

WRIA 8 Update and Committee Reports

March 20, 2014

- **Puget Sound Regional Update** – The **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC)** last met on January 23. Agenda topics included updates on steelhead planning, discussion of EPA riparian buffer width policy and requirement in federal grants, proposed three-year work plan policies and guidance, the 2015-2017 Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) grant round and allocation formula, and the Floodplains by Design project. The PS SRC meets next on March 27.

The **South Central Action Area Caucus** last met on February 19. The meeting agenda included a update on the process for Caucus Group review of EPA National Estuary Program grants for consistency with local priorities, review and approval of a template letter of support for grant applicants, presentation of Puyallup/White Watershed (WRIA 10) priority projects and programs, and an overview of Puget Sound Partnership comments on local near term actions for inclusion in the 2014 Action Agenda update.

- **2014 grant rounds** – In the 2014 grant cycle, federal dollars are available through the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB – projected to be \$433,356), and local funding is being provided by the King County Flood Control District’s Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant Program (approximately \$1.5 million). WRIA 8 staff is currently in the process of organizing the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee and refining application materials and defining milestones for these 2014 funding opportunities. CWM grant applications are due on April 18. SRFB pre-applications are to be complete in the PRISM Online project database by April 18 and final applications are due on August 1. The Project Subcommittee will conduct site visits and review and score applications for CWM in late April/early May and will do so for SRFB in mid-May. The Salmon Recovery Council will consider the Project Subcommittee’s CWM recommendations at the May 15 meeting and the SRFB recommendations at the July 17 meeting.
- **Ballard Locks** – King County Councilmember Larry Phillips, WRIA 8 Chair, met with Army Corps of Engineers Headquarters staff in Washington, D.C. at the end of January to discuss critical Locks infrastructure improvements. Councilmember Phillips also joined the Puget Sound Partnership in meetings with Reps. Rick Larsen and Adam Smith. The Puget Sound Partnership is advancing a federal priority focused on getting the Corps to improve its failing infrastructure that is putting the regional investment in Puget Sound habitat protection and restoration at risk – the three facilities being highlighted are Howard Hansen Dam, Buckley Diversion Dam, and the Locks.

Potential follow-up on the Locks includes:

- Reach out to Jeff McKee (Corps Headquarters Navigation Department) to discuss Locks funding.
- A staff-level meeting is scheduled on March 19 with Peggy Marcus at the Corps (Locks Nat Res Manager), to discuss coordination and opportunities to leverage

efforts around a Locks Centennial celebration to ensure that fish passage upgrades are part of any facilities improvements.

- Outreach to NOAA, as the agency responsible for implementing the ESA listing for Chinook, to request their support for fish passage improvements.
- **Legislative priorities letter to WRIA 8 legislators** – At the January meeting, the SRC decided to send a letter to all WRIA 8 state legislators to share WRIA 8’s state legislative priorities. The letter was sent to legislators on February 12. We received responses from a few legislators that were pleased to receive the priorities and planned to keep them in mind during session. The letter is included in the meeting packet for your reference.
- **WRIA 8 client satisfaction survey results** – Every year, King County, as the WRIA 8 Service Provider, conducts a WRIA 8 Client Satisfaction Survey to receive feedback from WRIA 8 partners on the staff team’s work and overall implementation of salmon recovery. The 2013 survey results are included in the meeting packet for your information. Twenty-eight responses were received, which is about average. Generally, feedback rated the WRIA 8 staff team’s service in all categories as good to excellent. One noted point of improvement is in helping project sponsors identify, develop, and fund priority projects, which is an area of emphasis in 2014 through the most recent WRIA 8 PSAR grant. Feedback from the survey on what are the most valuable services noted the value of WRIA 8 as a forum for sharing information, coordinating recovery efforts, including monitoring and habitat restoration, and developing innovative solutions.

WRIA 8 Committee Reports

- **WRIA 8 Technical Committee** – Met February 10 and March 5. Processed and finalized recommended products for the WRIA 8 Monitoring and Adaptive Management framework: Ecosystem Components, Key Ecological Attributes, Indicators, ecosystem pressures and stresses. Transcribed WRIA 8 Chinook Plan strategies for development of Results Chains (theories of change). Discussed numeric objectives for Viable Salmonid Population (VSP) parameters as previously recommended in H-Integration work. More TC work will be necessary to recommend standards for habitat metrics, and further prioritize indicators.

The Committee also made recommendations for proposed 2014 additions to WRIA 8 Three-Year Work Plan project list.

- **WRIA 8 Implementation Committee** – The Committee met on February 11 and on March 11. Agenda topics at the February meeting included: discussion of the WRIA 8 Three-Year Work Plan update for 2014 (through which the Committee provided recommendations on updates to the programs on the Work Plan), updating the Salmon Recovery Council Operating Guidelines to reflect the shift in local grant funding from KCD to the King County Flood Control District; discussion of a letter to legislators intended to convey WRIA 8 state legislative priorities; and a status update on the WRIA 8 monitoring and adaptive management effort. Agenda topics at the March meeting included: follow-up discussion of recommended updates to the programmatic activities on the WRIA 8 Three-Year Work Plan;

a presentation and discussion of WRIA 8's monitoring and adaptive management status and the next steps needed to complete Phase 1; and preparation for the March 20 Salmon Recovery Council meeting. The Committee next meets on April 8.

- **Green Shoreline Steering Committee Meeting** – The Steering Committee did not meet since the last SRC meeting. Steering Committee members, including WRIA 8 staff, participated in developing the agenda for the Salish Sea Shoreline Forum that was held on February 3. The Forum focused on improving permitting efficiency and effectiveness for shoreline restoration. The Steering Committee will continue to coordinate meetings in conjunction with Salish Sea Shoreline Forums.