



State of Washington
Padilla Bay Monitoring and Laboratory Specialist
(Environmental Specialist 2 or 3)

SALARY	\$4,216.00 - \$6,576.00 Monthly \$50,592.00 - \$78,912.00 Annually	LOCATION	Skagit County - Mt. Vernon, WA
JOB TYPE	Project (limited duration)	JOB NUMBER	2026-SEAP1328-00199
DEPARTMENT	Dept. of Ecology	DIVISION	Shorelands and Environmental Assistance
OPENING DATE	01/13/2026	CLOSING DATE	Continuous
SALARY INFORMATION	The high end of the salary range, Step M is typically a longevity step		

Description



Keeping Washington Clean and Evergreen

The Department of Ecology is hiring a **Padilla Bay Monitoring and Laboratory Specialist (Environmental Specialist 2 or 3)** within the [Shorelands & Environmental Assistance Program](#).

Note: **This is an In-Training position.** The goal class for this position is Environmental Specialist (ES3). We will consider applicants who meet the requirements for the ES2 and ES3 levels.

This is a project position that is funded until **December 31, 2026**. Continuation of the position beyond this date is determined on an annual basis and contingent upon funding and satisfactory performance of job duties.

Location:

- This position will be located in our [Padilla Bay Office](#) in Mount Vernon, WA.

Schedule:

- This position is NOT eligible for telework. Job duties include regular field and laboratory work requiring on-site work.

Application Timeline:

- **Apply by January 28, 2026**
- This position will remain open until filled. The agency reserves the right to make a hire at any time after application review begins. Applications received after date mentioned above may not be considered.

Ecology is committed to Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect

Duties

Padilla Bay Reserve is one of 30 National Estuarine Research Reserves and the only Reserve in Washington State. The mission of the Reserve is to advance research, monitoring, stewardship, management, conservation, and education related to estuarine and coastal ecosystems and communities. The Padilla Bay Reserve has over 8000 acres of eelgrass habitat, representing one of the largest meadows in North America. The Reserve is owned and operated by the Washington State Dept of Ecology through a federal partnership with NOAA.

This is an exciting opportunity to work in a beautiful natural setting with a close-knit group of scientists, educators and support staff who are passionate about the marine environment.

In this role, you will play a vital part in protecting Washington's environment by serving as a dedicated Monitoring Specialist for the Padilla Bay National Estuarine Research Reserve (PBNERR). You will advance the mission of the Reserve by collecting, managing, and analyzing critical water quality and other environmental data that informs the wise management of our nation's estuaries. By ensuring the integrity of the PBNERR laboratory and adhering to strict national protocols, you will provide the scientific foundation necessary to understand estuarine processes and protect the unique natural resources of Padilla Bay for future generations.

What you will do:

- **Lead Laboratory Operations:** You will oversee the Padilla Bay laboratory, maintaining and repairing sophisticated scientific instruments—such as datasondes—while ensuring the facility remains accredited and safe for staff and visiting researchers.
- **Manage Critical Data:** You will perform rigorous quality assurance and quality control (QA/QC) on environmental data, developing metadata and managing databases to ensure accurate information is submitted to the national data center.
- **Conduct Field Research:** You will collect, process, and analyze water samples, conduct habitat monitoring in intertidal and other nearshore environments, operate research vessels, and perform SCUBA diving tasks to support diverse monitoring and research activities.
- **Analyze and Synthesize Findings:** You will use statistical and geospatial (GIS) tools to analyze monitoring results, producing maps, reports, and publications that communicate findings to partners, scientists, and the public.
- **Support the Scientific Community:** You will act as a mentor and technical lead, training staff, student researchers, and volunteers on laboratory equipment use, field safety, and standardized sampling procedures.
- **Coordinate Nationally:** You will serve as a primary liaison to the NERRS Central Data Management Office, ensuring that Padilla Bay's monitoring programs align with national standards and contribute to a broader understanding of coastal health.

Qualifications

For detailed information on how we calculate experience, please visit our [Recruitment website](#).

This is an In-Training position. The goal class for this position is Environmental Specialist 3 (ES3). We will consider applicants who meet the requirements for the ES2 and ES3 levels. If the finalist meets the requirements for the ES2 level, they will be hired in at that level and placed into a training program to become an ES3 within a specified period of time.

