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Salish Sea Ecosystem Conference

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Using Collaborative Multi-Sector Partnerships to Address Sea Level Rise in Washington State

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Using Collaborative Multi-Sector Partnerships to Address Sea Level Rise in Washington State

This session focused on the objectives and experiences of members of the multisector partnership of the Washington Coastal Resilience Project (WCRP). The WCRP is a three-year effort spearheaded by a coalition of public agencies, nonprofit organizations, and academic institutions to overcome key barriers and rapidly increase the state's capacity to prepare for natural events that threaten the coast, such as intensifying storm surges, higher tides, and more severe flooding resulting from sea level rise.

Specifically, the panel provided insights from their efforts to improve how we forecast and communicate risks, offer better guidance for planning, and strengthen capital investment programs for coastal restoration and infrastructure through the WCRP. Furthermore, the panel shared their personal experiences, both positive and negative, from engaging in this multisector partnership.

The session ended with an interactive poll that displayed the results immediately to the audience and panel. The panel compared the responses from the audience to a 2014 report by Emily Halvorsen and Jamie Mooney titled, "Planning for Change: Climate Adaptation Survey Results, Washington State, 2014." This sparked discussion of pressing concerns for Washington communities, hurdles to incorporating sea level rise in planning efforts, and the ability of users to understand and access sea level rise information.