NWWA Subsection has hosted several workshops this spring:

- The first workshop of the spring was the **Math for Operators** held virtually on March 25th covering the basics of math used by water and wastewater operators, as well as reading and generating Process and Instrumentation Diagrams commonly used in the industry. Kenny Packard and Jeff Lundt were the speakers and did a great job leading the class!
- The **2025 Basic Waterworks Workshop** was held virtually on April 2nd and covered topics including an overview of water systems, regulations and contaminants, water sources, hydrology and hydraulics, water treatment and disinfection, water quality monitoring, water quality protection practices, construction and maintenance, and disaster response. Peg Wendling, Jim Spooner, Beth Mende and Jeff Lundt were the instructors.
- The **Water Treatment Workshop** was held in-person at Skagit PUD on April 23rd. Jeff Lundt, Kenny Packard, and Dave Price led the workshop covering topics such as iron and manganese removal, gravity filter media, chemicals and chemical systems, disinfection basics, onsite sodium hypochlorite generation, and hands on demos for metering pumps, analyzers and onsite hypo generation equipment.



Jeff Harmon demonstrating an onsite hypochlorite generation system



Lee Odell on Trouble Shooting Iron and Manganese Removal

- NWWA Speakers Dan Burwell and Jeff Lundt presented the Training-in-a-Box Water Storage Basics as a pre-conference workshop at the PNWS Conference in Boise.
- The third workshop was held on May 20 at Northshore Utility District in Kenmore covering all things related to **Control Valves**, including valve function, maintenance, troubleshooting and management. Patrick Miller and Ray Velasquez from Cimco-GC Systems were the speakers and did an amazing job covering a wide range of topics such as basic hydraulics, main valve, pressure reducing valves, pressure relief valves, hydraulic flow control, and pump control valves.



- The final workshop of the spring was the annual **Western Washington Short School and Trade Show** held June 3rd and 4th at the Tulalip Resort and Casino with five concurrent tracks each day covering topics ranging from Water Treatment and Distribution, Wastewater Treatment and Collections, Operations and Maintenance, Corrosion Prevention, Asset Management, Start-up and Testing, Water Chemistry, Tanks and Storage, Pumps, Valves, Odor Control, and SCADA/Instrumentation. Many participants enjoyed a tour of the Everett Wastewater Treatment Plant in the afternoon on Tuesday, June 3rd. All the workshops were a success with amazing speakers and great turnouts!

Upcoming:

We have a full slate of training opportunities already planned or in development for fall 2025, including:

- Fire Hydrant Maintenance Workshop at Northshore Water District in Kenmore on September 9th
- Basic Waterworks for Water Board Officers and Managers – September 2025
- Water Storage Basics – October 2025 (online)
- San Juan Island Workshop – October 2025 (in-person)
- Water Distribution – November 2025 (in-person)

The NWWA Subsection is committed to bringing you high-quality, affordable training. The complete training schedule will be posted to the PNWS Section website at 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 jalundt53@gmail.com and eschey@kingcounty.gov.

Events

Recap:

On April 17th, the NWWA Subsection hosted a Marysville Water Treatment Plant Tour at the Stillaguamish and Sunnyside Water Treatment Plants. The Stillaguamish WTP sources its

Subsection Updates

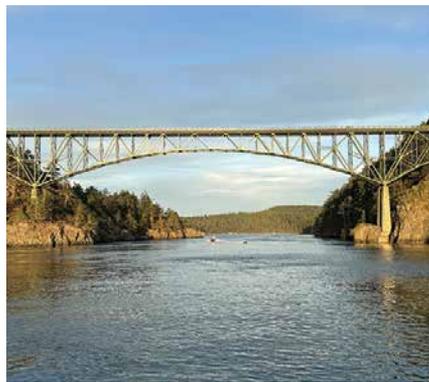
water from the Stillaguamish River using a Ranney Collector which is then pumped five miles to the treatment facility, which uses a Zenon low-pressure ultrafiltration membrane system. The Sunnyside WTP which is sourced by two deep water wells and treated by a Tonka Green-sand filter system. It also has a Clortec Onsite chlorine generator and a site wastewater lift station that handles backwash water. Attendees enjoyed food, beverages and socializing after the tours at the incredible 5 Rights Brewery in downtown Marysville!



