

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Meeting Notes
Mercer Island Community Center, Mercer Island || March 21, 2019 2:00 – 4:15 p.m.

Members Present		
#	Name	Affiliation
1)	Eric Adman	Sno-King Watershed Council
2)	Councilmember (CM) Diane Buckshnis	City of Edmonds
3)	Don Davidson	Washington Policy Center
4)	CM Ted Frantz	Town of Hunts Point
5)	Noel Gilbrough	Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
6)	Connie Grant	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
7)	CM Victoria Hunt	City of Issaquah
8)	CM Ryan McIrvin	City of Renton
9)	Joe Miles	WA State Department of Natural Resources
10)	CM Mark Phillips, Vice-Chair	City of Lake Forest Park
11)	Stewart Reinbold	WA State Department of Fish & Wildlife
12)	Charles Ruthford	Cedar River Council
13)	CM Carl Scandella	Town of Yarrow Point
14)	CM Keith Scully	City of Shoreline
15)	Gary Smith	Water Tenders/Trout Unlimited
16)	Richard Sowa	Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (FISH)
17)	CM John Stokes, Chair	City of Bellevue
18)	CM Paula Waters	City of Woodinville
Alternates Present		
19)	David Bain	Sno-King Watershed Council
20)	CM Pam Stuart	City of Sammamish
21)	Jordanna Warneck	WA State Department of Natural Resources
Others Present		
22)	Tawni Dalziel	City of Sammamish
23)	Laura Ferguson	Puget Sound Partnership
24)	Janet Geer	City of Bothell
25)	Alex Herzog	City of Woodinville
26)	Kim Jones	City of Newcastle
27)	Rachel Konrady	City of Kirkland
28)	Joan Lee	King County
29)	Tara Luckie	Environmental Science Center
30)	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz	WRIA 8
31)	Cleo Neculae	WA State Department of Ecology
32)	Kit Paulsen	City of Bellevue
33)	Larry Reymann	Environmental Science Center
34)	Kelly Steffen	Environmental Science Center
35)	Laura West	WRIA 8
36)	Jason Wilkinson	WRIA 8

I) Call to Order / Introductions

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

II) Public Comment

David Bain shared that Sno-King Watershed Council and Friends of North Creek Forest have been facilitating student water temperature testing at North Creek to look at how water temperatures change from the top of the forest to the bottom. The Creek drops 300 ft in elevation over 1,000 ft, with a 2.5-4 degree Celsius change.

III) Consent Agenda

The Salmon Recovery Council unanimously approved the meeting notes for the January 17, 2019 SRC meeting.

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IV) Updates & Announcements

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

- **Salmon Recovery Council letter to Snohomish County re: withdrawal from WRIA 8 interlocal agreement (ILA)** – The WRIA 8 Management Committee approved sending a letter on March 1 to Snohomish County Executive, Dave Somers, acknowledging Snohomish County’s withdrawal from the WRIA 8 ILA, documenting impacts to Snohomish County’s participation, and requesting a meeting to discuss options for the County returning as a cost share partner in the future. Jason MK hopes to have that conversation before WRIA 8’s 2020 budget discussions.
- **Ecology-led Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee and WRIA 8 participation** – The Streamflow Restoration Act (RCW 90.94) was passed by the legislature in 2018 and directs 15 watersheds to develop plans to offset the potential impacts to instream flows resulting from new permit-exempt domestic wells. WRIA 8 staff are attending the monthly planning meetings and serving two functions: 1) representing a group of seven cities via a “cities caucus” and 2) serving as an ex officio member that participates actively in the planning work but does not vote on the plan.
- **Scope of Work to address Lake Washington Ship Canal temperature and dissolved oxygen issues** – To address the potentially lethal high temperatures for salmon in the Lake Washington Ship Canal (LWSC), the SRC approved using up to \$27,500 in WRIA 8 carry forward funding to synthesize existing data and information, convene stakeholder workshops to develop two to three concepts and feasibility-level proposals. The draft scope of work was reviewed and approved by the Technical Committee and Implementation Committee. WRIA 8 staff are planning to seek a contractor to initiate the Phase 1 scope of work early this summer.
- **Hiring WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator position** – The Technical Coordinator position was vacant as of Scott Stolnack’s departure on March 7. The position announcement closed on March 15. WRIA 8 staff anticipate having the position filled and the new Technical Coordinator starting by May.
- **2019 Grant round update** – March 19 was the final application deadline for King County Flood Control District Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grants and 1 Million Trees Assistance Program grant proposals. Pre-applications for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) grants are due on May 1. As is usually the case, this year’s funding cycle is highly competitive. The Project Subcommittee’s funding recommendations for both grant programs will be brought to the Council at the May 16 meeting, and SRFB funding recommendations will be brought to the Council on September 19.
- **Draft Steelhead Recovery Plan** – In early February, NOAA Fisheries released the Proposed Recovery Plan for Puget Sound Steelhead for review. The WRIA 8 Technical Committee reviewed the draft Plan to assess the nexus with WRIA 8 priorities and developed a comment letter. Charles Ruthford commented that there are no steelhead left in the Cedar River and wonders how likely their return is. Charles indicated a desire to prioritize the existing salmon populations in the Cedar, particularly Chinook and sockeye. Councilmember (CM) Phillips questioned how WRIA 8’s approach would differ if we were attempting to address steelhead directly, compared to our current approach. Jason MK replied that he wasn’t sure, and noted the need for NOAA to better clarify recovery metrics is part of WRIA 8’s comments.