Required Qualifications:

At the Environmental Specialist 2 level (In-Training). \$4216-\$5666 monthly

Five years of experience and/or education as described below:

Experience professional level experience in hands-on environmental monitoring or research

Education involving a major study in environmental, physical, or one of the natural sciences, environmental planning or other allied field.

Examples of how to qualify:

- 5 years of experience.
- 4 years of experience AND 30-59 semester or 45-89 quarter college credits.
- 3 years of experience AND 60-89 semester or 90-134 quarter college credits (Associate's degree).
- 2 years of experience AND 90-119 semester or 135-179 quarter college credits.
- 1 year of experience AND a Bachelor's degree.
- A Master's degree or above.

At the Environmental Specialist 3 level (Goal Class). \$4882-\$6576 monthly

Six years of experience and/or education as described below:

Experience professional level experience in hands-on environmental monitoring or research

Education involving a major study in environmental, physical, or one of the natural sciences, environmental planning or other allied field.

Examples of how to qualify:

- 6 years of experience.
- 5 years of experience AND 30-59 semester or 45-89 quarter college credits.
- 4 years of experience AND 60-89 semester or 90-134 quarter college credits (Associate's degree).
- 3 years of experience AND 90-119 semester or 135-179 quarter college credits.
- 2 years of experience AND a Bachelor's degree.
- A Master's degree or above.

Whether at ES2 or ES3 level, experience mentioned above must also include demonstrated competencies in the following skill sets:

- Experience on small boats or motorized watercraft.
- Experience conducting laboratory procedures using technical equipment.
- Experience conducting research or monitoring studies.
- Ability to search, read, and synthesize scientific literature and protocols.
- Ability to prepare scientific presentations and reports.

Desired Qualifications:

- Knowledge or professional experience with methods and techniques of field sampling of water, data gathering with field instruments and multi-parameter instruments, and record keeping
- Knowledge, professional experience, and/or certification in R and/or geographic information systems (GIS) software.
- Experience operating, maintaining, and working on motorized vessels
- Completed Motorboat Operator Training Course (MOTC) or Certification Course (MOCC)
- Open water SCUBA certification
- Advanced open water SCUBA with drysuit certification
- American Academy of Underwater Sciences (AAUS) scientific diving certification

If you are excited about this role but not sure if your experience aligns perfectly with every qualification in the job description, **we encourage you to apply**. Studies have shown that women and people of color are less likely to apply to jobs unless they meet every single qualification. At the Department of Ecology, we are dedicated to building a diverse and authentic workplace centered in belonging. You may just be the needed candidate for this or other roles.

Supplemental Information

Ecology does not use the **E-Verify** system; therefore, we are not eligible to extend STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT). For more information, please visit www.uscis.gov.

Our Commitment to DEIR

Diversity, Equity, Inclusion, and Respect (DEIR) are core values central to Ecology's work. We strive to be a workplace where we are esteemed for sharing our authentic identities, while advancing our individual professional goals and collaborating to protect, preserve, and enhance the environment for current and future generations. We believe that DEIR is both a goal and an action. We are on a journey, honoring our shared humanity and taking steps to demonstrate our commitment to a vision where each of us is heard, seen, and valued.

Application Process

Ecology seeks diverse applicants: We view diversity, equity, inclusion, and respect through a broad lens including race, ethnicity, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, military background, language, education, life experience, physical disability, neurodiversity, and intersectional identities. Qualified job seekers from all backgrounds are encouraged to apply.

How to Apply

Click "Apply" at the top of this page. Complete the entire application, including full work history and responses to all supplemental questions, and attach:

- Cover letter, describing your interest in and qualifications for this position
- Resume

Because we base our selection on the information you provide, it is in your best interest to complete the application thoroughly. A resume will not substitute for the "work experience" section of the application or vice versa. Applications with blank fields or supplemental question responses with comments such as "see resume" may be considered incomplete.

For detailed application information, please visit our [Recruitment website](#).

Application Attestation: By submitting an application, you are affirming that the information contained in your application and on all attachments is complete and truthful. The state may verify this information, and any false or misleading answers may result in rejection of your application or dismissal if employed.

