

PALOUSE BASIN AQUIFER committee

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**Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution set to visit and study the Palouse Basin
*Researchers to focus on groundwater age, flow, and environmental parameters***

A team of researchers from the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) will be visiting the Palouse Groundwater Basin from May 8th through May 12th. The effort is being led by geochemist Alan Seltzer, Assistant Scientist at WHOI in the Marine Chemistry and Geochemistry Department, who runs the Seltzer Lab. The Lab specializes in applications of inert gases as quantitative tracers of physical processes in nature. Their current research spans a wide range in both space and time: from using noble gases tracers in the deep ocean to better understand large-scale changes in ocean ventilation in the past, present, and future, to constraining groundwater recharge and flow pathways, to simulating picosecond- and angstrom-scale interactions between dissolved gas atoms and water molecules that give rise to the isotopic signals we observe in nature. [Seltzer Lab @ WHOI \(noblegasisotopes.com\)](https://noblegasisotopes.com)

WHOI is interested in understanding the physical properties of groundwater recharge, mixing, flow, and residence time in the Columbia River Basalt aquifers. WHOI will have two research teams collecting up to 20 well samples from across the Palouse Basin measuring geochemical tracers of groundwater age, flow, and environmental parameters like temperature and water table depth. The research will build on earlier work done under the direction of University of Idaho Earth and Spatial Science Professor Jeff Langman.

Cara Haley, PBAC Chair and Pullman City Engineer, is excited to have the renowned WHOI supporting PBAC's important research. "The Institution is one of the most preeminent independent non-profit organizations dedicated to ocean and earth science studies. We are honored that they have selected the Palouse Groundwater Basin to study and analyze using their new and innovative analytical technique that measures trace noble gases, and are eager to see the results and overall outcome. A special thanks goes out to UI Professor Jeff Langman for inviting WHOI to our Palouse Basin," notes Haley.



About the Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee

The Palouse Basin Aquifer Committee works to ensure a long-term, quality water supply for the Palouse Basin. The primary role of PBAC is to encourage member entities to implement the Palouse Basin Groundwater Management Plan, enacted in 1992. Additional roles involve monitoring of pumping and groundwater levels, providing an education and information exchange, supporting groundwater system research, and exploring supplemental water sources.

PBAC membership consist of two representatives from the cities of Pullman and Moscow, Whitman and Latah counties, and Washington State University and the University of Idaho. Ex-Officio committee members include representatives from the Washington Department of Ecology and the Idaho Department of Water Resources. Together, the member entities analyze and research the Palouse Groundwater Basin holistically to monitor groundwater levels and annual water usage. <https://palousebasin.org>

About the Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution

The Woods Hole Oceanographic Institution (WHOI) is a private, non-profit organization on Cape Cod, Massachusetts, dedicated to marine research, engineering, and higher education. Established in 1930, its primary mission is to understand the ocean and its interaction with the Earth as a whole, and to communicate an understanding of the ocean's role in the changing global environment. WHOI's pioneering discoveries stem from an ideal combination of science and engineering—one that has made it one of the most trusted and technically advanced leaders in basic and applied ocean research and exploration anywhere. WHOI is known for its multidisciplinary approach, superior ship operations, and unparalleled deep-sea robotics capabilities. We play a leading role in ocean observation and operate the most extensive suite of data-gathering platforms in the world. Top scientists, engineers, and students collaborate on more than 800 concurrent projects worldwide—both above and below the waves—pushing the boundaries of knowledge and possibility. For more information, please visit www.whoi.edu.