

**Report to the Group Health Foundation**  
**North Olympic Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Council**  
**July 13, 2018**

North Olympic Peninsula Resource Conservation & Development Council (dba North Olympic Development Council or NODC) works closely with WSU Extension and the Peninsula Food Coalition (PFC), a network of community organizations working to improve community food security on the Olympic Peninsula. WSU Extension recently conducted a Ripple Effects Mapping (REM) session to illuminate the wide-spread impacts of the Peninsula Food Coalition's work across Clallam County. The NODC used the grant funds to create a video that captures the REM process and shows the benefits of the community engagement work of these partners. The video shows how, through the formation of the PFC and the strong relationships that have developed as a result of that collaboration, individual organizations have been able to leverage resources, build on each other's efforts, and create a culture of trust and shared values.

Building place-based community food security in the isolated and rural area of Clallam County requires interdisciplinary solutions that engage partners across all sectors of the food system. The practice of food justice requires breaking down systems of categorization and cultivating positive connections that link actors across the food system in comprehensive solutions. The PFC includes a broad cross-section of agencies/organizations including: an academic institution, emergency food providers, state-wide food distribution agencies, community action programs, county government, a land trust, and representation from several local tribes.

Low resource areas such as the Olympic Peninsula necessitate collaboration between a wide range of stakeholders from across the local food system to increase resiliency and efficient use of resources and grow economic opportunities. The work of the Coalition that is highlighted in the video addresses both rural food insecurity and community resilience by:

- Increasing agricultural productivity and incomes of small-scale food producers
- Enhancing rural infrastructure
- Working to ensure that all members of the community have access to nutritious, affordable and culturally appropriate food

Through the partnership forged between the diverse entities, our innovative work has provided equitable food access to healthy, nutritious, locally grown food for those who can least afford it, and at the same time provides economic incubation for regional micro-farms. By leveraging Farm-to-Food Bank funding and various federal programs such as the Farmers Market Nutrition Program to provide low-risk wholesale contracts for beginning farmers, as well as establishment of a gleaning program that was the foundation for creation a new agriculture business in a remote Tribal community, we have found effective ways to connect the dots between local small-scale food production and those in need in our communities. Having these diverse voices involved helps ensure that inequities in the food system are being addressed in unique and innovative ways.

One significant challenge that the group faces that is not addressed in the video is developing a sustainable program that allows the work to continue into the future. The success of the PFC's efforts has hinged on the gleaning program run by WSU Extension, which last year brought

70,000 pounds of fresh produce into the food banks. The gleaning program has been sustained by a three year Americorps VISTA member provided by Rotary First Harvest. Now that the 3-year term is drawing to an end, the PFC will be tested in new ways. Will the collaboration be strong enough to allow various member organizations to pitch in resources to keep this effort going? All indications point to YES. For example, the Sequim Food Bank is already exploring options for how to partner with WSU Extension to support the gleaning program going forward.

We would like to thank the Group Health Foundation for their generous support of this project. The grant provided has helped us create an informative video that we will use to highlight the unique collaborations and wide-reaching impacts of the Peninsula Food Coalition and WSU Extension. This will be a valuable tool for our constituents and funders to understand appreciate, and hopefully learn from the powerful work we are conducting.