

# WRIA 8 Update and Committee Reports

May 18, 2017

- **Puget Sound Regional Update** – The **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC)** last met on March 23. The meeting focused on an update regarding state and federal legislative priorities, the potential for greater PS SRC partner participation in the annual North of Falcon process that establishes harvest limits on salmon populations, approval of a recommended approach to apply the Puget Sound allocation formula to the state Salmon Recovery Funding Board’s interim 2017 capital project funding allocation, an update on the focus for the 2018 Action Agenda Implementation Plan, and an update on the final Chinook Implementation Strategy. The PS SRC next meets on May 25. John Stokes, WRIA 8 SRC Vice-Chair and Bellevue Mayor, and Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz represent WRIA 8.
  
- The **South Central Action Area Caucus** last met on April 5. The meeting focused on an update on the 2018 Action Agenda priorities and the role of local integrating organizations, update on federal and state budgets and effective messages/strategies to impact budget decisions, discussion of the pros and cons to potential LIO restructuring scenarios, and a “deep dive” presentation and discussion on Futurewise’s, “Lay of the Land Report and Low Impact Development Social Marketing,” and general member updates. Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz currently attends to represent WRIA 8. The Caucus Group meets next on June 7.
  
- **Legislative priorities update:**
  - State priorities – The state legislature is in an extended special session, during which the Senate and House will work to develop the state budget. Funding to address the McCleary Decision on public education funding continues to dominate the legislature’s focus. WRIA 8 capital budget priorities fared better in the House budget than the Senate budget.

Table: Status of WRIA 8 priority state salmon recovery capital funding programs

| <b>Funding Program</b>                                | <b>Agency Request / WRIA 8 Support</b> | <b>Gov’s Budget</b> | <b>Senate Budget</b> | <b>House Budget</b> |
|---|--|---------------------|----------------------|---------------------|
| <b>Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)</b> | \$80,000,000                           | \$50,000,000        | \$30,000,000         | \$40,000,000        |
| <b>Salmon Recovery Fund (state)</b>                   | \$55,300,000                           | \$30,000,000        | \$20,000,000         | \$19,771,000        |
| <b>Floodplains by Design</b>                          | \$70,000,000                           | \$20,338,000        | \$20,300,000         | \$51,000,000        |

- Federal priorities – Congress passed a continuing resolution budget to fund the federal government through September, which included funding for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) at last year’s \$65 million level, as well as National Estuary Program funding for Puget Sound recovery (both of which were zeroed out in the President’s proposed budget). Congressmen Heck and Kilmer led the Puget Sound Day on the Hill, which was a coordinated effort among state agency, local government, tribal, business, and community organization partners to collectively support federal investment in Puget Sound recovery. Key messages conveyed during sessions with members of Congress, staff and administration officials included:
  - Puget Sound protection and recovery efforts are a model of innovation and efficient partnerships for creating thriving and resilient communities
  - Withdrawal of federal support at this critical time would result in degradation of water quality and infrastructure, job loss, damage to multiple industries, and potentially irreversible ecosystem loss.
  - Federal investment in Puget Sound recovery and protection helps fulfill treaty-based responsibilities.

Congressional delegation and staff expect 2018 budget to be very contentious. Maintaining a strong Puget Sound advocacy presence will be important. The President’s proposed 2018 budget likely to be released by May 22, and is anticipated to look much like the 2017 proposed budget. There may only be a month to respond to the President’s 2018 proposed budget. To make sure WRIA 8 is prepared to respond in support of 2018 PCSRF funding, staff propose the SRC approve an \$80 million 2018 funding level for PCSRF as a federal legislative priority, which is the same level in WRIA 8’s 2017 legislative priorities.

- **Letter to King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors** – A letter from Andy Rheume, as Chair of the Salmon Recovery Council, was sent on May 10 to the King County Flood Control District Board of Supervisors (see letter in meeting packet), to share WRIA 8’s recently-approved habitat goals for the Cedar River, support inclusion of habitat opportunity areas in the District’s Cedar River Corridor Plan Capital Investment Strategy, and emphasize the overlap between habitat restoration priorities and flood risk reduction priorities that offer the opportunity to develop funding partnerships and implement multi-benefit projects. Individual members of the Council are encouraged to contact members of the FCD Board of Supervisors to emphasize the points in the letter.
- **State Salmon Recovery Conference highlights** – The Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board, along with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Long Live the Kings, the Upper Columbia Salmon Recovery Board, and Pyramid Communications hosted the biennial state Salmon Recovery Conference in Wenatchee on April 25 – 27. The conference brought together over 800 attendees from lead entities and regional salmon recovery organizations; local, state, and federal agencies; conservation districts, land trusts,

and fisheries enhancement groups; tribal members and staff; project managers, planners, restoration practitioners, scientists, engineers; and other salmon recovery-related professionals. Some key conference topics included:

- Emerging findings on climate change and incorporating climate change into salmon recovery plans
- Resolving uncertainty in restoration planning, design, and implementation
- Integrating terrestrial and aquatic restoration
- Prioritizing parcels for salmon habitat protection
- Restoring function to nearshore and estuary habitats
- Monitoring hatchery-wild interactions
- Telling the salmon recovery story
- Predicting and monitoring the effects of river and floodplain restoration
- New trends in programmatic salmon recovery

Keynote speeches were provided by Jay Manning (Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council Chair), Michael Tehan (Assistant Regional Administrator for National Marine Fisheries Service Interior Columbia Basin Office), and Will Stelle (past West Coast Administrator for the National Marine Fisheries Service), all of whom offered hope for the future of salmon while acknowledging the significant challenges and work ahead to achieve our goals.

- **New Ballard Locks smolt slide** – The US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE) recently installed a prototype smolt slide to improve passage of juvenile salmon through the Ballard Locks area. The new slide is safer to install than older versions, safer for migrating salmon, and replaces outdated sensors for detecting fish passing through the facility. The work is part of a Planning Assistance to States Agreement between King County (WRIA 8) and USACE that shares costs related to monitoring Chinook salmon migration in WRIA 8. It includes installing detectors at the Locks, capturing and tagging juvenile Chinook, and determining juvenile salmon survival rates through the Lake Washington system.
- **E-news** – The WRIA 8 E-news sent out April 17 included information on King County’s Green Globe award to partners in protecting Wayne Golf Course property, efforts to restore West Point Treatment Plant operations to treat wastewater released to Puget Sound, fish use monitoring results at the South Lake Washington shoreline restoration project, notice of upcoming funding opportunities, and several relevant news stories and education resources. Please send ideas for the June E-news to Polly Freeman, WRIA 8 Communications Specialist, at [polly.freeman@kingcounty.gov](mailto:polly.freeman@kingcounty.gov) by June 9.

## **WRIA 8 Committee Reports**

- **WRIA 8 Technical Committee** – The Technical Committee met on May 10. The meeting topics included: reviewing technical content of the Plan update, and reviewing the draft WRIA 8 Monitoring Plan.
- **WRIA 8 Implementation Committee** – The Implementation Committee met on April 4 and May 2. Meeting topics included general WRIA 8 updates; discussion of main elements of WRIA 8 Plan update, including approved recovery strategies, habitat goals, updated land use actions, approach for addressing the role of mitigation in salmon habitat restoration, and review of the implementation monitoring section of the draft WRIA 8 Monitoring Plan; review of the draft 2018 WRIA 8 budget and work plan; and, review of the draft agenda for the May 18 Salmon Recovery Council meeting.