

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Meeting Notes
Department of Ecology Northwest Regional Office || September 21, 2017 3:03-5:11 p.m.

Members/Jurisdictional Staff Alternates Present		
#	Name	Affiliation
1)	Mayor John Stokes, Vice-Chair	City of Bellevue
2)	Deputy Mayor Jay Arnold	City of Kirkland
3)	Councilmember (CM) Eileen Barber	City of Issaquah
4)	CM Diane Buckshnis	City of Edmonds
5)	CM Allen Dauterman	City of Newcastle
6)	CM Bruce Dodds	City of Clyde Hill
7)	CM Ted Frantz	Town of Hunts Point
8)	Mike Grady	NOAA Fisheries
9)	Joe Miles	WA State Department of Natural Resources (WDNR)
10)	CM Hank Myers	City of Redmond
11)	CM Salim Nice	City of Mercer Island
12)	Joan Nolan	WA State Department of Ecology (WDOE)
13)	CM Mark Phillips	City of Lake Forest Park
14)	Stewart Reinbold	WA State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)
15)	CM Jesse Salomon	City of Shoreline
16)	Mayor Pro Tem Carl Scandella	City of Yarrow Point
17)	Richard Sowa	Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (FISH)
18)	Jacques White	Long Live the Kings
Alternates Present		
19)	David Bain	Sno-King Watershed Council
20)	Alex Chen	City of Seattle
21)	Jeannette Dorner	Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
22)	Don Gerend	City of Sammamish
23)	Garrett Holbrook	King County
24)	Cyndy Holtz	City of Seattle
25)	Jessica Saavedra	King Conservation District
Others Present		
26)	Kate Akyuz	King County
27)	Josh Baldi	King County
28)	Charles Costanzo	American Waterways Operators
29)	Peter Holte	City of Redmond
30)	Kelli Jones	City of Kirkland
31)	Janne Kaje	King County
32)	Megan Moore	King County
33)	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz	WRIA 8 Team
34)	Cailan Nealer	WDNR
35)	Laird O'Rollins	King County
36)	Kit Paulsen	City of Bellevue
37)	Larry Reymann	Environmental Science Center
38)	Susanna Stoike	Puget Sound Partnership
39)	Scott Stolnack	WRIA 8 Team
40)	Ron Straka	City of Renton
41)	Stacy Vynne	Puget Sound Partnership
42)	Jason Wilkinson	WRIA 8 Team

I) Call to Order / Introductions

Vice-Chair John Stokes opened the SRC meeting at 3:03 pm, inviting those present to introduce themselves. He welcomed the SRC's new delegate, Salim Nice, a councilmember for the City of Mercer Island.

II) Public Comment

There was no public comment.

WRIA 8 SRC Meeting Notes

September 21, 2017

III) Approval of Meeting Notes for July 20, 2017

A motion was made and seconded to approve the SRC meeting notes from July 20, 2017. The Council unanimously voted to approve the motion.

IV) Updates & Announcements

A. General Announcements:

- i. **Capital Budget Draft Letter to Legislature (Decision):** Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (Jason) reported the state legislature has not approved a capital budget, which may hinder recovery efforts. This impacts funds for partner agencies, organizations, and grant programs. Federal funding through the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (via NOAA) may also be impacted, as these require matching state capital fund. WRIA 8 staff have drafted a letter to inform legislators and outline concerns about the ability to implement salmon recovery, which Jason presented for SRC review.

Hank Myers said the letter should voice the SRC's understanding for the reasons behind the delay. Don Gerend asked if funds could be borrowed from elsewhere if the budget remains unapproved; Jason replied that may soon need to be asked. Diane Buckshnis added that Senator Liias and Representative Peterson continue to work on achieving budget approval.

A motion to send the letter as written to the legislature was made and seconded, and unanimously approved by the SRC.

B. Other Announcements:

- i. **Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund:** Jason said the President's federal budget zeroed out this program, which is a big concern. A letter was sent to Washington's Congressional delegation encouraging the program be put back in the budget at \$80 million. Senator Murray has been a strong leader, getting it back in the budget at \$65 million. At this time the revised Senate budget is in committee, waiting for approval. WRIA 8 sent a letter to thank the Senator for her efforts.
- ii. **WRIA 8 Salmon Tour:** Jason reminded the Council that the annual tour is on October 27th. It will include high-priority recovery sites: the Ballard Locks, Wayne Golf Course, the Sammamish River Side Channel, and a restoration site on Bear Creek. He said elected officials at all levels are invited to attend, and asked SRC members to forward suggestions to him.
- iii. **Letter to Colonel Gerald:** Jason said in July WRIA 8 sent a welcome letter to Colonel Mark Gerald, the new head of the Seattle District of the US Army Corps of Engineers (USACE). A copy of the letter is included in the meeting packet.
- iv. **Ballard Locks Salmon Count Update:** Chinook and sockeye counts from WDFW and the Muckleshoot Tribe's annual salmon count at the Locks are also included in the meeting packet.
- v. **Flood Control District (FCD):** Vice-Chair Stokes reported the King County FCD recently approved the WRIA 8-approved grant recommendations for the Cooperative Watershed Management program.