Need an Accommodation?

If you need reasonable accommodation during the application and/or screening process, including this job announcement in an alternate format:

- Please contact us at 360-407-6186 or occareers@ecy.wa.gov
- If you are deaf or hard of hearing, you may call through the Washington Relay Service by dialing 711 or 1-800-833-6384.

Questions?

- For specific questions about the position location options, schedule, or duties, please contact **Sylvia Yang** at Sylvia.Yang@ecy.wa.gov
- If you need assistance applying for this job, are inquiring about the status of your application, would like to request the full position description, or have any other questions, please contact the Recruitment Team at occareers@ecy.wa.gov

About the Shorelands and Environmental Assistance (SEA) Program

The mission of the SEA Program is to create community conservation partnerships to protect and restore our shorelands, wetlands, and floodplains.

About the Department of Ecology

As the State of Washington's environmental protection agency, we are deeply committed to protecting, preserving, and enhancing Washington's environment for current and future generations. Joining Ecology means becoming part of a team dedicated to protecting and sustaining healthy land, air, water, and climate in harmony with a strong economy. A career in public service at Ecology allows you to help solve some of the most challenging problems facing our state, while keeping your health and financial security a priority. We combine one of the most competitive benefits packages in the nation with a strong commitment to life/work balance. We invest in our employees to create and sustain a working environment that encourages creative leadership, effective resource management, teamwork, professionalism, and accountability.

Ecology employees may be eligible for the following: [Medical/Dental/Vision for employee & dependent\(s\)](#), [Public Employees Retirement System \(PERS\)](#), [Vacation, Sick, and other Leave*](#), [11 Paid Holidays per year*](#), [Public Service Loan Forgiveness](#), [Tuition Waiver](#), [Long Term Disability](#) & [Life Insurance](#), [Deferred Compensation Programs](#), [Dependent Care Assistance Program \(DCAP\)](#), [Flexible Spending Arrangement \(FSA\)](#), [Employee Assistance Program](#), [Commute Trip Reduction Incentives](#) ([Download PDF reader](#)), [Combined Fund Drive](#), [SmartHealth](#) *[Click here for more information](#)

To learn more about Ecology, please visit our [website](#), explore [Working at Ecology](#), check out our [Strategic Plan](#), and connect with us on [LinkedIn](#), [Facebook](#), [Instagram](#), [YouTube](#), or our [blog](#).

Equal Opportunity Employer: The Washington State Department of Ecology is an equal opportunity employer. We strive to create a working environment that includes and respects cultural, racial, ethnic, sexual orientation and gender identity diversity. Women, racial and ethnic minorities, persons of disability, persons over 40 years of age, veterans, military spouses or people with military status, and people of all sexual orientations and gender identities are encouraged to apply.

Collective Bargaining: This is a position covered by a bargaining unit for which the Washington Federation of State Employees (WFSE) is the exclusive representative.

Note: This recruitment may be used to fill other positions of the same job classification across the agency. Once all the position(s) from the recruitment announcement are filled, the recruitment may only be used to fill additional open positions for the next sixty (60) days.

**Benefits****More than Just a Paycheck!**

Employee benefits are not just about the kind of services you get, they are also about how much you may have to pay out of pocket. Washington State offers one of the most competitive benefits packages in the nation.

We understand that your life revolves around more than just your career. Like everyone, your first priority is ensuring that you and your family will maintain health and financial security. That's why choice is a key component of our benefits package. We have a selection of health and retirement plans, paid leave, staff training and other compensation benefits that you can mix and match to meet your current and future needs.

Read about our benefits:

The following information describes typical benefits available for full-time employees who are expected to work more than six months. Actual benefits may vary by appointment type or be prorated for other than full-time work (e.g. part-time); view the job posting for benefits details for job types other than full-time.

Note: If the position offers benefits which differ from the following, the job posting should include the specific benefits.

Insurance Benefits

Employees and their families are covered by medical (including vision), dental and basic life insurance. There are multiple medical plans with affordable monthly premiums that offer coverage throughout the state.

Staff are eligible to enroll each year in a medical flexible spending account which enables them to use tax-deferred dollars toward their health care expenses. Employees are also covered by basic life and long-term disability insurance, with the option to purchase additional coverage amounts.

