

Gathering Our Voice: Building on Success in North Central Washington 2009 Framework

What is the purpose of this program? This project is designed to build the infrastructure that will create inspiring stories for the future by developing a strong network of story gatherers and story tellers throughout North Central Washington. Together, IRIS and our partners will create the story of how acts of environmental, community and economic stewardship contribute to a vital future in this place.

What is the difference between stewardship and sustainability? Stewardship means taking responsibility to assure the existence of something, e.g., full range of natural diversity, community cooperatives, critical local businesses. Stewardship encompasses a continuum of actions to which we all contribute as individuals and members of a family, business, organization, and community. Sustainability is an outcome of good stewardship founded on a holistic approach to living and problem solving. Both concepts address individual and community vitality, environmental health, and economic prosperity.

How will we identify stories that illustrate these concepts? Over the next three years we'll work as a region to discover principles of stewardship and sustainability by gathering stories about past and present practices that: 1) integrate social, environmental, and economic values, 2) preserve choice and opportunity for future generations, 3) acknowledge our dependence upon healthy natural ecosystems, and 4) create thriving communities where people feel safe, have meaningful work and relationships, and enjoy a healthy environment.

Specifically, we'll look for stories that maintain and strengthen our community, economy and environment - stories of diverse people adapting, learning, and cooperating. And stories from old-timers and newcomers alike that show how the acts of appreciating, enhancing, and hoping shape our future. Self-reliance, inventiveness, and building on the good work of others will be cornerstones of many stories we find along with big-picture thinking, saving all the parts, and considering interactions.

How will we choose interviewees and interview questions? Because it takes many types of stewardship to make NCW thrive, we'll interview a broad spectrum of people representing diverse occupations, lifestyles, and geographic locations within NCW. We'll use both general interview questions and those that are specific to each topic area listed below to guide each interview. And at the end of each year we'll roll up our results and tell one *Signature Story* highlighting what we discover about stewardship success in our region.

Agriculture
Forestry
Fisheries
Water
Energy
Mining

Business
Public Safety
Transportation
Education
Habitat Conservation
Government
Community

Health Care
Recreation
Social Services
Communications
Arts & Culture
Housing

Project Overview 2009 – 2011

Convene team to develop project framework and questions	January
Begin publicizing project and recruiting local teams	February
Host regional storytelling series	March
Form signature story team, provide training and launch projects	April
Expand Gathering Our Voice portion of IRIS website	April
Distill and produce 2009 <i>Signature Story</i>	September
Duplicate, distribute and market products	November
Evaluate and adapt project for 2010 & 2011	December

Project Partners

IRIS, a committee of the North Central Washington Resource Conservation & Development Council dedicated to the development of sustainable rural communities, serves as the convener and project manager. Other partners include representatives from the business community, museums and libraries, education and technology, visual and performing arts, and landowners and managers across the region.

2009 Signature Story Leadership Team

Brenda Abney, Executive Director, Wenatchee Valley Museum & Cultural Center
Joan Alway, Executive Director, Icicle Fund
Rita Brown, Development Director, Northwest Public Radio
Rosemary Cairns, Research Associate, Royal Roads University
Cheryl Dawes, Assistant, Initiative for Rural Innovation & Stewardship
Kathleen Deason, Watershed Manager, Foster Creek Conservation District
Bridget Egan, Membership Coordinator, Chelan Douglas Land Trust
Ben Field, Owner, New Media Systems
Guy Evans, Executive Director, Sunshine Institute
Malcolm Keithley, Owner, M&M Productions
Marilyn & Richard Ries, Board Members, Okanogan County Historical Society
Ferne Rosenblatt, Board Member, Okanogan Valley Land Council
Kathi Rivers Shannon, Public Relations, Wenatchee Valley College
John Thoren, Chairperson, IRIS
Paula Walters, Book Group Coordinator, North Central Library District
Nancy Warner, Coordinator, Initiative for Rural Innovation & Stewardship
Mary Watson, Workforce Development Dean, Wenatchee Valley College
Harriet Weber, Board Member, Quincy Valley Historical Society
Rufus Woods, Owner & Publisher, Wenatchee World

For More Information

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