V) Final Draft WRIA 8 Plan Update Review and Approval (Decision)

Mr. Mulvihill-Kuntz presented the final draft of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Plan Update for SRC approval. He said this is the result of 20 months' work by WRIA 8 staff and stakeholders. He reminded the Council that a one month comment period in August on the draft Plan Update resulted in 189 comments from 18 commenters, all reviewed by staff for possible integration into the update. There were no major changes to the draft, but several comments suggested clarifications or additional context for various topics including: land use recommendations; NPDES and stormwater issues; further clarifying partnerships and integrated work; and better articulating that flood reduction, stormwater management, and Agriculture Production District (APD) concerns are being addressed, including how they fit in with salmon recovery.

Several SRC members praised the update and the work of all involved. It was commended for context and readability, and setting a strong example for other Puget Sound watersheds. Jason said a few picture and language adjustments will be made to the final draft in the next two weeks, at which point the final approved document will be re-posted online and hard copies will be printed for distribution to partners.

A motion to approve the draft going forward was made and seconded, and unanimously approved by the SRC.

Jason said a common resolution was drafted for local government partners to the interlocal agreement to use in ratifying the Plan Update at their respective city/county councils. Having partners use the draft resolution will help

WRIA 8 SRC Meeting Notes

September 21, 2017

ensure partners have a common understanding of ratifying the Plan Update. Jason requested comments to the draft common resolution should be sent to him by mid-October. He has asked jurisdictions to ratify the plan by March 2018. At the end of this discussion, Vice-Chair Stokes handed over chairing of the meeting to Ted Frantz, Councilmember from Hunts Point.

VI) Ballard Locks Economic Impact Study Briefing & Review of Draft WRIA 8 Letter (Decision)

Charles Costanzo of American Waterways Operators presented results of a multi-stakeholder funded study by The McDowell Group on economic impacts of the Ballard Locks. The impetus of the study is to bolster arguments for the \$30-60 million total funding need to update the infrastructure of the century-old Locks. The Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) budget process determines value by the total cargo tonnage traversing a facility, which many argue is not an appropriate way to assess the true value of the Locks. Although the Locks are the busiest lockage in the nation, the total cargo tonnage annually passing through the Locks is not consistently over one million tons, so the Corps considers them a low-priority "recreational" system.

Benefits of the Locks spans economic, environmental, tribal obligations, and public safety. The total economic value of the Locks calculated by this study, which focuses primarily on the marine trade industry, is \$1.2 billion annually. This includes aspects such as tourism and recreation, commercial fishing, marine services, and decreased vessel maintenance costs due to freshwater mooring. Environmental benefits include: access/egress for migrating salmon in and out of the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish watershed, protecting over \$125 million invested in salmon habitat restoration projects, and controlling water levels in Lake Washington and Lake Union, which maintains two major floating bridges as well as 75 miles of shoreline. The Locks are also important to the Muckleshoot and Suquamish tribes, particularly in terms of monitoring and managing salmon runs. Local public safety and law enforcement depend on the Locks for ease of access between the freshwater lakes and Puget Sound. Long-term failure of the Locks could have drastic impacts on infrastructure and human life; the results of a seismic study underway by the Corps on this issue are expected in fall 2017.

Mr. Costanzo said a problem in making progress on fixing the Locks is a need for large-scale collaboration. All Democrats in Puget Sound's federal congressional delegation are backing a bill by Representative Jayapal to fund the Locks, but support from Republican members and other impacted delegations such as Alaska is crucial as well.

Mike Grady concurred with the study's general findings, but said the \$1.2 billion impact total is a huge underestimate. He stressed a potential failure of the I-90 bridge due to an decrease in lake levels from a failure at the Locks, which could isolate Mercer Island and much of the Eastside. Such isolation could result in multiple billions of dollars in impacts to major Eastside employers, such as Microsoft. Mr. Costanzo agreed this message should be part of a long-term advocacy strategy. He said there will be an informational packet to distribute to legislators to inform them on this issue. He would also like to convene a multi-partner advocacy team of Locks stakeholders, such as the City and Port of Seattle and the commercial fishing industry. Mr. Grady also suggested meeting with Governor Inslee and his staff, and lobbying for big businesses impacted by the Locks to do the same.

Jason said he will continue to work with Mr. Costanzo on advocacy, and presented a draft letter for the SRC to send to legislators on this topic for the Council's consideration.

Mr. Myers made a motion to send the letter to legislators as soon as possible, which was seconded and unanimously approved by the SRC.