To view premium rates, coverage choice in your area and how to enroll, please visit the [Public Employees Benefits Board \(PEBB\) website](#). The [Washington Wellness](#) program from the Health Care Authority works with PEBB to support our workplace [wellness programs](#).

[Dependent care assistance](#) allows the employee to save pre-tax dollars for a child or elder care expenses.

Other insurance coverage for auto, boat, home, and renter insurance is available through payroll deduction.

The [Washington State Employee Assistance Program](#) promotes the health and well-being of employees.

Retirement and Deferred Compensation

State Employees are members of the Washington Public Employees' Retirement System (PERS). New employees have the option of two employer contributed retirement programs. For additional information, check out the [Department of Retirement Systems](#)' web site.

Employees also have the ability to participate in the [Deferred Compensation Program](#) (DCP). This is a supplemental retirement savings program (similar to an IRA) that allows you control over the amount of pre-tax salary dollars you defer as well as the flexibility to choose between multiple investment options.

Social Security

All state employees are covered by the federal [Social Security](#) and Medicare systems. The state and the employee pay an equal amount into the system.

Public Service Loan Forgiveness

If you are employed by a government or not-for-profit organization, and meet the qualifying criteria, you may be eligible to receive student loan forgiveness under the [Public Service Loan Forgiveness Program](#).

Holidays

Full-time and part-time employees are entitled to paid holidays and one paid personal holiday per calendar year.

Note: Employees who are members of certain Unions may be entitled to additional personal leave day(s), please refer to position specific [Collective Bargaining Agreements](#) for more information.

Full-time employees who work full monthly schedules qualify for holiday compensation if they are employed before the holiday and are in pay status for at least 80 nonovertime hours during the month of the holiday; or for the entire work shift preceding the holiday.

Part-time employees who are in pay status during the month of the holiday qualify for the holiday on a pro-rata basis. Compensation for holidays (including personal holiday) will be proportionate to the number of hours in pay status in the month to that required for full-time employment, excluding all holiday hours. Pay status includes hours worked and time on paid leave.

Sick Leave

Full-time employees earn eight hours of sick leave per month. Overtime eligible employees who are in pay status for less than 80 hours per month, earn a monthly proportionate to the number of hours in pay status, in the month to that required for full-time employment. Overtime exempt employees who are in pay status for less than 80 hours per month do not earn a monthly accrual of sick leave.

Sick leave accruals for part-time employees will be proportionate to the number of hours in pay status, in the month to that required for full-time employment. Pay status includes hours worked, time on paid leave and paid holiday.

Vacation (Annual Leave)

Full-time employees accrue vacation leave at the rates specified in [WAC 357-31-165\(1\)](#) or the applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA). Full-time employees who are in pay status for less than 80 nonovertime hours in a month do not earn a monthly accrual of vacation leave.

Part-time employees accrue vacation leave hours in accordance with [WAC 357-31-165\(1\)](#) or the applicable collective bargaining agreement (CBA) on a pro rata basis. Vacation leave accrual will be proportionate to the number of hours in pay status, in the month to that required for full-time employment.

Pay status includes hours worked, time on paid leave and paid holiday.

As provided in [WAC 357-58-175](#), an employer may authorize a lump-sum accrual of vacation leave or accelerate the vacation leave accrual rate to support the recruitment and/or retention of a candidate or employee for a Washington Management Service position. Vacation leave accrual rates may only be accelerated using the rates established WAC 357-31-165.

Note: Most agencies follow the civil service rules covering leave and holidays for **exempt** employees even though there is no requirement for them to do so. However, agencies are required to adhere to the applicable RCWs pertaining holidays and leave.

Military Leave

Washington State supports members of the armed forces with 21 days paid military leave per year.

Bereavement Leave

Most employees whose family member or household member dies, or for loss of pregnancy, are entitled to five (5)

days of paid bereavement leave. In addition, the employer may approve other available leave types for the purpose of bereavement leave.

Additional Leave

[Leave Sharing](#)

[Parental Leave](#)

[Family and Medical Leave Act \(FMLA\)](#)

[Leave Without Pay](#)

Please visit the [State HR Website](#) for more detailed information regarding benefits.

