

# WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council Meeting Notes

Bellevue City Hall

November 21, 2013, 3:00-5:14 p.m.

| <b>Members Present</b>    |                                |  |
|---------------------------|--------------------------------|--|
| <b>#</b>                  | <b>Name</b>                    | <b>Affiliation</b>                     |
| 1.                        | Mayor Joan McBride, Vice-Chair | City of Kirkland                       |
| 2.                        | Eric Adman                     | Sno-King Watershed Council             |
| 3.                        | Councilmember Layne Barnes     | City of Maple Valley                   |
| 4.                        | Tor Bell                       | Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust      |
| 5.                        | Richard Bonewits               | Cedar River Council                    |
| 6.                        | Councilmember Diane Buckshnis  | City of Edmonds                        |
| 7.                        | Councilmember Bruce Dodds      | City of Clyde Hill                     |
| 8.                        | Nancy Eklund                   | The Boeing Company                     |
| 9.                        | Councilmember Don Fiene        | City of Lake Forest Park               |
| 10.                       | Councilmember Ted Frantz       | City of Hunts Point                    |
| 11.                       | Mayor Ava Frisinger            | City of Issaquah                       |
| 12.                       | Noel Gilbrough                 | Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group  |
| 13.                       | Councilmember Mike Grady       | City of Mercer Island                  |
| 14.                       | Councilmember Lisa Jensen      | City of Newcastle                      |
| 15.                       | Kathy Minsch, Staff Alternate  | City of Seattle                        |
| 16.                       | Councilmember Bart Masterson   | City of Mill Creek                     |
| 17.                       | Joan Nolan                     | WA Department of Ecology (Ecology)     |
| 18.                       | Councilmember Larry Phillips   | King County                            |
| 19.                       | Councilmember Andy Rheaume     | City of Bothell                        |
| 20.                       | Councilmember Jesse Salomon    | City of Shoreline                      |
| 21.                       | Councilmember Carl Scandella   | City of Yarrow Point                   |
| <b>Alternates Present</b> |                                |  |
| 22.                       | Dave Garland                   | Ecology                                |
| <b>Others Present</b>     |                                |  |
| 23.                       | Alison Bennett                 | City of Bellevue                       |
| 24.                       | Rika Cecil                     | City of Shoreline                      |
| 25.                       | Danielle DeVoe                 | Mid-Sounds Fisheries Enhancement Group |
| 26.                       | Diana Forman                   | Portage Bay Coalition for Clean Water  |
| 27.                       | Cyndy Holtz                    | City of Seattle                        |
| 28.                       | Erika Kinno                    | King County                            |
| 29.                       | Rand Little                    | City of Seattle                        |
| 30.                       | Councilmember Mark Phillips    | City of Lake Forest Park               |
| 31.                       | Stacey Rush                    | City of Kirkland                       |
| 32.                       | Jon Spangler                   | City of Redmond                        |
| 33.                       | Ron Straka                     | City of Renton                         |
| 34.                       | Jean White                     | King County                            |
| 35.                       | Linda Grob                     | WRIA 8 Team                            |
| 36.                       | Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz          | WRIA 8 Team                            |
| 37.                       | Scott Stolnack                 | WRIA 8 Team                            |
| 38.                       | Jason Wilkinson                | WRIA 8 Team                            |

Meeting Chair Joan McBride opened the meeting, reporting that Chair Dr. Don Davidson was unable to attend. After introducing Jason Wilkinson (Jason W), officially hired as the permanent Actions & Funding Coordinator, she asked all attendees to introduce themselves.

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Mike Grady announced that this is his last Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) meeting. He said his two terms as Mercer Island City Councilmember are over at the end of the year, which is all he committed to doing.

## 1. Public Comment

There was no public comment.

## 2. Approval of Meeting Notes for September 19, 2013

*The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the meeting notes for the September 19, 2013 meeting.*

## 3. Updates & Announcements

### General Announcements:

Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (Jason MK) elaborated on several items from the WRIA 8 Update handout:

