



## OPERATING GUIDES WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum

As approved/amended by Watershed Ecosystem Forum  
Approved February 12, 2009 and amended May 14, 2009

**Membership and Organization:** Membership of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum is comprised of the municipalities of WRIA 9 that are parties to the interlocal agreement (ILA) and business, environmental, and community interests as appointed by the parties to the ILA. Each member municipality, agency, or entity of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum determines its representative delegate and alternate to represent them on the Watershed Ecosystem Forum. Written notification must be submitted to the Chair (see Chairmanship below). Attached are the organizational chart that depicts the WRIA 9 organization established through the WRIA 9 ILA and the list of members and their representatives of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum.

**Membership of Non-Governmental Organizations and Businesses:** To be members of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum, non-governmental organizations and businesses on the Watershed Ecosystem Forum should meet the following criteria:

- Have activities or interests across the entire watershed or at least across one subwatershed;
- Be in existence at least three years;
- Attend, be prepared for, and actively participate in Watershed Ecosystem Forum meetings (if a delegate does not attend, an alternate should);
- Seek to understand the interests and concerns of other members; and
- Work cooperatively and in good faith with other members to implement the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan: Making Our Watershed Fit for a King.

By a two-thirds vote, a quorum of the existing membership of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum may waive any of these requirements to authorize membership.

If a non-governmental or business member does not participate in three (3) sequential meetings of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum, its membership may be revoked by a two-thirds vote of a quorum of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum.

**Function:** The Watershed Ecosystem Forum functions as both (1) an advisory body to the parties to the ILA to make recommendations concerning protecting and restoring the ecosystem of the Green-Duwamish River and Central Puget Sound Watershed, including monitoring implementation of the "WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan: Making Our Watershed Fit for a King"; and (2) the local citizens committee, also known as the Lead Entity Citizens Advisory Group under state law, to develop prioritized habitat project lists for funding consideration by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board

**Scope of Work & Salmon Habitat Recovery Team:** The scope of work and staffing of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum are determined annually by the parties pursuant to the ILA under which participating municipalities in WRIA 9 have agreed to work together from 2007

through 2015. The Watershed Ecosystem Forum may make recommendations to the parties to the ILA on annual scope of work and staffing levels.

Staff members are responsible for generating products and action items for the Watershed Ecosystem Forum. Staff members comprise a group housed at King County called the Salmon Habitat Recovery Team.

***Nature of Meetings, Ground Rules, & Chairmanship:*** Watershed Ecosystem Forum meetings are:

- Focused on reviewing and acting on information and recommendations brought forward by the Chair, Management Committee, and Salmon Habitat Recovery Team.
- Held four times per year with the time and location announced well in advance, and start and stop on time. Agendas for the meetings and meeting materials are distributed one week prior to meetings, and meeting summaries are distributed in a timely fashion.
- Are open to the public and to observers and include a limited amount of time for observers to offer commentary and insights at a specified point in the agenda.
- Are planned and managed by the Chair. Meetings are primarily conducted to make decisions. Informational meetings are discouraged; information is to be primarily conveyed via print, electronic communication, and web-based methods.

Watershed Ecosystem Forum member representatives commit to the following ground rules:

- Attend, be prepared for, and actively participate in meetings.
- Seek to represent the range of interests and concerns of the member organization that he/she is representing.
- Seek to understand the interests and concerns of other member entities.
- Interact with each other with respect, and with a focus on trying to find creative ways to maximize the interests of each participant. Work cooperatively and in good faith with other representatives to implement the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan.
- Contact the members of the Salmon Habitat Recovery Team to discuss agendas, issues, or the Salmon Habitat Plan.

Watershed Ecosystem Forum chairmanship is determined annually by the parties to the ILA (pursuant to provisions of the ILA).

***Decisions:*** Decisions and recommendations of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum are to be made with efficiency and fairness. Member representatives recognize there is a direct relationship between successfully implementing the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan and the number of member entities who agree to implementation measures, priority actions, and changes to the Salmon Habitat Plan. Consensus (as defined by lack of dissent), therefore, will be the goal of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum.\* The Chair is to seek consensus among representatives on key decisions. In the absence of consensus, a majority of all members present and the majority of the local governments present at any meeting of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum prevail. Minority opinions are recorded in the summary of the meeting, along with the reason for the dissent. Meeting summaries can be supplemented by written statements from member representatives. The Chair is responsible for gauging the degree of consensus, and for calling the question to vote.

