

# WRIA 8 Update and Committee Reports

November 19, 2015

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- **Puget Sound Regional Update** –The **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC)** last met on September 24. Agenda topics included an overview of the Puget Sound Nearshore Ecosystem Restoration Program and the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, review of the proposed approach for developing a Chinook salmon Implementation Strategy related to the Puget Sound recovery Vital Signs, presentation on the Qwuloolt estuary restoration project in the Snohomish River watershed, deciding the approach and process for submitting funding proposals to the Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) for updating watershed chapters of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan, approving principles for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) capacity funds. The PS SRC meets on November 19. Andy Rheame, WRIA 8 Vice Chair and Bothell Councilmember, and Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz represent WRIA 8.

The **South Central Action Area Caucus** had one workshop on October 30 and two meetings (October 14 and November 6) since the last SRC meeting. These meetings focused on discussion of PSP’s request for proposals (RFP) for near-term actions (NTAs) for the 2016 update to the Action Agenda for Puget Sound recovery, the process for a similar Caucus Group solicitation for local area near-term actions, and reviewing over 110 pre-proposals submitted by local project sponsors. The Caucus Group will continue to meet at least monthly through the end of the year. WRIA 8 does not currently have a SRC member representative on the Caucus Group. Anyone interested in representing WRIA 8 on the Caucus Group should let Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz know. The next meeting is scheduled for December 9.

- **Interlocal Agreement (ILA) partner approval status** – As of November 12, 24 of 28 local government partners have approved the ILA. The remaining four partners are scheduled to consider the ILA for approval between mid-November and mid-December.
- **Minor update to WRIA 8 Memorandum of Understanding** – King County changed the title of its lead staff for watershed-based salmon recovery from “Watershed Coordinator” to “Salmon Recovery Manager.” The Memorandum of Understanding approved by the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council has been updated to reflect this change.
- **WRIA 8 funding proposal to support completing Plan update and monitoring and adaptive management** – Over the past year and a half, WRIA 8 has been working through a process to develop a monitoring and adaptive management plan for salmon recovery in our watershed. Earlier this year, Scott Stolnack, WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator, shared the results of Phase 1 of this work. In the 2016 legislative session, Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) received \$400,000 to support local watersheds in completing the monitoring and adaptive management planning process as part of updating Chinook salmon recovery plans. PSP sent a request for proposals on October 13 with a deadline of November 10. The Management Committee approved sending a letter of support from the Salmon Recovery Council to submit with a WRIA 8 proposal for \$96,000 to support our effort to complete the monitoring and

adaptive management process and our 10-year update to the WRIA 8 Plan. (see letter in meeting packet)

- **WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Summit** – On February 4, 2016, WRIA 8 will host a Salmon Recovery Summit for watershed partners and stakeholders, including technical experts, natural resource managers, outreach and education practitioners, nonprofit organizations, and elected officials. The purpose of the Summit is to celebrate 10 years of implementation progress, discuss and get feedback on WRIA 8 priorities and implementation approach, and motivate partners and foster excitement for future implementation. A save the date will be distributed before the Thanksgiving holiday.

- **WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Tour highlights successes and challenges**

About 40 folks visited several sites around WRIA 8 on October 9 for our annual look at high priority projects across the watershed. Participants included state legislators, Congressional staff, local officials and staff, state and federal agency staff, and community group members. Dodging a few raindrops -- and spotting some salmon! -- along the way, we visited:

- The Hiram M. Chittenden (Ballard) Locks to learn about urgently needed fish passage and infrastructure improvements, and efforts underway to raise funds for these and other improvements in the context of the Locks' 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary coming up in 2017.
- The site of a future multi-benefit floodplain restoration project at Riverbend on the Cedar River, where a mobile home park was purchased and residents are being relocated out of harm's way.
- Confluence Park, site of a stream channel and riparian area restoration (part of a large urban park project) in downtown Issaquah, where Issaquah Creek and East Fork Issaquah Creek come together.

These tours provide an invaluable opportunity to see progress – and challenges – in person, and to network with others working to restore salmon habitat across our watershed.

