

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Meeting Notes

Mercer Island Community Center || September 20, 2018 3:00 – 5:15 p.m.

Members Present		
#	Name	Affiliation
1)	Judy Blanco	Forterra
2)	Bea Covington	King Conservation District
3)	Don Davidson	Washington Policy Center
4)	Councilmember (CM) Bruce Dodds	City of Clyde Hill
5)	CM Ted Frantz	Town of Hunts Point
6)	Noel Gilbrough	Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
7)	CM Victoria Hunt	City of Issaquah
8)	CM Ryan McIrvin	City of Renton
9)	CM Dave Mitchell	City of Newcastle
10)	CM Hank Myers	City of Redmond
11)	CM Tom Neir	City of Kirkland
12)	CM Salim Nice	City of Mercer Island
13)	CM Dana Parnello	City of Maple Valley
14)	CM Mark Phillips, Vice-Chair	City of Lake Forest Park
15)	Stewart Reinbold	WA State Department of Fish & Wildlife
16)	Mayor Pro Tem Carl Scandella	Town of Yarrow Point
17)	Mary Shustov	Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts (WASWD)
18)	Gary Smith	Water Tenders/Trout Unlimited
19)	CM John Stokes, Chair	City of Bellevue
20)	CM Paula Waters	City of Woodinville
Alternates Present		
21)	David Bain	Sno-King Watershed Council
22)	Alex Chen	City of Seattle
23)	Garrett Holbrook	King County
24)	Robert Knoll	Snohomish County
25)	Michele Koehler	City of Seattle
Others Present		
26)	Kate Akyuz	King County
27)	Alison Bennett	City of Bellevue
28)	David Chapman	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
29)	Janet Geer	City of Bothell
30)	Connie Grant	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
31)	Alex Herzog	City of Woodinville
32)	Jon Hofstra	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
33)	Peter Holte	City of Redmond
34)	Kelli Jones	City of Kirkland
35)	Kim Jones	City of Newcastle
36)	Joan Lee	King County
37)	Kathy Minsch	City of Seattle
38)	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz	WRIA 8
39)	Kit Paulsen	City of Bellevue
40)	Stephanie Potts	WA State Department of Ecology
41)	Scott Stolnack	WRIA 8
42)	Ron Straka	City of Renton
43)	Stacy Vynne	WA State Department of Ecology
44)	Laura West	WRIA 8
45)	Jason Wilkinson	WRIA 8

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I) Call to Order / Introductions

Chair Stokes called the Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) meeting to order and attendees introduced themselves.

II) Public Comment

Noel Gilbrough announced a fundraising event for Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group on October 4. The event is at the Mount Baker Rowing Center from 6:00-8:30 p.m.

III) Consent Agenda

Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (Jason MK), Salmon Recovery Manager, noted a minor change to the funding request amount for the Lead Entity program in the letter to the Governor with the WRIA 8 legislative priorities.

The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the consent agenda, which included meeting notes for the July 19, 2018 SRC Meeting, draft letter thanking Congressional delegation for supporting Locks repairs funding, draft letter notifying NOAA of the WRIA 8 Plan update, and draft letter to Governor Inslee sharing WRIA 8 2019 legislative priorities.

IV) Updates & Announcements

Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (Jason MK), WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager, highlighted the following items:

- **Ecology restoring in stream flows-** Stacy Vynne and Stephanie Potts, Washington Department of Ecology, overviewed Engrossed Substitute Senate Bill 6091. The legislation allows landowners to receive building permits that rely on wells. There are eight watersheds that are going through a new planning process to be completed by June 2021 that focuses narrowly on addressing impacts to stream flows from permit-exempt wells. The committee roster for these plans includes tribes, counties, cities, irrigation districts, water purveyors, and the Department of Fish and Wildlife. Nominations are being accepted for agricultural, environmental, and residential construction industry representatives. Stephanie asked for jurisdictions to let her know if they are interested in being part of the process or at least attending the first meeting. Ecology expects there will be 35-40 people sitting at the table in WRIAs 8 and 9, and the committee will likely recommend work groups, possibly turning to an existing entity.
- **Governor's Orca Task Force-** Jason MK informed the SRC of the latest updates from the Governor's Orca Task Force. The Task Force is expected to release draft recommendations on September 24. The WRIA 8 staff team will review the report and draft comments by the October 7 deadline if warranted. Jason noted that increased production of hatchery fish is likely to be one of the recommendations. Although the Issaquah Hatchery in WRIA 8 is not among the list to see an increase, increases at other hatcheries could have an impact on wild Chinook recovery efforts in WRIA 8. Mayor Pro Tem Scandella asked if anyone had calculated if the amount of salmon produced in hatcheries is comparable to what an orca would eat in a year. Chair Stokes emphasized the need for habitat to support increased fish numbers. Mary Shustov asked about the impact of sea lions on competition for food. Jason MK replied that the Task Force is discussing that.
- **Cooperative Watershed Management 2018 grant recommendations approved-** On September 4, the King County Flood Control District approved the funding recommendations for the 2018 Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grant program. The WRIA 8 recommendations—approved by the Salmon Recovery Council at the May 17 meeting—will provide over \$1.4 million to habitat restoration projects, \$300,000 for ongoing monitoring activities, and approximately \$50,000 to outreach and education programs.
- **Proposed changes to the Endangered Species Act-** Jason MK noted that WRIA 8 staff are tracking the proposed changes to the Endangered Species Act (ESA), but are currently not planning to send a separate letter. Jason has urged the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC) to submit comments that WRIA 8, as a member of that body, can sign onto. Jason highlighted a few concerns with the changes. CM Neir commented that the Kirkland City Council approved a letter in response to the proposed EPA changes at their Council Meeting on September 18, which Kelli Jones will send to Jason for distribution to the SRC. Jason noted that King County also submitted a comment letter, which he would distribute with Kirkland's letter.

