# WRIA 8 Update and Committee Reports

September 15, 2016

- **Puget Sound Regional Update –** The **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC)** met on July 28. Agenda topics included an update from the Skokomish Watershed and from WRIA 8 on their progress updating their recovery plans (presentation given by Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz), a discussion of the PCSRF funding reduction, and responses to key scientific questions from the Salmon Science Advisory Group to inform salmon recovery policy making. The PS SRC meets next on September 22. John Stokes, WRIA 8 SRC Vice-Chair and Bellevue Mayor, and Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz represent WRIA 8.

- The **South Central Action Area Caucus** met on August 3 and held a subgroup work session on September 7. The meetings focused on review of the Caucus' 5-year Ecosystem Recovery Plan, presentation on street sweeping as a stormwater toxics reduction strategy, and developing a process for selecting a near-term action to award $100,000. The Caucus Group will continue to hold monthly meetings or workshops to advance these discussions. Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz currently attends to represent WRIA 8. Any SRC member interested in representing WRIA 8 on the Caucus Group should let Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz know. The next meeting is on October 5.

- **Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) capacity funding update** – At the July Salmon Recovery Council meeting, staff and the Council discussed the proposed cut to WRIA 8's 2016 – 2017 salmon recovery lead entity grant as a result of NOAA's reduction to Washington State's allocation of federal funding from the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCRSF). The state Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) met on August 11 to decide how to implement the reduction this year and how to address the issue moving forward (decision summary below). At this meeting, the SRFB maintained the proposed cuts to watershed's grants, which amounts to a $14,342 cut to WRIA 8's 2016 – 2017 $60,000 Lead Entity grant. WRIA 8 staff will renegotiate our grant scope of work for this new funding amount with the Recreation and Conservation Office and will continue to work with our partners to emphasize to NOAA, the Congressional delegation, state legislators, and others the importance of adequate capacity funding to being effective and successfully implementing salmon habitat protection and restoration.

*Summary of Salmon Recovery Funding Board Decisions for 2017 – 2019 Budget*

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| **Salmon State Capital Budget Request** | Request up to **$56 million** for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board for 2017 – 2019 (contained in the Recreation and Conservation Office budget). Up to 6% of capital funding may be used for capacity funding for Lead Entities, which is allowable when the funding supports project development. The intent of using capital dollars for operational capacity is to either bring in additional capacity on top of PCSRF funding or to offset the amount of capacity funding requested in the PCSRF application to NOAA.<br><br>Around $100,000 will also be used to fund a LEAN study to identify whether there are inefficiencies in the Lead Entity system. |
| **State General Fund Request** | Maintain the same funding request as in recent state budgets, **$907,000**, to support Lead Entity capacity. |
| **Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) Request and Strategy** | Maintain the same funding request to NOAA with the same proportion in capacity as in the 2015 and 2016 applications. The timing of the PCSRF submittal (spring) means that capacity could be reduced from PCSRF if RCO is successful in securing additional capital funding to support capacity. Additionally, RCO was directed to work with NOAA to revisit their stance on capacity funding in their prioritization due to the substantial leverage brought about by Washington's salmon recovery human infrastructure. |

- **WRIA 8 Recovery Strategies Workshop** – As part of the process to update the WRIA 8 Plan, WRIA 8 hosted a workshop on August 16 focused on updating recovery strategies. A "strategy" is a group of actions with a common focus that work together to reduce ecosystem pressures, capitalize on opportunities, or restore natural systems (e.g., protect and restore floodplain connectivity). Based on key life stages and the Technical Committee's ranking of ecosystem pressures, workshop participants proposed refinements to existing strategies and new strategies that should be included in the Plan update, as well as identified strategies that should be elevated or be a key focus in the Plan update. The updated strategies will feed into identifying appropriate actions.

- **WRIA 8 letter to Tribes inviting their coordination/participation in WRIA 8 Plan update –** At the July meeting, the Salmon Recovery Council approved sending letters to Tribe with an interest in WRIA 8 salmon recovery efforts, including the Muckleshoot Tribe, Suquamish Tribe, Tulalip Tribes, and Snoqualmie Tribe. Staff sent the letters in early August (see letters in meeting packet). To date, staff have not received any responses.