Updated 01-07-2026

Employer

State of Washington

Address

[View Job Posting for Agency Information](#)

[View Job Posting for Location, Washington, 98504](#)

Website

<http://www.careers.wa.gov>

Padilla Bay Monitoring and Laboratory Specialist (Environmental Specialist 2 or 3) Supplemental Questionnaire

*QUESTION 1

How did you hear about this job?

- Community Based Organization
- Community / Technical College
- Ecology Employee
- Ecology Recruiter
- Ecology Jobs Page
- Facebook
- Job Board
- Job Fair
- LinkedIn
- Newspaper
- Other State Agency
- Other Website
- Professional Association
- Twitter
- University Job Board
- WorkSource
- Other

*QUESTION 2

If you selected Community Based Organization, Community / Technical College, Job Board, Job Fair, LinkedIn Group, Newspaper, Other State Agency, Other Website, Professional Association, University Job Board, WorkSource, or Other, please share which one.

*QUESTION 3

Have you ever worked for the Department of Ecology in any capacity including: Permanent, Non-permanent, Project, Intern, or Volunteer?

- Yes
- No

*QUESTION 4

How many years of professional level experience do you have in hands-on environmental monitoring or research?

Please include any experience gained through employment, internships, and/or volunteer positions. Note that experience gained from academic coursework, class projects, or other degree requirements is assessed in later questions.

- One year
- Two years

- Three years
- Four years
- Five years
- Six years
- None of the above

***QUESTION 5**

Please provide additional details to support your response above. The following information is needed: position title(s), specific duties, and periods of employment. Make sure your response specifically addresses the qualification above. An incomplete answer, including "please see resume" may remove you from further consideration.

QUESTION 6*What is your level of education?**

- 30-59 semester or 45-89 quarter college credits
- 60-89 semester or 90-134 quarter college credits (AA degree)
- 90-119 semester or 135-179 quarter college credits
- Bachelor's degree
- Master's degree or above
- None of the above

***QUESTION 7**

If you have college credits or a degree, please list your major(s) or field(s) of study and any degree(s) earned. If you don't have this education, put N/A.

QUESTION 8

The State of Washington and the Department of Ecology, play a vital role in fostering a Diverse, Equitable, Inclusive, and Respectful (DEIR) workplace and contributing to equitable outcomes for the communities we serve. We view DEIR through a broad lens including: race, ethnicity, class, age, religion, sexual orientation, gender identity, immigration status, military background, language, education, life experience, physical disability, neurodiversity, and intersectional identities. We believe it is everyone's job to contribute to a DEIR workplace. What experiences have you had working with people whose backgrounds are very different from your own? What impact did those experiences have on how you worked?

***QUESTION 9**

I understand that Ecology does not use the E-Verify system and is unable to extend STEM Optional Practical Training (OPT).

- Yes
- No

***QUESTION 10**

Do you possess, or have the ability to obtain and maintain, a valid driver's license?

- Yes
- No

***QUESTION 11**

Please describe your experience in the following areas. In your response, specify your years of experience, the equipment used, and the context (e.g., academic, professional, or volunteer). If you do not have experience in a specific area, please indicate "N/A" • Small Boats: Experience with motorized watercraft or small vessels in marine, estuarine, or other aquatic environments. • Laboratory Procedures: Using technical equipment (e.g., datasondes, spectrophotometers, or microscopes) to collect environmental data or analyze environmental samples. • Field Research: Conducting environmental monitoring studies or biological research. • Scientific Research & Communication: Searching, reading, and synthesizing scientific literature and analyze environmental data to produce formal reports or presentations."

***QUESTION 12**

Within the first 12 months of employment, you must obtain First Aid/CPR, Boater Safety, and motorboat operator certifications, meet AAUS SCUBA prerequisites, and pass the agency medical requirements for scientific diving. Can you meet these requirements? • First aid and CPR certification • Washington State Boater Safety and Navigation proficiency • Motorboat Operator Certification Course (MOCC) or other motorboat operator course • Prerequisites for AAUS SCUBA certification • Ecology agency medical requirements for AAUS scientific diving

- Yes, I already meet all of these.
- I am willing and able to meet all listed requirements within 12 months.
- No, I am unable or unwilling to meet one or more of these requirements.

* Required Question