Some decisions will only be in the purview of the parties pursuant to the ILA. The parties to the ILA choose the Chair of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum, and select and assign duties to a

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\* The Parties to the ILA make decisions as described in the WRIA 9 Interlocal Agreement for 2007-2015 or as amended.

Management Committee that serves as its executive committee. The parties to the ILA solely oversee and administer the expenditures of budgeted funds and allocated resources contributed by each party or obtained from other sources. The parties to the ILA, in tandem with the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, periodically during a year convene separately as the Ecosystem Restoration Project Executive Committee to make funding decisions regarding the Green/Duwamish River Ecosystem Restoration Project.

***Correspondence:***

Authorship: Correspondence written at the direction of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum will be reviewed and signed by the co-chairs of the WEF.

Correspondence written at the direction of the Management Committee will be reviewed and signed by the chair of the Management Committee.

Correspondence of watershed significance written at the initiative of the Watershed Coordinator will be submitted to the WEF co-chairs and members of the Management Committee for review at least three working days prior to its proposed submission date.

Distribution: Copies of routine correspondence will be distributed to members of the Watershed Ecosystem Forum as part of pre-meeting e-mail packets unless importance and/or urgency justify sending a separate e-mail simultaneous with the submission to the addressee.

The chart below clarifies who votes on which topic:

Decisions/Functions	Watershed Ecosystem Forum	Parties to the ILA <sup>^</sup>	Management Committee
Budget & Funding	◻	■	◻
Work Program & Staffing	◻	■	◻
Correspondence*	■		◻
Officer Election	◻	■	◻
Funding—KCD	◻	■	◻
LE Citizens Advisory Group/ SRFB	■	◻	
Adaptive Management Recommendations	■		
Agenda, Issues & Topics	◻		◻
ERP Project Funding <sup>^</sup>		■	◻

\* Comments on legislation, correspondence to political entities, etc.

<sup>^</sup> The Parties to the ILA also convene periodically as the “Ecosystem Restoration Project (ERP) Executive Committee” which includes the Army Corps of Engineers to decide funding priorities of the ERP.

**Key to Symbols:**

- Decide
- ◻ Recommend
- ◻ Discuss
- ◻ “Tee-Up”

**Voting Procedures of the Parties to the ILA:** The following voting procedures are established in the WRIA 9 ILA. The procedures only apply to the Parties to the ILA.

5. **VOTING.** The **WRIA 9 Watershed Forum** shall make decisions, approve scopes of work, budgets, priorities, and any other actions necessary to carry out the purposes of this Agreement as follows:
  - 5.1 Decisions shall be made using a consensus model as much as possible. Each Party agrees to use its best efforts and exercise good faith in consensus decision-making. Consensus may be reached by unanimous agreement of the Parties. If unanimous agreement of members cannot be reached then the Parties to this agreement may reach consensus by a majority recommendation with a minority report. Any Party who does not accept a majority decision may request weighted voting as set forth below.

- 5.2 In the event consensus cannot be achieved, as determined by rules and procedures adopted by the **WRIA 9 Watershed Forum**, the **WRIA 9 Watershed Forum** shall take action on a dual-majority basis, as follows:
- 5.2.1 Each Party, through its appointed representative, may cast its weighted vote in connection with a proposed **WRIA 9 Watershed Forum** action.
  - 5.2.2 The weighted vote of each Party in relation to the weighted votes of each of the other Parties shall be determined by the percentage of the annual contribution made by each Party as set in accordance with Section 4.4 herein in the year in which the vote is taken.
  - 5.2.3 For any action subject to weighted voting to be deemed approved, valid and binding, an affirmative vote must be cast by both a majority of the Parties to this Agreement and by a majority of the weighted votes of the Parties to this Agreement. A vote of abstention shall be recorded as a “no” vote.
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