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**THURSDAY,
MARCH 12, 2026,
4:00 PM**

**Fisheries Sciences
Building, Room 102**

LEVERAGING THE LAW TO SAVE SPECIES, WHILE STREAMLINING DEVELOPMENT: A Puget Sound Case Study

Caitlin Imaki

*Prior NOAA Fisheries (Former Attorney-Advisor,
Office of General Counsel, Northwest Section)*

Despite decades of legal protections and recovery efforts, Puget Sound Chinook salmon and Southern Resident killer whales remain at risk of extinction. Caitlin's talk will explain how science, policy, and law came together to establish a robust conservation banking program in the Puget Sound with the hopes of turning the tide for these species. She will explore factors that influence success—or failure—when trying to leverage the law to achieve conservation policy goals.

Caitlin worked as an Attorney-Advisor in the Northwest Section of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration's (NOAA) Office of General Counsel for eight years, where she advised the National Marine Fisheries Service on a broad range of matters arising under laws such as the Magnuson-Stevens Fishery Conservation and Management Act, the Endangered Species Act, and the Marine Mammal Protection Act. In 2021, Caitlin filled in as Acting Central Puget Sound Branch Chief, supervising ESA Section 7 consultations, recovery planning, and listed species' status reviews. Before joining NOAA, Caitlin litigated cases as a trial attorney in the Natural Resources Section of the Department of Justice's Environment and Natural Resources Division. She is a UW School of Law Alum.

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