

WRIA 8 Update and Committee Reports

March 17, 2016

- **Puget Sound Regional Update – [JMK]** The **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC)** last met on January 28. Agenda topics included a presentation on integrating management goals for habitat restoration, hatchery management, and harvest management (aka, “H-Integration”) and the need to align goals to support salmon population recovery, spending plan for supporting watersheds with recovery plan updates and development of monitoring plans, legislative priorities and 2017-2019 recovery planning priorities, and funding policy decisions on the regional funding allocation for capital grant funding, development of a proposed funding level for the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration program in the 2017 legislative session, a policy for allocating unobligated SPAR funds from previous biennium budgets, and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board’s policy to allow salmon recovery regions to allocate up to 10% of their capital grant funding for priority monitoring activities. The PS SRC meets next on March 24. John Stokes, WRIA 8 Vice Chair and Bellevue Mayor, and Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz represent WRIA 8.

The **South Central Action Area Caucus** met four times (November 6, December 9, February 3, and March 2) since the last SRC meeting. These meetings focused on discussion of Puget Sound Partnership’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, reviewing proposal NTAs submitted by local project sponsors, and initial discussions about how to prioritize among local NTAs for future funding that may be allocated to local integrating organizations like the Caucus Group. The Caucus Group will continue to hold monthly meetings or workshops to advance these discussions. Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz currently attends on behalf of WRIA 8 Any SRC member interested in representing WRIA 8 on the Caucus Group should let Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz know. The next workshop is on April 6 and next meeting is scheduled for May 4.

- **2016 Legislative update** – On March 10, a special legislative session was called, extending the 2016 session. Because funding for most of the capital funding programs directly relevant to salmon recovery was not discussed this session, WRIA 8 state legislative priorities focused on thanking legislators for their support of these programs looking ahead to the 2017-2019 biennium session. We plan to invite legislators on our annual fall salmon recovery tour as part of this communication strategy. One important funding issue that has emerged this session is SB 6570, which attempts to manage the decline in revenue from the hazardous substance tax to the state toxics control account, the local toxics control account, and the environmental legacy stewardship account by setting a policy that prioritizes cleanup of toxic sites and postpones grants and loans for controlling stormwater pollution, riparian restoration, and public participation. An amendment to the bill restoring full funding for the Storm Water Financial Assistance Program would help address concerns about important grant funding reductions.

In terms of federal legislative priorities, the Obama Administration's 2017 budget proposal includes \$65 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF), the same

amount that was allocated in 2016. PCSRF is the federal portion of the funding that comprises the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board's grant funding, a critical source of dollars to restore and protect salmon habitat. Please see a draft letter from the Salmon Recovery Council to members of the Washington Congressional delegation thanking them for their past support for this funding and encouraging their support for the current proposed funding level.

- **WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Summit** – On February 4, 2016, WRIA 8 hosted a Salmon 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 was 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. The Summit was a great success, with over 100 people attending and providing enthusiastic and thoughtful feedback throughout the day, which will help inform the update to the WRIA 8 Plan and hopefully inform partners' continued salmon recovery actions. The Summit presentations and summary are available on the WRIA 8 website.
- **10-Year Implementation Progress Report** – In January, the WRIA 8 team completed a 10-year implementation progress report – *Salmon and People Living Together: Adapting to Change in our Watershed* – to document ten years of implementation of the WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan, including accomplishments, lessons learned, and future challenges and priorities. The Progress Report was released at the Summit and is being distributed to watershed and regional partners, funders, state legislators, and the Congressional delegation. The report is available on the WRIA 8 website or email polly.freeman@kingcounty.gov to get additional printed copies.
- **Sponsorship of “Our Urban Watershed” sign/map** – WRIA 8 was recently offered the opportunity to contribute \$4,600 to be a sponsor for a series of “Our Urban Watershed” signs that will be posted in at least 50 locations throughout the central Puget Sound region. The signs are intended for a general public audience and will provide information about watersheds, salmon recovery, stormwater management, floodplains, and shorelines, among other topics. The Salmon Recovery Council is asked to consider WRIA 8's sponsorship.
- **2016 Salmon Recovery Council meeting topics** – Proposed draft 2016 meeting topics are listed in the meeting packet. While there are standing agenda items for most meetings, there is usually space for additional topics of interest. If there are topics Salmon Recovery Council members would like to see considered for a meeting, please suggest them to Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz.
- **WRIA 8 2017 Budget and Work Plan development** – The Management Committee of the Salmon Recovery Council will be convened in April to review and recommend a budget and work plan for Salmon Recovery Council consideration at the May 19 meeting. Management Committee members include: Salmon Recovery Council Chair (Bothell) and Vice-Chair (Bellevue), King County, Seattle, Issaquah, and Hunts Point.

- **WRIA 8 grant supporting Plan update and monitoring and adaptive management** – WRIA 8 was awarded the grant from the Puget Sound Partnership to support the update to the WRIA 8 Plan, focusing primarily on completing the monitoring and adaptive management process we initiated in 2014. WRIA 8 was one of two watersheds in Puget Sound to receive a grant, and our work is intended to help other watersheds go through a similar plan update process. Our work on this grant will commence on March 14 and will be completed by June 2017. We anticipate significant engagement with the Technical and Implementation committees and the Salmon Recovery Council in the process.
- **Grants update** – The Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) held their 2015 funding meeting on December 9 in Olympia. All proposals submitted by WRIA 8 project sponsors were approved, including a project identified by the SRFB Technical Review Panel as a “project of concern.” The project was appealed to the SRFB at the December 9 meeting and successfully cleared for funding.

The 2016 grant rounds are currently open. Proposals for King County Flood Control District Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) funding were due to WRIA 8 on March 10. Proposals for 2016 SRFB funds and 2017 – 2019 Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) funding are due on March 18. The WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee will be reviewing proposals and visiting project sites in April, and we anticipate bringing the Subcommittee’s funding recommendations to the SRC’s May 19 meeting.

- **WRIA 8 E-news** – The WRIA 8 E-news published February 22 reported on the WRIA 8 Salmon Summit, acquisition of the Wayne Golf Course on the Sammamish River in Bothell, an article about the status of the Ballard Locks and needed infrastructure improvements, status of federal funding for salmon recovery grants, a series of salmon-related news stories, and information about grants available for salmon recovery projects and programs. E-news subscriptions have been increasing steadily, with a current total of over 600 subscribers, demonstrating the value of the communication tool. Partners are encouraged to propose idea E-news items by contacting Polly Freeman at: polly.freeman@kingcounty.gov

WRIA 8 Committee Reports

- **WRIA 8 Technical Committee** – The Technical Committee met in December, January, February and March. Agenda items included debriefing from the November Technical Forum and preparations for the WRIA 8 10-year progress report, Summit, and plan update. The committee also heard presentations on juvenile Chinook use of small non-natal streams, juvenile salmonid use of the Rainbow Bend restoration project, and large-scale restoration plans for the Cedar River Riverbend restoration project. 4-Year Work Plan additions were also discussed approved.
- **WRIA 8 Implementation Committee** – The Implementation Committee met in January and March. January meeting topics included discussion of the results from the survey of local

government and non-profit partner implementation of WRIA 8 Plan programmatic priorities, 2016 grant round schedule, status of the 10-year implementation progress report, and planning and preparation for the WRIA 8 Salmon Summit. March meeting topics included a debrief of the WRIA 8 Salmon Summit, WRIA 8 Plan update timeline and schedule for Implementation Committee engagement, proposed additions to the Four-Year Work Plan, and review of the draft March 17 Salmon Recovery Council meeting topics.