Upcoming:

Waves for Water Dinner Cruise – Wednesday, September 10th

The NWWA Subsection is pleased to announce that we are planning our third annual 'Waves for Water' fundraiser for Wednesday, September 10th! 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 this summer and be sent out via email. Space is limited so register early!



Please continue to check our website for updates: 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.

New Members

If you are a new member to the NWWA Subsection, we would love to connect with you! Please reach out to our President and New Member Chair, Nick Leininger at 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:

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

Monthly Meetings

The NWWA Subsection holds monthly meetings virtually on the second Tuesday of each month at 1:00 pm, 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. 

Inland Empire Subsection

Hello and Happy almost summer from the Inland Empire Sub Section (IESS). We have had a busy few months so far this year. On February 26th we held the 21st annual truck rodeo. A total of 110 local operators and water purveyors earned .6 CEU's as they learned about cyber security, chlorine residual measurement, confined space safety and more. The meter challenge, best tasting water, and best truck competition were part of the day's events. Quinten McLure with Whitworth Water District won the meter challenge and represented IESS at the annual PNWS competition where he finished 7th. The City of Spokane was awarded the best tasting water from IESS and then went on to win the PNWS section conference best tasting water. Now the City of Spokane will compete for best tasting water at ACE 2025.

We are starting off the board calendar year with a full board by adding Ryan Webster from the City of Coeur d'Alene Water Department as director 5.

Our annual recognition banquet on May 14th celebrated those that volunteer and help make the IESS successful. We honored our Muddy Boots winner Chris Hawkins for his dedication to replacing over 10,000 water meters in Spokane County Water District #3. The water drop award for outstanding support staff went to Tim Lewis, a GIS technician for the City of Spokane and his work on the lead and copper service line inventory.

IESS events continue throughout the summer. Our annual golf tournament is set for Friday July 25th at Prairie Falls Golf Course in Post Falls Idaho. We have all members, spouses, kids, significant others, picnic in August and finish out with our NO WATER NO BEER event on September 11th.

Current Board

- Jessica Waller** – JUB Engineering – Past President
- Doug Greenlund** – City of Spokane Water Department – President

- Kyle Meschko** – Keller Associates – Vice President
- Eric Delbo** – Spokane County Water District #3 – Director 1
- Brady Stewart** – Vera Water and Power – Director 2
- Sheri Miller** – Washington State Department of Health – Director 3
- Preston Love** – Consor – Director 4
- Ryan Webster** – Coeur d'Alene Water – Director 5
- Stephanie Foster** – City of Spokane Water Department – Secretary/Treasurer

The board meets in person on the second Wednesday of each month. Reach out to Doug Greenlund dgreenlund@spokanecity.org, Kyle Meschko kmeschko@kellerassociates.com, Eric Delbo edelbo@pnws-awwa.org, or any board member for more information on meetings or other events. 📧



Chris Hawkins Muddy Boots winner



Tim Lewis Water Drop winner




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King County Subsection

Time to put away your raincoats because summer is officially here! The King County Subsection is looking for new ways to serve our members and continue getting people involved in our amazing Subsection. We encourage you to get involved and come meet the awesome people that make up our industry!

Events

The 13th annual **Water Olympics** was held on March 28th at the Formula Brewing in Issaquah, WA. Attendees enjoyed good conversation, food, beverages and competitions along with the best tasting water competition, meter challenge and hydrant hysteria.

Thank you all for participating and attending! Thank you to all the sponsors; Consor, Core & Main, David Evan & Associates, Ferguson Water Works, Hazen, M&H Company, PACE, RH2, Romac, Stantec, Sybis, Victaulic Infrastructure, BHC for supporting this King County Subsection-AWWA event. This event wouldn't have happened without their support!

Meter Challenge: The Meter Challenge was held outside this year for spectators to enjoy. First place went to **Matt Davis** with **Northeast Sammamish Sewer and Water District**. Congrats to Matt!

Hydrant Hysteria: Lake Meridian Water District was the only team this year, with Connor Nichols and Wesley King, along with Coach Jeff Greer. Lake Meridian competed at ACE in June as the returning National Champs!

Best Tasting Water Competition: We had a total of seven 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 **Union Hill Water Association!** **Covington Water District** took



home the trophy for Best Tasting Water for treated systems.

