

## **Recommended WRIA 8 Riparian Strategy**

### **Summarizing WRIA 8 Implementation Committee Riparian Strategy Discussion**

- There is a lot of work being done by NGOs, some jurisdictions. Most of the work is being done on public land rather than private land with the exception of Adopt-a-Stream Foundation & Cedar Stewardship In Action. NGOs have the advantage of being more trusted, less expensive. Many NGOs are seeing a growth in volunteerism due to community service requirements.
- Working with private property owners requires building trust/long-term relationships which doesn't fit well with year to year grants. Local governments have had to cut staff that work directly with private property owners, e.g. basin stewards.
- There are good model programs and tools to draw resources and lessons learned from – both funded and now unfunded.
- Need to use social marketing techniques to develop messages/outreach strategies that work for property owners and are addressing their needs.
- There are several target audiences to develop messages/materials for including: elected officials, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council members, property owners (both rural and suburban).
- There are many place-based programs with their own blend of programming. It is a complex, layered environment. A subbasin by subbasin strategy may be needed.

**The drivers for loss of riparian forest appear to be 1) many small actions by many streamside property owners – “thousand cuts” and 2) new developments which were vested/ grandfathered under old regulations.**

**The WRIA 8 Implementation Committee recommends a two track response:**

**Track 1: Do what we can now to address “thousand cuts” or actions by private property owners.**

- Assess what is already being done and identify gaps. Inventory existing models, potential partners, resources and tools that can be shared. Share lessons learned and proven strategies and tools for working with private property owners.
- Develop messages, tools for encouraging protection/restoration of riparian areas.
- Translate Bear/Evans TMDL data and findings that show the benefits of riparian forest on reducing temperatures into a more lay-person friendly format as a good starting point.
- Identify ways to add value at the WRIA level and tasks that we can work collectively on that would help existing efforts to improve/protect riparian habitat.
- Explore partnership with STORM consortium on tree planting best management practices for both NPDES permit requirements and salmon recovery.

## **Track 2: More analysis of the problem.**

- More closely investigate the drivers/cause of loss of trees in riparian areas by “thousand cuts”.
- In high priority riparian areas look more closely at forest cover trends and identify existing, vested/grandfathered development sites that might be developed in the future.
- Research the existing regulations that protect riparian areas in WRIA 8 (e.g. status of tree ordinances and CAO/SMP updates).
- With this analysis, develop more in-depth strategy for motivating private property owners to protect/restore riparian areas.
- Develop a strategy to address vested/grandfathered development sites that will do the most harm to high priority riparian areas.

**Caveat: To fully implement this strategy will require additional funding and partnerships. With existing resources we can begin some of this work, but will seek other funding to implement the strategy in a more meaningful way.**