

Pacific Northwest Consortium on Plastics

Fall 2021 Newsletter



Pacific Northwest Consortium on Plastics Fall Teleconference

Our focus for the fall teleconference will be on solutions to plastic pollution. We are thrilled to announce that we will hear remarks on recent and future efforts to reduce plastic pollution and its impacts on the environment from the honorable Senator Jeff Merkley (D-OR). In March 2021, along with Representative Lowenthal, Merkley reintroduced the Break Free From Plastic Pollution Act (H.R. 2238, S.984). He will discuss current and future plans related to this proposed legislation.

We are very excited to also hear from Nora Nickum, Ocean Policy Manager at the Seattle Aquarium, who will present on 2020 and 2021 bills passed in Washington state to reduce plastic pollution and waste, and from Heather Trimm, Executive Director of Zero Waste Washington, on work to pass extended producer responsibility legislation in Washington in the upcoming legislative session, and implications of WA policy for improving our recycling system and reducing waste and pollution.

SETAC North America 42nd Annual Meeting

November 14th - 18th, 2021 • Virtual Conference • SciCon4



Many sessions focused on plastic pollution, from micro to nano to recent efforts working towards solutions will be on the docket at the Society of Environmental Toxicology and Chemistry's annual meeting. Mark the sessions and events below on your calendar, details at: <https://scicon4.setac.org/daily-schedule/>

- Microplastics Interest Group Topical Mixer
- Fate and Effects of Nano- and Microplastics in the Environment
- Microplastics Research Priorities: Detection, Analysis, and Effects
- Nanoplastics Part I: Fate, Transport, and Exposure
- Nanoplastics Part II: Effects and Risks
- Where the Rubber Meets the Road: Detection, Toxicity, and Management of Tire-wear Microplastics
- Microplastic Monitoring and Risk Characterization for Management
- Microplastics: Standards, Big Data, and Analytical Methods in Research



Left: Dr. Win Cowger, our first presenter at our annual Summer Teleconference.
Right: Dr. Shelly Moore, our second presenter.

PNWC Summer 2021 Teleconference Summary

At the July teleconference we learned all about data on “trash” and how challenging it is to use because we are in need of better data standardization. Dr. Win Cowger discussed how data science can help turn trash data (not trashy data) into knowledge and propose standards and how he and others are leveraging big data tools such as open data, Trash Taxonomy, AI, machine learning, web applications, etc. to turn data into action!

We then heard from Dr. Shelly Moore, a scientist at the San Francisco Estuary Institute and Executive Director at the Moore Institute for Plastic Pollution Research, on the CA Trash Monitoring Methods Playbook. It serves as a reference for trash monitoring practitioners and agency staff interested in learning more about the considerations for selecting suitable trash monitoring programs. Working hand-in-hand with approaches discussed above by Cowger (who is starting a post-doc at the Moore Institute), the methods from the handbook will increase the comparability of the data collected so that spatial and temporal comparisons are more seamless.

We look forward to hearing more about their work in the future!



Oregon State University
Marine Studies Initiative