A special thank you to Cheryl Capron, Rita Hulsman and Rad Artono who were our wonderful judges that represented various parts of the water industry, and judged samples of water from each contestant's distribution system.

For questions related to King County Subsection competitions, please contact Tyler Howard at tyler@lakemeridianwater.com or 253-631-3770.

Education and Training

The Board has been making a push to host more education and training events for the Subsection, including both 1-hour virtual lunch and learns and full day in-person CEU courses! The following education and training events have been hosted so far in 2025:

CEU Course – All About Ductile

Iron Pipe: Joshua Blount with the Ductile Iron Pipe Research Association presented on a wide variety of topics ranging from thrust restraint for DIP to corrosion and corrosion control with DIP in a 0.6 CEU course at the Brightwater Center on February 13th, 2025.

Lunch and Learn – Pipeline Leak Detection and Condition

Assessment: Doug McClintic with Pure Technologies/Xylem educated attendees on how utilities can benefit from proactive leak detection and condition assessment of their critical pipeline assets on February 25th, 2025.

Lunch and Learn – Pipe Joining

Methods: Chris Portner and Steve Morrision with Victaulic covered various methods of joining

Subsection Updates

pipe used across the industry including cover welding, flanging, threading, and the use of Victaulic mechanical coupling. Coming soon!

For questions related to King County Subsection education and training events, please contact Henry Ricca at hricca@azenandsawyer.com or 919-863-5812.

What We Are Looking Forward To: 2025 30th Annual KCSS Golf Tournament

The 2025 PNWS-AWWA Charity Golf Tournament is officially scheduled for September 19th at the Auburn Golf 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. We are looking forward to exciting NEW 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, Marius Eugenio Jr. at marius.eugenio@spwater.org.

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 4 lunch and learns (non-CEU) and

3 CEU classes within the calendar year. Look out for further announcements and registration information. For questions related to classes, whether that's an idea for a class, or suggestion for speakers, or general information about training and CEU's, please contact our Program Director Henry Ricca at hricca@azenandsawyer.com or 919-863-5812.

KCSS Board Transitions and Recruitment

Board transitions have taken place, and we are excited to welcome our new board members, Marius Eugenio Jr. as our new subsection secretary and Rad Artono as our new subsection treasurer. We want to give a huge thank you to our outgoing board members, Chris Guest (secretary) and Jessica Breedon (treasurer). We will miss you!

We are always looking for members to join our committees to help deliver new and exciting opportunities to our members. Please reach out to Beth Mende at emende@kingcounty.gov if you are interested in becoming a KCSS Committee member in our Networking, Education and Training or Competitions Committees. 

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Leading the Way:

How the TRANSFORMATIVE Water LEADERSHIP Academy PREPARES Utility Professionals for FUTURE WATER Challenges



The Transformative Water Leadership Academy (TWLA) is a collaborative program of AWWA and the WaterNow Alliance. TWLA intentionally brings a diverse selection of water leaders together to explore issues of public health protection, environmental stewardship, the future of the water workforce, community engagement and public trust. The program encourages innovative, solutions-oriented thinking. Participants develop a capstone project to support their community and utility, while also building their network of water sector changemakers. Not only does the program impact local utilities and institutions, but it also empowers the

next generation of water leaders to be better equipped to face the challenges impacting the future of the sector. TWLA instills confidence in its future water leaders, expands professional networks, and encourages action.

The challenges facing the sector prove a need for outside-the-box thinkers. It can be difficult to find a voice to express new ideas, and it can be lonely to be the sole innovator in a sea of *this is how things have always been done*. TWLA provides water professionals with the confidence to be the catalysts for change at their utility.

Jenyffer Vasquez, a graduate from the 2024 cohort, shared how her participation in TWLA expanded her confidence in advocating for change and sharing newfound perspectives.

Before TWLA, I rarely had the confidence to lead or speak up about issues important to me. TWLA provided an opportunity to be exposed to open dialogue and conversations with other water professionals that enriched my perspective. It was so rewarding to hear stories and challenges that were similar to mine in a room of water sector leaders across the nation. Through the program, I learned how important it is to not only to be in the room, but also to raise your hand and bring others in! Since graduating, I've been promoted [and] see the endless possibilities in getting involved and the impact that I can make in my role. I am no longer shy to share new ideas on enhancing water use efficiency

programs but also workforce development strategies. I have led our team in a newly established workforce development task force, working on enhancing opportunities to highlight the water industry and continue partnerships with local colleges. This program helped completely shift my perspective on leading and illustrated that we all have the power to grow into these roles!

