



Beaux Arts Village
 Bellevue
 Bothell
 Clyde Hill
 Edmonds
 Hunts Point
 Issaquah
 Kenmore
 Kent
 King County
 Kirkland
 Lake Forest Park
 Maple Valley
 Medina
 Mercer Island
 Mill Creek
 Mountlake Terrace
 Mukilteo
 Newcastle
 Redmond
 Renton
 Sammamish
 Seattle
 Shoreline
 Woodinville
 Woodway
 Yarrow Point

Cedar River Council
 Friends of the Cedar River Watershed
 Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery
 Greater Seattle Chamber of Commerce
 Long Live the Kings
 Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
 Mountains to Sound Greenway
 Northwest Marine Trade Association
 Sno-King Watershed Council
 Trout Unlimited
 Water Tenders

Alderwood Water and Wastewater District
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 US Army Corps of Engineers
 Washington Departments:
 Ecology
 Fish and Wildlife
 Natural Resources
 Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
 King Conservation District

March 1, 2019

Dave Somers
 Executive, Snohomish County
 3000 Rockefeller Avenue, M/S 407
 Everett, WA 98201



Re: Snohomish County withdrawal from salmon recovery interlocal agreement in Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8)

Dear Executive Somers,

In late 2018, Snohomish County (the County) formally withdrew from the WRIA 8 interlocal agreement (ILA) that supports coordinated salmon recovery in the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8). The County notified WRIA 8 partners it was unable to pay its 2019 cost-share due to a shortfall in the Surface Water Management budget, from which the cost-share payment is derived. Since 2000, the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council has worked toward the shared goal of recovering sustainable, harvestable populations of Chinook salmon in the watershed. Snohomish County is one of the original partners to the ILA and recently ratified the WRIA 8 Ten-Year Plan Update. This collaborative effort involves partners working toward a common vision and being committed to improving habitat that will benefit the region's salmon populations and improve the quality of life for residents. While the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council was able to adjust the 2019 budget to temporarily absorb the impact of losing Snohomish County's cost share this year, we are concerned if the County does not return as a WRIA 8 ILA partner this will have future adverse ramifications to the budget and other partners' cost shares.

Snohomish County's cost share contribution represents approximately 10% of the annual ILA budget, and the loss of Snohomish County as a cost-share partner significantly impacts WRIA 8 operations and implementation of shared salmon recovery priorities in the watershed. WRIA 8 staff worked with the County's Surface Water Management division to attempt to identify an interim solution, such as an in-kind services agreement in lieu of making the cost-share payment. This arrangement would allow the County to remain a functional partner in 2019 until the budget situation could be addressed. Unfortunately, a mutually agreeable solution could not be reached within current budgetary constraints and adopted work plans.

The County has indicated a commitment to continued staff participation in the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council and the WRIA 8 Implementation and Technical Committees. We welcome this continued participation, yet as a result of withdrawing from the ILA, the nature of the County's participation will necessarily change as follows:

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- The County will no longer have a voting role in Salmon Recovery Council decisions, including budget, staffing, policy positions, and annual allocation of grant funding.
- The County will no longer serve on the WRIA 8 Management Committee.
- We value County staffs' technical expertise and welcome their participation in the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee to review and recommend annual grant funding for projects and programs, but County staff will no longer have the ability to score/vote on funding recommendations.

The Snohomish County portion of our watershed is important to achieving our salmon recovery goals, and the County is a valued partner in salmon recovery in WRIA 8. In addition, the County has directly benefitted from its participation in WRIA 8, including receiving more than \$1.9 million in WRIA 8-directed grant funding since 2000 (another \$600,000 is approved for funding and awaits legislative appropriation for the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration program this legislative session). Obtaining final approval for \$1.05 million of this amount involved significant WRIA 8 staff support on behalf of the County to resolve Salmon Recovery Funding Board Technical Review Panel concerns with the Meadowdale Beach Estuary and Restoration Project (in 2015 and 2018).

We sincerely hope Snohomish County's withdrawal from the WRIA 8 ILA is temporary, and we will be seeking a meeting with you to discuss how the County can resume being a cost-share partner in 2020. We look forward to working with you in this effort. In the meantime, if you have any questions, please contact Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager, at 206-477-4780 or jason.mulvihill-kuntz@kingcounty.gov.

Sincerely,



John Stokes
Chair, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council
Councilmember, City of Bellevue



Mark Phillips
Vice-Chair, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council
Councilmember, City of Lake Forest Park

Cc: WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council members