- **Puget Sound Regional Update:**
  - **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC):** The PSSRC last met on September 25. Agenda topics included: updates on work to identify and prioritize salmon recovery best management practices (BMPs) and align them with stormwater BMPs; status of the regional monitoring and adaptive management (M&AM) project; steelhead recovery planning options; scope and eligible activities for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) capital project management funding; and 2014 PSSRC leadership nominations. The next meeting is December 6.
  - **South Central Action Area Caucus (Caucus Group):** The Caucus Group next meets on November 18, with topics to include: 2014 legislative development update; update on the Green River System Wide Improvement Framework; and Caucus Group near-term action development.
- **King County Flood Control District:** As part of its 2014 budget and work plan, the King County Flood Control District (FCD) Board of Supervisors unanimously passed a levy rate increase of \$0.03 (\$9,866,830 in 2014, \$65.75 million over 6 years). This results in an increase of \$873,674 in 2014 WRIA funding, increasing the total WRIA funding from \$3.15M to \$4.02M. For WRIA 8 this means a 2014 grant funding amount of \$1.5M (previously \$1.2M), an inflation adjustment from the base year of 2006, and an inflation adjustment in subsequent years. Joan McBride called this an early Christmas present, and thanked the Board of Supervisors. Larry Phillips remarked that this is really due to King County Councilmember Regan Dunn, who championed the increase.
- **WRIA 8 Actions & Funding Coordinator Hiring:** The hiring panel included Don Fiene, Stacey Rush, City of Kirkland, Michael Murphy, King County, Scott Stolnack, Technical Coordinator, and Jason MK. The panel was unanimous in ranking Jason W as the top candidate based on his proven track record in the position over the past eight months, excellent working relationships with WRIA 8 and regional partners, and understanding of WRIA 8 challenges and priorities.
- **PSAR Project Implementation and Development Awards (PIDA) – Project Subcommittee (PSC) Proposal:** Jason W explained that the PIDA program was established by PSP and Watershed Leads to distribute a portion of the 6% of \$40M of the PSAR funds to advance capital projects for salmon recovery. Resources would be provided either to support existing projects or to develop new projects for future funding requests. Each watershed was eligible to request up to \$200,000 to advance priority capital work, and funds will be allocated through a regionally-competitive process. Jason W reported that the PSC met on October 17 to discuss options for applying for these funds, which were due to PSP by November 15. The PSC recommended that WRIA 8 staff

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engage the City of Renton on proposing an analysis of restoration opportunities on the lower Cedar River in order to identify specific restoration projects within the city's jurisdiction. With Renton as a willing partner, WRIA 8 and Renton staff developed a proposal requesting the full \$200,000 to analyze opportunities and constraints along the Cedar from the mouth to RM 4.7. If funding is awarded, and depending on the amount, up to six conceptual restoration project designs will be developed for the segments between the Logan Avenue bridge and the State Route 169 bridge.

- **Salmon SEEson:** The annual Salmon SEEson event is going on now, and Jason MK went over some of the highlights. Mike Grady praised the volunteers on the Cedar. He said he takes students up the Cedar every year, and we always see salmon.
- **WRIA 8 Salmon Tour Recap:** The 2013 tour on October 11 was a great success. Participants included SRC members, Congressional staff, state legislative staff, SRFB member/former State Senator Phil Rockefeller, and state agency staff. This year's tour took us to three high priority, large-scale restoration projects: 1) Rainbow Bend Levee Removal and Floodplain Restoration project (Cedar River); 2) Issaquah Hatchery Dam removal (Issaquah Creek); and 3) Lower Bear Creek Restoration project (Redmond). We organized a media event with project information at the Rainbow Bend site, which was filmed and picked up by several local newspapers. The event has aired on KCTV.
- **Fish Return Numbers:** Scott Stolnack said preliminary data indicate that while 2013 was below average for numbers of adult Chinook salmon passing through the locks, the number of Chinook redds in the Cedar River is actually relatively strong – twice the 14-year average and second only to the record year of 2007. He reported that the number of returning adult Chinook salmon on the Cedar will likely surpass our minimum abundance goals (1,200 adults) for only the fourth time since 1980. Adult passage over the Landsburg Dam is also very strong in 2013, with a much larger than normal number and proportion of natural-origin females (around 80). Judging by the hatchery report, it's likely the numbers of Chinook in Bear Creek and other North Lake Washington streams will be lower than normal.

## **Going Away Presentation:**

Jason MK gave a presentation highlighting the departing SRC members. Framed WRIA 8 plaques were presented to Vice Chair Joan McBride, Ava Frisinger, Don Fiene, Mike Grady, Bart Masterson, and Chair Dr. Don Davidson (in absentia). SRC members and WRIA 8 Staff were photographed raising glasses of sparkling cider to toast Dr. Davidson.

Joan McBride said she was sorry Dr. Davidson couldn't be here, because he is really an advocate for salmon. She thanked staff for the plaque. Richard Bonewits remarked that he is so impressed the SRC is continuing.

## **4. WRIA 8 Leadership**

Jason MK reported that the Management Committee (MC) met on September 23, 2013 to discuss and recommend future WRIA 8/SRC leadership due to departing members and the loss of existing leadership. The MC recommended Larry Phillips as Chair and Andy Rheume, City of Bothell Councilmember, as Vice Chair, with both agreeing to serve. In addition, Councilmember Rheume will represent WRIA 8 on the PSSRC, and Don Fiene, as the Friends of the Cedar River Watershed (FCRW) representative, will continue to represent WRIA 8 on the South Central Action Area Caucus Group.