By surrounding herself with diverse leaders of shared experiences, Jenyffer was able to feel more comfortable stepping into a leadership role, knowing she was supported by those around her. Each cohort consists of individuals from diverse regions all over the country, representing both large to very small systems, embodying the communities they serve. The TWLA provides a platform for participants to discuss big issues with their peers, and to bring their own unique, lived experiences into the conversation. These differing perspectives expose the cohort to new ideas to implement in their own community and enhance their capacity to listen to others to lead more effectively.

A motivator for establishing the Transformative Water Leadership Academy in 2022 was to sustain the water workforce and equip the next generation of water workers with leadership skills to advance their career within the sector. It can be difficult to be sure-footed in the next career step, and TWLA provides the tools and resources for participants to explore their career ambitions while in the program. With a mentoring program and a network of experienced professionals, TWLA graduates are brought into a supportive culture that supports their career goals.

Jori Nelson, a graduate from the 2024 cohort, reflected on her career shift during her participation in the TWLA.

Prior to joining TWLA, I found myself frequently being one of the youngest people in the room, feeling like an imposter at times, but also striving to figure out my way to the next level of my career. The most valuable part of TWLA for me was gaining connections with other water



industry professionals who were in similar situations in their careers. Since completing the TWLA, I have moved into a consulting position and continue to work with water utilities on a daily basis. When I moved to a different region of the country (Washington State), where I did not know anyone professionally, I initially felt like I was starting over. But, through TWLA, I realized a big part of my adjustment was going to be relying on my network that existed across the country.

For Jori, taking a career leap, and moving across the country, was empowering because of her ability to rely on the network she built within TWLA.

The TWLA leaves an impact on more than just the participants during their time in the program. The program

leaves a lasting impact on the individual, utility and the community. The TWLA program highlights the importance of community-minded leadership, through the implementation of a capstone project. Daniel Koge, of the Honolulu Board of Water Supply and a 2023 TWLA graduate, shares the value of implementing his capstone on his own personal leadership and the sustained impact it has on his community.

Before TWLA I never truly believed in my ability to transform my community. TWLA gave me the direction, resources, mentorship, and vision to build my capstone project as a program framework to establish a local summer program under the "Watership" moniker (a play on 'water' and 'internship'). Succession planning



is a marathon not a sprint, and TWLA's exposure to concepts and ideas beyond the typical short-term action planning allowed me to truly address the philosophical question; why water? TWLA's welcoming atmosphere, access to once-in-a-lifetime experiences and resources beyond one single organization, and fostering of lasting professional relationships is the same vein that my Watership was built upon for college students looking for a career; you better the people and their vision, you better the future. As both a beneficiary and leader of

this recipe for success, I'm better equipped with the understanding of my utilities strengths and have more confidence to undertake the leadership role for Watership and continue the mission of providing safe, dependable, and affordable water to our customers. Now on its second cohort this summer, neighbor island water utilities have taken notice of Watership's successes and expressed interest in collaborating with our team to do so, further validating the pay-it-forward real-world value that TWLA (and its capstone) brings to water

leaders. Access to such impactful and high-quality trainings for early-mid career professionals are few and far between, let alone Hawaii residents, and I am forever grateful for the opportunity to participate in TWLA.

While Daniel's continued work to empower his community and strengthen the water workforce is commendable, it's not unique – and that's a good thing. This is the culture the TWLA builds across the nation. TWLA can be categorized as professional development, however, it's so much more than that. TWLA instills the values of connection, collaboration, and innovation to transform the water industry.

As the water sector continues to evolve in response to pressing challenges – climate, workforce transitions, and the growing need for more collaboration – the TWLA is vital to the future of the water workforce. Each new cohort strengthens the culture of the TWLA, by empowering a network of leaders equipped with tools, confidence and connections to drive change. As the program continues to grow, it will only further its impact on leaders, local utilities and communities, to shape a more sustainable and resilient future for the water industry.

For more information on TWLA, email Lauren Steavpack, lsteavpack@awwa.org. 

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