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- **Salmon SEEson-** The 12th annual Salmon SEEson is underway, providing salmon viewing opportunities to the public around King County. A few new sites were added this year in the Snoqualmie Watershed and in WRIA 9. The WRIA 8 team is doing more social media outreach this year to promote the program.
- **Salmon returns-** The sockeye run has almost completely passed through the Locks and the numbers are pretty low. Around 32,100 sockeye passed through this year, well below the 20 year average. Chinook are well below the historical average, but at a similar amount as last year. A majority of Chinook last year went to the Cedar River, representing the 2nd largest return since we've been monitoring. It is too early to tell where the Chinook will go this year.
- **Meeting times and printing preferences-** The WRIA 8 team surveyed SRC members on preferred meeting times for 2019 and printing preferences. Responses indicate a preference for an earlier start time to get a jump start on traffic after the meeting. Jason MK will email the SRC for additional input and will bring a proposal to the November SRC meeting for approval. For printing preferences, a majority of members expressed a desire for electronic meeting materials and a reduction in paper, which the WRIA 8 staff team will work towards. CM Parnello commented that power point presentations could be sent separately with a link to view them.
- Mayor Pro Tem Scandella mentioned two recent tours he attended. One was a Duwamish River tour sponsored by The Nature Conservancy, raising money for Duwamish Cleanup efforts. The other was a Port of Seattle Tour. He suggested inviting the biologist on the tour to a future SRC meeting.

V) **Funding Recommendation to Support Process to Address Water Quality Issues in the Lake Washington Ship Canal**

Jason MK reminded the SRC of the memo presented at the July meeting that outlined ways to address elevated temperatures in the Lake Washington Ship Canal. Jason explained that if WRIA 8 puts forward initial funding to facilitate stakeholder discussions, the Army Corps of Engineers could support the effort with additional funding to support design and implementation. Jason walked through a proposal for \$27,500 to hire a consultant, convene stakeholders to do a synthesis of existing data and information, and choose a preferred alternative. Each workshop would likely have between 10-20 attendees and focus on evolving content. The budget numbers are based off the Technical Forum in 2015 that cost about \$5,000 to organize. Jason expects these discussions to last roughly a year. CM Phillips commented that phase 1 seems to be more than just temperature data synthesis, and also includes collecting data on previous ideas. CM Phillips asked if that data is local. Jason MK replied it was, and a lot of it goes back a number of years. There isn't one place where that data is analyzed, or one place where all the proposed ideas are captured. Jason emphasized the need to look at feasibility of the various ideas. Most jurisdictions agree on the importance of this effort. CM Frantz asked if there has been an effort to quantify the impact on salmon from the data that has been collected. Scott Stolnack, Technical Coordinator, isn't aware of one. Scott added there have been tagging studies with temperature and location trackers in salmon, which indicate that the temperature in the Ship Canal is delaying Chinook migration.

The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the funding recommendation to facilitate a stakeholder process to complete Phase 1 and 2 of the project to address elevated water temperatures in the Lake Washington Ship Canal.

VI) **Salmon Recovery Funding Board / Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Grant Round Funding Recommendations**

Jason Wilkinson (Jason W), Projects and Funding Coordinator, presented on the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee's recommendation on two grant funding programs: the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) program and the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) program. Jason walked through WRIA 8's role with the grant program and outlined the proposed projects.

- **Meadowdale Beach & Estuary Restoration-** This project is seeking \$800,000 for construction funding. The project will create Chinook juvenile rearing and refuge habitat. The project will increase the creek opening from 6 feet to 90 feet, replace the existing culvert with a bridge, restore the pocket estuary, and replace grass. It is an expensive project, likely to total around \$15 million and the State Technical Review Panel is concerned about the cost, but Snohomish County is seeking a diverse array of funding for the project and the Project Subcommittee believes this project provides good value. Snohomish County has a

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working relationship with the railroad company (BNSF), which is often a barrier for restoration work. This is an opportunity to demonstrate success working with BNSF on a habitat restoration project. CM Neir asked if the funds will be returned to us if the project sponsor doesn't succeed in securing the rest of the funding. Jason W confirmed the funds will be returned and would be good for a year starting in July 2019. Jason assured the SRC we would know with plenty of time if the project isn't moving forward as they are planning to start construction in 2021.

