2021 Legislative Priorities for Salmon Recovery and Puget Sound Watershed Health

Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Partners

CAPITAL BUDGET

Highest Priority Funding Programs

• Support $69.9 million for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Supports implementation of the highest priority habitat protection and restoration projects throughout Puget Sound. Program includes:
  1) base funding for watershed habitat projects grant round (first $30 million), and
  2) funding for ranked list of large-scale projects.

• Support $80 million for state salmon recovery funding through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Leverages federal funding and serves as required match for annual grant rounds managed by watershed-based salmon recovery Lead Entities around the state to recommend salmon habitat protection and restoration projects.

• Support $70 million for Floodplains by Design in Washington Department of Ecology budget. Supports large-scale, multiple benefit floodplain restoration and management projects.

• Support $20 million for Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Provides grants to protect and restore the Puget Sound nearshore.

Other Priority Funding Programs

• Support $140 million for Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Provides funding for land protection and outdoor recreation, including park acquisition and development, habitat conservation, farmland and forest preservation, and construction of outdoor recreation facilities.

• Support $9.1 million for Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Provides funding to protect and restore natural aquatic ecosystem processes, provide public access to the water, and increase public awareness of aquatic lands.
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Support $65.6 million for Fish Barrier Removal Board in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Provides funding to remove barriers to fish passage for Chinook salmon, coho salmon, and Lake Sammamish kokanee that limit access to valuable habitat.

Support stormwater management and water quality improvement priorities in Washington Department of Ecology budget:
• $52.7 million for Stormwater Financial Assistance Program
• $80 million for Centennial Clean Water Program
• $315 million for Water Pollution Control Program (aka, Clean Water State Revolving Fund)

Operating Budget
Support $828,000 for salmon recovery Lead Entities in Recreation and Conservation Office budget. Provides base grants to Lead Entities in watersheds around the state to administer a locally-based process to develop and prioritize projects for funding through the state Salmon Recovery Funding Board (per RCW 77.85). Support state agency budget requests for monitoring salmon populations and for studies and management of predation, disease, and other issues that affect WRIA 8 salmon populations and are vital to understanding and reporting on progress towards recovery.

Policy Legislation
Track and support legislation seeking to improve regulatory protections for areas that are important for salmon habitat.

Support legislation seeking to provide immunity from liability for entities that implement habitat restoration projects involving the placement of large wood.

Track and participate in efforts to develop and establish new watershed-based and/or regional funding authorities that support multiple benefit projects addressing salmon habitat protection and restoration and Puget Sound recovery priorities.

Support legislation addressing effects of climate change on Chinook salmon and salmon habitat.

For more information about these priorities, please contact:
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