

WRIA 8 2015 Budget and Work Plan – Management Committee Recommendation

May 15, 2014

Background

Since 2000, 27 local governments in WRIA 8 have partnered to recover ESA-listed threatened Chinook salmon. Through the WRIA 8 Interlocal Agreement (ILA), each local government pays King County for salmon recovery coordination services through annual cost shares, which are based on each jurisdiction's population, assessed value, and area.

From 2000 to 2013, the total annual WRIA 8 ILA cost share remained unchanged at \$501,063, despite rising staff and operating costs. In 2014, recognizing that base revenues from the ILA cost share and state Lead Entity grant were projected to be insufficient to fund staff and operating costs, the Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) decided to increase the ILA cost share 3% to \$516,095. As part of the 2014 budget decision, the SRC also approved an increase of up to 5% in 2015, depending on the revenue shortfall for staffing and operating costs. The funding shortfall in 2015 is approximately \$21,978, which could be covered by a 4.25% increase in the ILA cost share.

Previous to 2014, base revenues from the ILA cost share and state Lead Entity grant were sufficient to fund staff and operating costs, and excess ILA revenue supplemented other state and federal grants to provide capacity to advance high priority WRIA 8 work (e.g., Green Shorelines outreach, Land Cover Change Analysis, Wadeable Stream Surveys, etc.). While WRIA 8 has successfully secured grants to supplement base revenues and advance important WRIA 8 Plan priorities, grant revenues typically have limited duration, specific tasks and deliverables, and are not reliable.

WRIA 8 expects additional high priority demands on staff in the near future, including:

- Renewal of the WRIA 8 ILA (current ILA ends at the end of 2015)
- Coordinating the 10-Year WRIA 8 Plan update, including development of a monitoring and adaptive management framework and plan
- Providing technical assistance and project development for priority capital projects
- Supporting implementation of Green Shorelines and riparian area stewardship strategies

In 2014, the 3% ILA cost share increase helped close the majority of the funding gap in staffing and operating costs. The remaining funding gap is being covered by a combination of grants that offset ILA funds and carryover ILA funds from staff salary savings in previous years. Carryover salary savings and one-time grant funds may be an option for helping to address the shortfall in 2015, but these options are not recommended by the Management Committee as they would reduce the funding that could be used to advance implementation priorities identified by the SRC.

Management Committee Recommendation

Based on the Salmon Recovery Council's decision in 2014 to increase the 2014 ILA cost share 3% and up to 5% in 2015 and the anticipated staffing and operating revenue shortfall in 2015, the Management Committee recommends the Salmon Recovery Council approve the 2015 proposed WRIA 8 Budget and Work Plan, including a 5% increase to the ILA cost share to completely cover the anticipated revenue shortfall for staffing and operating expenditures and to continue to support WRIA 8 implementation priorities.