

2021 Legislative Priorities for Salmon Recovery and Puget Sound Watershed Health



*Snoqualmie Watershed
Forum Partners (WRIA 7)*

CAPITAL BUDGET

Investments in healthy habitat support economic recovery, provide jobs, and improve public health; they also lead to salmon and orca recovery and community resiliency.

Shovel-ready Capital Projects in Snoqualmie Valley and the Skykomish River:

Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project: Restore and reconnect 145 acres of Snoqualmie River floodplain to improve survival of juvenile Chinook salmon reduce flood risk to farms.

REQUEST: \$15M to King County Water and Land Resources Division

Beckler Confluence Alluvial Fan Restoration: Construct 6 log jams to dramatically increase instream habitat complexity and prevent salmon eggs from being washed downstream.

REQUEST: \$500k to Wild Fish Conservancy

Cherry Valley Initiative: Benefit salmon and farmers by increasing juvenile salmonid habitat, improving farmland drainage, and reducing flood hazards in Cherry Creek in Snoqualmie Valley.

REQUEST: \$2.3M to Wild Fish Conservancy

The following grant programs fund Puget Sound and statewide salmon recovery efforts:

- **Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) - \$80 Million (Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO))** PSAR funds support implementation of the highest priority habitat projects throughout Puget Sound. The **Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project is ranked #1** (see details above).
- **State Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) - \$90M (RCO)** SRFB funds consist of federal and state capital funds that serve as the required match to federal funds. Together, these dollars support annual grant rounds for salmon habitat protection and restoration projects statewide.
- **Floodplains by Design –\$70M (Washington Department of Ecology)** This funding supports multi-objective floodplain restoration projects that benefit salmon, farmers, and help keep floodplain residents safe from floods. King County's Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project is Ranked #1 (see details above).
- **Fish Barrier Removal Board Grants –\$50M (RCO)** Funding for projects to remove barriers to fish passage, opening habitat that salmon formerly occupied.



The Fall City Floodplain Restoration Project will protect roads and farms from flood damage and improve salmon habitat.



Chinook salmon fry and eggs



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Policy priorities to strengthen protections for salmon habitat

Designate WA Department of Fish and Wildlife and Tribes as lead agencies for water typing and create consistent and streamlined procedures for mapping and classifying streams on both forest and non-forest lands. Accurately locating and classifying all streams protects them from being cleared, piped and built over. Department of Natural Resources has jurisdiction over water typing on forest lands, and procedures for non-forest lands are inconsistent.

Create a net ecological gain standard for mitigation for impacts to shorelines and aquatic areas to make up for past damages and reverse ongoing declines in salmon and orcas. **HB 2550 and HB 2549, 2020 House.**

Protect flows in streams and rivers for aquatic life and beneficial uses by increasing funding to Ecology for tracking and enforcement of existing regulations, adding rules to protect instream flows, and expanding the use of recycled water.

- Improve water use tracking, reporting, and enforcement of illegal water use
- Enforce rules about beneficial use and waste
- Expand programs and rules that preserve and protect instream flows
- Ensure land use, shoreline and stormwater programs implement instream requirements
- Evaluate contributions of river habitat projects and beavers to groundwater and stream flows
- Develop and use recycled wastewater to offset consumptive use, preserve instream flows, reduce wastewater discharges, and create water supply resiliency.

Limit liability for entities that implement habitat restoration projects involving the placement of large wood in rivers and streams.

Wood in streams is a scientifically proven vital component of high-quality salmon habitat, and increasing wood rivers is a key to salmon recovery. Liability concerns related to placing large wood in streams as part of habitat restoration projects can delay and/or limit salmon habitat restoration actions. Amend existing state law (RCW 4.24.210, which limits liability of landowners for injuries to recreational users) to clearly limit liability for entities that implement habitat restoration projects.



Tolt River

For more information about these priorities, please contact:

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