- **Puget Sound Partnership solicitation for near-term actions for 2016 Action Agenda update** – The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) is seeking submittals for regional and local Puget Sound recovery programs/projects designed to (1) prevent pollution from stormwater, (2) protect and restore habitat, and (3) recover shellfish beds. Selected “near-term actions” (NTAs) will be included in the 2016 update to the Action Agenda for Puget Sound recovery, which may guide the allocation of some sources of future Puget Sound recovery funding. For local actions, the South Central Action Area Caucus Group, which includes WRIA 8 as a member, is receiving, reviewing, and submitting proposals to PSP. The deadline for pre-proposals was October 28, and, for actions that move forward, full proposals are due November 30. WRIA 8 distributed this solicitation to our partners and is working with project sponsors to support their proposals. WRIA 8 also submitted the following NTAs for which we are proposing to be the lead/“owner”:

  - Developing options to address elevated temperatures in the Ship Canal
  - Advancing options to address elevated temperatures in the Sammamish River
  - Implementation of Ballard Locks fish passage improvements

- **Survey of priority programmatic actions** – On October 26, a survey using Survey Monkey was sent out to all 28 partner jurisdictions and 23 non-profit partners in WRIA 8. The survey asks about the status of programmatic actions recommended in the WRIA 8 Salmon Conservation Plan – land use, outreach, education and other – that watershed partners may have implemented in the past five years to promote salmon recovery. Responses are due November 13 and will be analyzed in the aggregate to report on the status of WRIA 8 Plan implementation in our 10-year Progress Report, at the Watershed Summit slated for early 2016, and to inform the 10-year Plan Update.
- **WRIA 8 Technical Workshop** – on November 17, the WRIA 8 Technical Committee hosted a workshop of scientists and technical practitioners to discuss the state of our scientific knowledge of bottlenecks and gaps in our understanding of Chinook limiting factors for recovery, to inform the 10-year Chinook Conservation Plan update. More information will be forthcoming.
- **Invitation to tour dewatered Ballard Locks** – The Army Corps of Engineers is hosting its annual tour of the dewatered large lock chamber starting 10:00 a.m. November 23, 2015, with area stakeholders from various business and government agencies. The tour offers the opportunity to go down into the dewatered lock for a first-hand view of the maintenance the Corps does every year on this 100-year-old structure. If you are interested in attending, contact: Steve Cosgrove, Corps Public Affairs Specialist at [Steven.W.Cosgrove@usace.army.mil](mailto:Steven.W.Cosgrove@usace.army.mil) or 206-764-3464.
- **2015 grant round status update** – The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) will hold their 2015 funding meeting on December 9 in Olympia. The funding recommendations approved by the SRC at the May 21 meeting will go before the SRFB for funding approval, with one exception. The Little Bear Creek Knotweed Control and Reforestation Project (sponsored by Snohomish County) was withdrawn from funding consideration. WRIA 8 staff will request that the funding recommended for this project (\$75,400) be rolled into the 2016 grant round. Additionally, another project recommended for funding in May was assigned a “project of concern” status by the SRFB Technical Review Panel on the basis of project cost. As a result, the project sponsor and WRIA 8 staff will appeal the status decision to the SRFB in an attempt to have the project cleared for funding. If the SRFB does not clear the project, we will request that these funds are also carried forward to our 2016 grant round (\$250,000).

In reviewing 2015 - 2017 legislative funding decisions, PSP determined identifying projects for Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funds earlier in the legislative process would be better received by the legislature. Currently, PSP submits a funding request without identified projects. The PSSRC is considering a policy proposal at their November 19 meeting that will ask watersheds to consider options for 2017 – 2019 PSAR projects during the 2016 grant round. WRIA 8 staff will communicate the decision to project sponsors in late November, as this would mark a fairly significant change to the expectations sponsors have for the PSAR grant round.

- **WRIA 8 E-news** –The WRIA 8 E-news published October 20 reported on the October Salmon Recovery Tour, plantings happening this fall at Confluence Park and an update on Salmon SEEson, with notes that people are seeing fish return, notably Chinook (see below). Other items covered were the impending launch of the “Kokanee Quest” geocaching activity, and a video that documents Rainbow Bend project, including footage of fish using the site <https://vimeo.com/141571358>
- **Chinook spawning update** – Chinook returns have been surprisingly strong this season. This information will be presented in more detail during the meeting.

### **WRIA 8 Committee Reports**

- **WRIA 8 Technical Committee** – The Technical Committee met on October 14. Agenda items included updates on the Lake Washington Predation Monitoring project (UW), Committee approval of the 4-Year Work Plan update, and planning for the upcoming Technical Workshop on November 17. The Committee next meets on December 9 and January 14.
- **WRIA 8 Implementation Committee** – The Implementation Committee has not met since the last SRC meeting. The Committee received an email update of important topics and reviewed the draft topics for the November 19 SRC meeting. The Committee next meets on January 12, 2016.