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***The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously confirmed the new WRIA 8 Leadership as recommended by the Management Committee.***

## **5. Monitoring, Adaptive Management and H-Integration**

Jason MK announced that Scott Stolnack will be regularly updating the SRC on the Monitoring and Adaptive Management (M&AM) Project. Today's presentation is on M&AM and H-Integration. One of the outcomes of the H-Integration process was to clarify some of the Chinook goals in the WRIA 8 Chinook Conservation Plan.

Scott remarked that he is trying to the right level of technical information to the SRC. He started off by holding up a book by UW Professor Tom Quinn, which he said is excellent, *The Behavior and Ecology of Pacific Salmon and Trout* (UW Press, 2005). He said WRIA 8 has control over the freshwater parts of the Chinook salmon life cycle, which includes: spawning in the fall; emerging in January; migrating throughout the spring (two forms: some take two months, some longer). WRIA 8 habitat managers have little no control over what happens to WRIA 8 Chinook during the two-five years they spend in the ocean. WRIA 8 has two Chinook populations (Sammamish and Cedar) and two life history strategies: early migrant juveniles (Cedar has a higher %); and late migrant juveniles (Sammamish has a higher %).

Scott showed members how to access the information on the WRIA 8 web page: go to <http://www.govlink.org/watersheds/8>; select [Plans, Studies and Maps](#); select [Studies, Technical Reports and Presentations](#); and scroll down to the H-Integration Subcommittee Documents to view the H-Integration tables. These tables look at habitat, hatchery, and harvest of the VSP parameters.

Scott presented two slides adapted from tables for the H-Integration Cedar and Sammamish population VSP goals, showing the differences between the WRIA 8 Plan, 10-years out, and the current status. For Cedar abundance in 2012, our target escapement goal was 1,250 naturally spawning adults and our actual numbers were 1,175, which meant we were approaching our target. He said the red arrows on his slide are goals that habitat managers do control, or have a significant element of control over. He said there are different ways to measure productivity, and one thing he wanted SRC members to take away is that our ten-year average egg to migrant survival goal is 13.8%, whereas our current egg to migrant survival average (2007-2011) is 22.8%, which means we are currently surpassing that goal.

Scott explained that late rearing migrants on the Cedar generally survive to adulthood more successfully than those that migrate early, which is one reason we want to increase their numbers. For diversity, we want hatchery numbers below 20%. We've been below 20% for the last five years, which is good.

The Sammamish population numbers are somewhat less positive.

For the M&AM Common Framework, Scott said future work for WRIA 8 will be on human pressures, and system and species stresses. Current work involves naming habitat components and key ecological attributes for habitat conditions and species conditions. He explained our initial set of indicators has been drafted and sent to PSP. We have fish indicators but need habitat indicators, so the Technical Committee will begin to consider and prioritize indicators for both Chinook and

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freshwater habitat components at the December meeting. Next week we will be sending a draft Chinook status update to PSP.

## Discussion:

- Jesse Salomon asked if we have any idea about the extent of unregulated salmon fishing in the ocean. Scott Stolnack replied that for regulated fishing about 50% of the Chinook are fished.
- Carl Scandella commented on the difficulty of reading the H-Integration table and asked Scott to summarize. Scott explained it shows what the H's do on parameters, and gets us to a common understanding. The next stage is to agree on some common goals.
- Ted Frantz inquired if migrants are measured as they exit the Cedar River or the lake. Scott said they are measured at the Cedar, though some assessment is done also at the Ballard Locks. But there is a bit of an information gap there and we could use some more information.
- Erik Adman questioned how the abundance number is set. Scott responded that it is set by co-managers. The abundance number is considered the minimum for sustaining the population, and lets us see if we can have a fishery in Lake Washington.
- Noel Gilbrough asked when early migrants and late migrants move out the system. Scott replied that the early migrants start in January, the late migrants in about April. Noel noted that the smolt slides are in not yet in at the Locks for early migrants. Scott explained that the early migrants take a couple of months to get through the lake, and the slides are operational when they start going out.
- Don Fiene commented that the Redmond project we visited on the Salmon Tour should provide some benefits. Scott agreed that the Lower Bear Creek project is going to help migrant survival, and more projects like that are needed.
- Dick Bonewits noted that there was no mention of predation on Lake Washington in the presentation. Scott explained that we need more information on predation, and in general there's not a lot of information out there. Consequently we know there is predation, but are not sure there is so much. Dick said that is a big gap in our knowledge.

## 6. Cedar River Watershed Habitat Conservation Plan

Jason MK introduced Cyndy Holtz, Cedar River Habitat Conservation Plan (HCP) Manager for the City of Seattle. He said the HCP has such an impact on the Cedar that he felt it was important for Cyndy to give a presentation to the SRC.