Mr. Nice suggested mentioning the cumulative economic impact of the Locks over the next century. Other Councilmembers agreed edits should be made to strengthen the tone of the letter. Jason recommended, to several Councilmembers' agreement, focusing on the results from the current study for now while acknowledging there are much larger impacts that need to be considered. David Bain suggested copying FEMA on the letter to advise them of concerns about repercussions from a Locks failure. Jason said the letter would be revised and sent through the Management Committee for approval to send.

VII) Cedar River Large Wood Management

Jason explained that large wood in the Cedar River is a topic the Council is well aware of and that it is an ongoing issue. Since 2016 nine major logjams were categorized as a safety risk, resulting in the Cedar River being closed to recreation. In the summer of 2017, King County, as service provider to the King County Flood Control District (FCD), took action to address the safety concerns related to all nine logjams in order to "open" the river to recreation. He said WRIA 8 has a goal in the Plan Update to put more wood in the river, as it is still considered a "wood-starved" system overall.

WRIA 8 SRC Meeting Notes

September 21, 2017

Josh Baldi, Director of King County's Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD), said the the permit applications and work to address the logjams was organized by Kate Akyuz in WLRD's River and Floodplain Management section. Although the County took action at the direction of the FCD, Josh noted FCD's purview on this topic is limited to wood associated with flood risk reduction projects, which is only one aspect of the issue the County must address. There also needs to be more discussion between the County Council and the FCD.

Ms. Akyuz explained the County has an aggressive management strategy for naturally occurring wood in rivers, but moving the wood is a last resort. She noted that concerns as summer approached this year resulted in a significant river closure. A nine-mile, heavily-used stretch of the river was closed to public use. Up to 40% of float trips observed on the river this year had alcohol or potential alcohol visible, which adds to public safety concerns from the County Sheriff's office.

The County tried to get permits to relocate the wood in 2016, but permits were denied. The County is working with WDFW and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe Fisheries Division (MITFD) to evaluate functions of large wood on the river, and find agreement on what can be universally implemented in terms of meeting minimum wood requirements vs. maintaining fish habitat. The MITFD has stressed a desire for more quantitative data to specifically measure this.

She spoke of ongoing obstacles involving funding and conflicts with using salmon habitat restoration sites for mitigation, which the MITFD has concerns about. The FCD funds also can't be used where salmon recovery is the primary objective, and the entire river is in WRIA 8's salmon recovery plan. Ultimately, since the river closure was deemed ineffective, the County applied for and received a state permit to address the logjams this summer. However, the County sees this as only a short-term solution. A process to develop a programmatic approach to address future logjams is still being discussed.

Alex Chen noted the difficulty in striking a balance between salmon recovery and other priorities, but that the two don't have to be exclusive. He suggested Ms. Akyuz return at a future SRC meeting so the Council can learn more about the mitigation plan and the thinking behind it.

Jason said the MITFD's primary concern is the lack of a quantitative way to measure cumulative loss of wood in the river or loss of habitat functions across the watershed, and that restoration projects should ultimately result in a net gain. Ms. Akyuz said she believes meaningful restoration progress can be made along with successful wood management. She believes ground is not being lost in terms of wood gain, and recent measurements of juvenile salmon habitat in the river indicate three to four times more edge habitat than measured previously at sites where wood has been managed.

VIII) Success Story: Bear Creek In-Stream and Riparian Habitat Restoration Projects

Laird O'Rollins, King County Ecological Restoration and Ecological Services (ERES) unit, gave the SRC a brief overview of two restoration projects, Klapp and Doyle, on Lower Bear Creek at the edge of the City of Redmond.

The Klapp project is at the confluence of Bear and Mackey creeks. The site originally had several artificial structures and modifications. The County's goal was to increase ecological value of the site: remove the house, the bricks lining the creek channel, and the outbuildings. An opportunity was seen to create off-channel rearing habitat for juvenile fish. This was done by laying back the bank of Mackey Creek, and a pond; Bear Creek backflows in winter and creates rearing and flood refuge habitat here. A study on Lower Bear Creek last year measured the highest amounts of juvenile fish of any place surveyed at the mouth of Mackey Creek.

The Doyle project is a cooperative effort with the City of Redmond, as the creek is on the jurisdictional boundary between the City and unincorporated King County. A major problem here was an 18-foot wide culvert which backed up and flooded during high flows. The County's approach was to: (1) dig side channels in the floodplain to meet zero-rise standard and habitat requirements, and (2) add wood to the mainstem and buried under the side channels to stabilize the channel. Mr. O'Rollins thanked all who helped facilitate the projects, noting both were funded with Cooperative Watershed Management Grants through WRIA 8.

IX) Next Meeting

The next Council meeting is November 16, 2017, 3:00 – 5:15 p.m., at WDOE's Northwest Regional Office in Bellevue. Jason reminded all interested in attending the October 27th Salmon Tour to RSVP to him.

The September 21, 2017 meeting of the SRC adjourned at 5:11 pm.