

WATER RESOURCE INVENTORY AREA 9 (WRIA 9) WATERSHED ECOSYSTEM FORUM



Algona
Auburn
Black Diamond
Burien
Covington
Des Moines
Enumclaw
Federal Way
Kent
King County
Maple Valley
Normandy Park
Renton
SeaTac
Seattle
Tacoma
Tukwila

King Conservation District

Vashon/Maury Island
Community Council

Covington Water District

Port of Seattle

Washington Department
of Ecology

Washington Department
of Fish and Wildlife

Washington Department
of Natural Resources

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers

Washington
Environmental Council

Green/Duwamish
Watershed Alliance

Trout Unlimited/Mid-Sound
Fisheries Enhancement Group

Save Habitat and Diversity of
Wetlands (SHADOW)

The Boeing Company

Master Builders Association

King County Agricultural
Commission

June 9, 2017

Office of Senator Jeff Flake
United States Senate
Washington, DC 20510



Dear Senator Flake:

On behalf of 17 cities and King County, representing over 700,000 residents, **thank you** for supporting the 2017 Continuing Resolution budget provisions for Puget Sound in Washington State. It is extremely important to King County and its cities that federal support for Puget Sound continue, and we are grateful that Congress agrees.

We need, however, your support and commitment to Puget Sound again. The President's proposed 2018 budget eliminates funding for Puget Sound restoration and discontinues federal support of our locally established efforts to solve the problems we and Congress face together. We request Congress to:

- Restore the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA) grants and education of at least \$262 million, including at least \$65 million for the Pacific Coast Salmon Restoration Fund
- Restore Geographic Programs of the Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) of at least \$427 million, including the Puget Sound share of \$28 million annually
- Restore the National Estuary Program of the EPA of at least \$26.7 million, including the Puget Sound share of \$600,000 annually
- Restore at least \$642,000 to the Fish and Wildlife Service budget for the Washington Salmon Recovery/Environmental Data Quality and Access

Should these federal programs not be funded and our partnership with the federal government discontinued, the impacts would be severe, including:

- Direct economic damage to our communities—**we want and need to recover the health of Puget Sound as our economy depends on it**
- Millions of dollars of local and state leveraged funding left on the table
- Severance of a long and well established partnership among local governments, tribes, state and federal government, and alliances with many more stakeholders, including landowners

We liken the President's proposed 2018 budget to shutting off the engine of the Puget Sound economy, and walking away from multiple-year and many millions of dollars of local, state, and federal investments made by Congress and us to restore Puget Sound. We expect Congress to recognize the devastating affects to our local, regional, state, interstate, and federal economies of the President's budget proposals and fully restore Puget Sound funding at levels at least provided in the 2017 Continuing Resolution.

Financial support provided by signers of Watershed Planning Interlocal Agreement for WRIA 9 including: Algona, Auburn, Black Diamond, Burien, Covington, Des Moines, Enumclaw, Federal Way, Kent, King County, Maple Valley, Normandy Park, Renton, SeaTac, Seattle, Tacoma, Tukwila

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We care deeply about the environment of Puget Sound. As stated by former EPA Administrator Bill Ruckelshaus and resident of Puget Sound regarding our local collaborative governance to address problems, "Washington's approach to salmon recovery is a national model. We were the first in the history of the federal Endangered Species Act to have local communities statewide write recovery plans and set priorities for saving salmon." Congress must continue helping us implement our locally established and collaborative efforts to restore the health of Puget Sound.

The Salmon Habitat Plan was the culmination of six years of local governments, tribes, business and environmental interests, and state and federal agencies working together to:

- Achieve recovery of the Green River Chinook Salmon population
- Improve the ecological and economic health of the watershed
- Contribute to the recovery of Puget Sound as a whole

Enclosed is a graphical representation of the Salmon Habitat Plan, "Making our Watershed Fit for a King".

Please contact Doug Osterman, Salmon Recovery Manager, at 206-477-4793 or doug.osterman@kingcounty.gov with questions.

Thank you for your consideration,

WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum Co-Chairs:



Marlla Mhoon
Councilmember, City of Covington



Bill Peloza
Councilmember, City of Auburn