



Ian doing some survey work on the beach on the Olympic Peninsula.

TYPE OF WORK
I focus on coastal hazards. I do applied research and outreach about flooding, erosion, and sea level rise with an emphasis on improving coastal community planning.

Ian Miller
Coastal Hazards Specialist
Washington Sea Grant



Coastal Hazards Specialist



TYPICAL DAY: My work varies a lot. I teach at least one quarter per year. When I'm not teaching, I conduct fieldwork on a variety of projects. I also do a lot of presentations to community members and leaders and spend time writing to report on my research work. Much of what we do relies on communication and social skills for interacting with a variety of community partners. Sometimes I work on the computer using specialized software like MATLAB and ArcGIS.

CAREER PATHWAY:

After high school, I went immediately into university to study Marine Ecology, which was an interest I developed early. After graduation, I worked a variety of seasonal jobs including wilderness guide, carpenter, seasonal field biology, field education, fisheries observer, and finally settled into a permanent role as an education manager at the Olympic Park Institute. After a few years, I leveraged my relationships to return to school and completed my PhD from UC Santa Cruz in 2012.



IMPORTANT SKILLS

I have a PhD in coastal oceanography and utilize that technical background frequently. However, many specialists do not have that in-depth scientific training, which is totally fine, and in many cases can be advantageous.

EDUCATION

Master's Degree

SALARY RANGE

\$50,000 - \$75,000

TOOLS OF THE TRADE

I use a variety of specialized software, primarily MATLAB and ArcGIS. My research relies on survey-grade GPS and digital photo analysis.

"I love the variety of my job and the chance to develop and guide my own work plan." - Ian Miller