Cyndy reported that the HCP is a planning document required by the ESA listing of Chinook that took seven years of negotiations with the federal agencies ("the Services") to finalize. It is a habitat-focused HCP, with a collection of activities that address 83 species, focused on all anadromous fish in the Cedar and resident fish in the watershed, and species dependent on old-growth forests in the Cascades. As an ecosystem-based plan, it extends from the headwaters through the lowlands and Lake Washington to the Ballard Locks. She said due to public review of the HCP, Seattle committed to managing the entire municipal watershed ecologically with no logging. The HCP is a 50-year agreement, a \$105 million commitment, with over 80 projects in three areas: watershed management; instream flow management (including downstream habitat protection and restoration); and mitigation for the Landsburg Dam.

Cyndy explained that Cedar River instream flows are governed by an Instream Flow Agreement (IFA). The reservoir receives run-off from the upper 43% of the basin, and 20% of the annual flow is diverted for drinking water. Key elements of the Cedar IFA are: a guaranteed flow regime; limits on

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annual water diversions; flexibility in management of unallocated water dedicated to the river; continued research and monitoring to guide management practices; funding for capital improvements at the Ballard Locks and downstream habitat; and oversight by the Cedar River Instream Flows Commission. She said there is flow variability within and between wet and dry years, and Seattle met minimum flows in all thirteen years of the HCP.

Cyndy reported that the Landsburg Dam fish passage was completed in 2003, providing access to 21 miles of river, and passing all species of fish above the dam with the exception of sockeye, which are mass spawners. The dam is used as an opportunity to collect data on salmon and migration timing, and this has been a fairly strong year for Chinook overall. She noted that there have only been a couple of generations passed above the dam, with only about 5% spawning above it. Sockeye hatchery production at the Cedar River Sockeye Hatchery is limited so it is less than 50% of total production.

Restoration in the municipal watershed includes road decommissioning and improvements; stream and riparian restoration; and forest restoration. Cyndy reported that \$20 million was set aside for removing the 60 miles of deteriorating, badly constructed logging roads that Seattle inherited. When the roads were taken out there was less sediment in the system. She said there was not enough large wood for habitat and returning salmon, so we planted 8,000 linear feet of stream bank, planted conifers and placed large wood. In regards to forest habitat, she said the forest had been clear-cut except for 1,400 acres. Seattle worked to increase diversity by accelerating old growth conditions, and doing ecological thinning and restoration thinning (drop and leave).

Cyndy explained that downstream protection and restoration is part of the instream flows component. We buy and restore land to meet our commitment, working closely with King County, which established this protection vision. She said Forterra also works with FCRW to bring in volunteers on our properties, sometimes resulting in huge crowds. The floodplain reconnection at Rainbow Bend was done in collaboration with King County, and Seattle is interested in partnering on the River Bend project.

The Cedar River Stewardship-in-Action program focuses on controlling knotweed, which is both a private and public problem. Cyndy said we put together a proposal with King County Noxious Weeds, Forterra and FCRW that includes three parts: knotweed treatment; reestablishing native plant communities; and landowner education. As a result of the program, 72-80% of knotweed is now eradicated on properties from Landsburg (RM 21) to the Renton city limit (RM 5.5), and she reported that only one property owner did not give us approval. We have received two additional grants which are good through 2015, and are starting to look for more funding. We also plant river gardens for free as part of the program.

## Discussion:

- Dave Garland asked about the statement that sockeye are mass spawners. Cyndy Holtz responded that it means there would be too many carcasses in the drinking water so we don't pass sockeye above the dam.
- Lane Barnes remarked that the Cedar River HCP is a Success Story.
- Ted Frantz asked how many river gardens have been installed. Cyndy said 30 have been put in and another fifteen are in the planning stage.

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- Larry Phillips commented that partnering is very important for WRIA 8, and Seattle is one of our great partners.
- Jesse Salomon inquired what gets planted in river gardens. Cyndy said we would like to plant cedars. Councilmember Salomon asked what is detrimental about knotweed, besides not providing shade. Cyndy explained that there is a lot of bad with knotweed, such as: it reproduces by rhizome; is not native; travels downstream; sucks down all the nutrients into the roots; and deprives the soil, making it a desert of nutrients and shade. Noel Gilbrough quipped that besides all that, it's great.
- Jason MK said the Stewardship-in-Action program has been a great success and the model for our Trees for Streams riparian strategy, and we would like to expand it to Issaquah Creek and Bear Creek.

## 7. Next Meeting

Joan McBride announced that the next meeting is January 16, 2014, 3:00 to 5:15 p.m., Bellevue City Hall. She explained that for those of us departing, we are leaving on a high note, and she thanked the new leadership.