



PROGRAM ON THE ENVIRONMENT

UNIVERSITY *of* WASHINGTON

TO BETTER SERVE OUR COMMUNITIES: INFORMING GOVERNMENT STAFF ON CONNECTIONS BETWEEN CLIMATE CHANGE AND SOCIAL JUSTICE

Session Day 2, In-Person

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Climate change will impact us all, but not in the same ways. Many climate action plans do not address this, and if they do, it is usually newly added. King County's Strategic Climate Action Plan is an example of this, addressing this issue in its latest iteration. However, knowledge on the section is limited among staff at King County. To increase awareness, I created a communication plan for my internship. I first gathered information by surveying and interviewing the staff working directly on projects in the section as well as surveying staff working indirectly in the section. I asked about their awareness on the topics, what they found important, and how to go about increasing awareness. From analyzing the results, I found there was a need to increase general awareness about connections between climate change and social justice. I also found that staff wanted to rely on current communication channels and materials before implementing new ones. In my plan, I created a schedule for implementing each of these materials while emphasizing discussions for people to learn from each other. The implications of education on these topics includes increasing motivation in staff by having a better understanding of what the county is doing against climate change. Another implication is that staff will be more effective at their work, increasing their capacity. By understanding what the communities they work with are doing right now, staff are enabled to better serve their needs.