- **Willowmoor Floodplain Restoration Design-** This project is located in the transition zone between the Sammamish River and Lake Sammamish. It provides multiple benefits of habitat enhancement and lake level management. The project team is also looking at opportunities to address elevated temperatures via cold water supplementation. The project team is requesting \$200,000 for those investigations in cold water supplementation as part of the project design.

Mayor Pro Tem Scandella commented that in the past, WRIA 8 has funded a number of smaller projects and asked why this year there are a few large projects. Jason W replied that with this funding source, the Project Subcommittee encourages larger dollar asks due to the complexity of the application process and amount of reporting required. RCO even acknowledges that it isn't worth applying for applications under \$100,000.

The Project Subcommittee recommends full funding for both projects. With that recommendation, WRIA 8 still has a surplus of \$849,220 and is encouraged to swap with watersheds that have unfunded needs. WRIA 8 can offer our balance to WRIAs 7, 14, and 18 and they'll return those exact funds to us with next year's SRFB program. The SRC discussed why we didn't get enough requests to use all our money. Jason W explained that grant processes are fluid, and some project sponsors weren't ready yet. Large capital projects can get complicated and delays can occur. The State Technical Review Panel sets a high bar and if there is any question on whether the project will be approved, the Project Subcommittee advises applicants to wait until it is fully ready for the review process. Jason W expects some of those in-development projects will be ready by next year and noted we have several projects that are in phases of design that will be very expensive to construct, so there will be no shortage of funding needs in the near future. Chair Stokes commented about the importance of working amongst WRIAs.

Jason W announced that the Riverbend Floodplain Restoration project is competing for separate funding through the PSAR Large Capital program. King County is asking for \$5.9 million to move forward to construction in 2020. The project is ranked #3 and the PSAR program needs \$51 million in legislative allocation to fully fund this project. The SRC approved a letter of support for this project at the May meeting.

The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the Project Subcommittee's recommendation for grant funding awards from the Salmon Recovery Funding Board and the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration programs.

VII) Willowmoor Floodplain Restoration Project Update

Kate Akyuz, Project Manager at King County, provided an update on the Willowmoor Floodplain Restoration Project. Preliminary design started in 2018. The team hopes to start construction in 2022, which could take up to three years due to Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) permitting and the possibility of finding cultural resources on the site. The team is planning early excavations in the proposed side channel area to look for archeological remains. Kate noted a trend of increasing water levels on Lake Sammamish and the increasing expense of maintenance to address water levels, particularly with permitting and mitigation. Kate discussed the impact of the project on the Marymoor dog park and how the project will ensure separation of the dog area from fish habitat. Kate explained that the transition zone is the hottest part of the river and the selected split channel alternative provides the most reduction in water elevation in the lake and provided the most habitat benefits. Kate walked through the 30% design process and discussed the three cold water supplementation alternatives. CM Myers commented that several years ago, the Corps said the water level issue was a maintenance issue as opposed to a weir design issue. Kate replied that the County's maintenance now consists of mowing reed canary grass and pruning back willows. Noel Gilbrough asked if the project team has sought funding from the Corps. Kate's team has considered it, but the FCD is the local sponsor and has maintenance responsibility. Gary Smith asked if there are ways to mitigate the impact on Kokanee. Kate replied that they are working closely with the Washington Department of Ecology, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Muckleshoot Tribe and others at

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the County to look at impacts on Kokanee. Gary also asked where water would come out if it came out in a pipe from lower depths of Lake Sammamish. Kate replied that mechanical engineers will be working on how to keep the water cool once it comes out.

VIII) Success Story: Funding for Ballard Locks Repairs and Status of Future Priority Projects

Jon Hofstra, Army Corps of Engineers Operations Project Manager at the Ballard Locks, overviewed the repair needs at the Ballard Locks, including the gates on the large locks, the emergency closure system for the small locks, and replacing the Stony Gate valves and machinery on the large locks. The Corps is also installing an alarm system to alert them when salt water is going into the fish ladder and disrupting the freshwater flow that attracts fish to the fish ladder. Jon explained that normally fish use the fish ladder, but occasionally they come through the large lock. The repairs will attempt to attract them to the fish ladder and improve survival if they go the other route. Alex Chen commented that this progress is encouraging and asked about the emergency closure system in case of a failure from an earthquake. Alex asked how quickly can the back-up gates be deployed and how that compares to the time needed to drain 10 feet of the lake. Jon replied that staff are on site 24 hours a day, but currently the crane is inoperable and needs replacing. With a functioning crane, if the existing gates fell down in an earthquake, the back-up gates could be deployed pretty quickly with the automated system, which is also receiving improvements.

IX) Next Meeting

The next SRC meeting is November 15, 2018, 3:00 – 5:15 pm, at Mercer Island Community Center.