- **WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Tour** – Each fall, WRIA 8 hosts a Salmon Recovery Tour for SRC members, federal and state legislators and their staff. Because the Tour takes a lot of staff time to plan and execute, and with staff focusing significant time and energy on the Plan update in addition to the fact that it will be hard to get participation from state legislators who will be back in Olympia for the legislative session, staff propose and the Management Committee supports taking a hiatus from the tour this year. Further, we are in a period where most of our projects are in the planning and design stage, so presently there are very few good site visit options.

In lieu of the Tour, we plan to provide a project status update at the November Salmon Recovery Council meeting, to highlight what projects are being designed, implemented, and anticipated to be ready in the next year. In order to meet our objective of reaching state legislators to share WRIA 8 legislative priorities, Chair Rheaume and I discussed working to schedule specific meetings with key legislators in their home districts ahead of the session or in Olympia during the session.

- **Chinook Book ads promote salmon recovery in King County watersheds in print and digitally** – WRIA 8 helped coordinate a multi-watershed advertisement to raise awareness for salmon recovery through the Chinook Book coupon book. The print Chinook Book released on September 1 contains two ads promoting salmon recovery. There is also an inline ad (that shows up when you use the Chinook Book "app" on your phone) that promotes Salmon SEEson throughout September. We will be creating inline content for five additional months between now and September 2017, encouraging salmon-friendly behaviors like natural yard care, etc. Links will take users to webpages to take action, to participate in a specific program, or to learn more about a program.

- **Salmon SEEson Program Update –** The 10th annual Salmon SEEson program is off and running, promoting salmon watching opportunities around the region through flyers, posters and a website. We are happy to have all of our sites and partners back again for this year. Posters are being posted around the region and flyers are available at Salmon SEEson sites, libraries, community centers, and more. The Saving Water Partnership continues to sponsor Salmon SEEson, and we also have support from King County, Duwamish Alive, and the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed (WRIA 9).

- **North West Science Writers Association panel discussion** - ***Water Woes: Too little, too much, too dirty***

  *7:30 p.m. Wednesday, Sept. 14*
  *The Seattle Times (1000 Denny Way), Seattle, WA*
  *Free for members, $5 for guests*

  From drugs detected in Puget Sound salmon to increasing threats of both drought and flooding, water concerns are on the rise in our region and relevant for a range of science interests. Join this discussion of issues surrounding water quality and quantity in the Pacific Northwest, and how agencies and citizens are responding to these changes.

  Panelists will include:
  - Joel Baker, Science Director for the UW-Tacoma Center for Urban Waters
  - Guillaume Mauger, a research scientist with the UW Climate Impacts Group
  - Lynda Mapes, Seattle Times science reporter
  - Brett Walton, Circle of Blue reporter
  - Lynne Peeples (moderator), freelance science journalist

- **WRIA 8 E-news –** The WRIA 8 E-news sent out August 18 included a call for volunteer Cedar River naturalists, updated readers on the summer's watershed conditions, noted the closure of a stretch of the Cedar to recreational use, and encouraged folks to weigh in on potential changes to the Shoreline Management Act. The August E-news also included links to salmon-related news stories and information on relevant grant sources. Partners are encouraged to send ideas for the October E-news to Polly Freeman at polly.freeman@kingcounty.gov by October 3.

## WRIA 8 Committee Reports

- **WRIA 8 Technical Committee –** The Technical Committee met on August 10 and September 14, and participated in a joint TC/IC workshop on August 16. Meeting topics included: WRIA 8 recovery plan update – pressures assessment reviews, habitat goals initial discussion, and recovery strategies workshop; adult Chinook counts at the Ballard Locks; and Bear Creek project design review.

- **WRIA 8 Implementation Committee –** The Implementation Committee met on September 6. Meeting topics included a discussion on updating education and outreach recommendations in the update to the WRIA 8 Plan, the draft WRIA 8 2017 federal and state legislative agenda, and meeting topics for the September Salmon Recovery Council meeting.