

# WRIA 9 Implementation Technical Committee Charter

Last Updated December 17, 2015

## 1. Background

The WRIA 9 Forum authorized the creation of an Implementation Technical Committee (ITC) in 2007 to track and adaptively manage 2005 Salmon Habitat Plan (Plan) implementation. Inherent in Endangered Species Act 4(f) coverage of the Plan is the requirement that Plan goals and actions can be achieved and that “objective, measurable criteria” which, when met, would result in delisting. An Implementation Plan with monitoring and adaptive management guidance for WRIA 9 was developed by the WRIA 9 Adaptive Management Work Group and adopted by the WRIA 9 Forum in January 2007. The ITC updated the monitoring and adaptive management guidance for the Plan in 2013. The WRIA 9 ITC has also reviewed and commented on project proposals, participated in field reviews of proposed projects, and wrote a Status and Trends report in 2012.

## 2. Objectives

The overall purpose of the WRIA 9 ITC is to advise on continued implementation of the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan, in its current and/or future forms, using principles of adaptive management. Future work of the ITC will include reviewing project proposals to ensure they are consistent with Plan targets, finalizing the draft 2013 WRIA 9 Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan, and updating the Plan, which was intended to be a 10-year guidebook. To accomplish these tasks, the ITC must continually synthesize scientific information and use it to guide the implementation of the Plan. To this end, the ITC will recommend and oversee the collection and interpretation of physical and biological data related to salmon recovery in WRIA 9, and provide recommendations to project and program sponsors and the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum regarding improvements to proposed projects and/or modifications to incorporate into future projects or other recovery actions. The oversight role is envisioned to be distanced from the actual data collection.

WRIA 9 ITC objectives include:

### Plan Monitoring and Adaptive Management

1. Update the Plan every 10 years, or as needed to meet the requirements of the ESA as stipulated by NOAA and/or Puget Sound Partnership
2. Develop a WRIA 9 Status and Trends report every five years:
  - a. Oversee data management and analysis; interpret existing data
  - b. Evaluate the effects of management actions;
  - c. Recommend changes if certain thresholds are (or are not) reached;
  - d. Identify data gaps, and data to be collected
3. Draft monitoring, adaptive management, and research objectives, protocols, and plans
4. Advise and support WRIA 9 team efforts to coordinate with Puget Sound Partnership and other watershed monitoring efforts to advance efforts to monitor viable salmonid population (VSP) and environmental indicators, as well as to gain information from project monitoring in other watersheds
5. Identify Plan and monitoring needs and make recommendations to the Forum for Plan amendments, Plan updates, monitoring, and funding
6. Assemble and distribute relevant technical information and recommendations to project sponsors and the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum

7. Seek out and promote partnerships for monitoring and adaptive management
8. Review changes to 4-year Workplans

#### Project Monitoring and Adaptive Management (Optional)

9. A project review workgroup, consisting of 3-5 people with project and monitoring expertise, may be convened to conduct early reviews of project designs at the phase of alternatives analysis. Technical experts may be brought in as needed. The project review workgroup will report back to the ITC.
10. Review project designs, monitoring and research reports
11. Provide technical expertise and recommendations to project sponsors and the WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum
12. Reevaluate project ranking process (every 4 years or as needed ):
  - a. Is there new information that would change the project ranking process?
  - b. Re-rank unfunded projects and consider new project proposals
  - c. Propose changes to project ranking criteria and project list to Forum

### **3. Products**

Annual update to the WRIA 9 Forum on the progress of project implementation, results of effectiveness monitoring, update on status and trends monitoring, and recommendations for implementation, monitoring and funding.

### **4. Time Commitment**

The entire ITC shall meet each month for two or three hours. ITC members may need to review or develop materials between meetings, and/or participate in subcommittees. One day-long meeting may be held each year as needed, and field meetings to tour and review project sites may also be scheduled as needed. Email and phone conferences will be used where practicable.

### **5. Chair**

The ITC will be chaired by a member of the WRIA 9 Watershed Coordination Services team, or as agreed upon by the group. The ITC Chair may also appoint a technical co-chair from within the ITC. The chair and technical co-chair will be responsible for setting agendas, scheduling meetings, facilitating meetings, inviting guest speakers, maintaining meeting notes, briefing the WRIA 9 Forum, and disseminating information to ITC members.

### **6. Membership**

WRIA 9 staff will, at a minimum, invite representatives from WRIA 9 Watershed Coordination Services, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, King County Department of Natural Resources, Seattle Public Utilities, Port of Seattle, Puget Sound Partnership, U.S Army Corp of Engineers, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, Tacoma Public Utilities, a small city, and a non-governmental organization. The term of membership shall be unlimited.

### **7. Decision-making**

The ITC will strive to reach consensus on recommendations and decisions. When this is not possible, provisions for the expression of minority opinions will be made so that decision makers and the public are informed of the diversity of views.