V) Partner Survey of WRIA 8 Service Provider Staff Team

Jason MK announced that King County was administering its annual WRIA 8 client services satisfaction survey for 2018. Joan Lee, King County Rural and Regional Services Section Manager, commented that King County takes the results very seriously and Joan is open to receiving feedback from anyone by phone. Joan can be reached at (206) 477-4751. The results will be presented at the May SRC meeting.

VI) 2019 Legislative Priorities and Outreach

Jason MK, CM Scandella, CM Phillips, and others met with legislators in Olympia twice in February to advocate for capital budget priorities and emphasize the link between salmon and orca recovery. CM Stokes encouraged SRC members to call or email legislators if they aren’t able to visit in person. Jason MK relayed that the legislators they met with understood the importance of salmon recovery, but didn’t necessarily understand all the nuances of the funding dynamics that support the work, so it was helpful for WRIA 8 representatives to explain the budget needs beyond the Governor’s proposed budget. The revenue forecast was released on March 20 and included more money than anticipated. Jason MK has heard encouraging words about PSAR, and it is a good time for SRC members to voice support. Jason MK noted that both trips seemed very effective, especially with local elected official

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participation. CM Scandella remarked that this was his first trip to Olympia and it was helpful to meet legislators and learn how much help they need from us to understand these complicated and nuanced issues. Salmon recovery is competing with education and health care in the budget allocations. CM Scandella noted that Brandon Parsons, with American Rivers, who also attended, brought a perspective of the economic impact of restoring river floodplains and the importance of maintaining rivers for the economy, which CM Scandella found very effective. CM Phillips added that legislators mentioned a larger public outcry could make a difference in funding levels, suggesting the need for further public outreach. Charles Ruthford asked about funding sources for the Riverbend Floodplain Restoration Project on the Cedar River, which applied for the PSAR Large Capital funding. Jason MK replied that the Riverbend project is ranked third on the PSAR project list, and has also applied for WRIA 8 grant funding this year.

CM McIrvin announced that the House's Capital Budget would be released around 11:00 am on Monday 3/25 with a public hearing at 8:00 am on Tuesday 3/26. The Operating Budget is scheduled to be released at 3:30 pm on Monday. CM McIrvin suggested that Monday afternoon or Tuesday at the public hearing would be an excellent opportunity to comment on the proposed budgets and show support for our priority programs before the Senate Budget is released. The Senate Budget is expected to be released late in the week of 3/25. CM McIrvin added that the Association of Washington Cities (AWC) rescheduled their action day to Monday 3/25, so that would be another opportunity to highlight WRIA 8's priorities. CM Stuart asked if a letter signed by multiple elected officials could be drafted to coordinate comments in the quick turnaround time between Monday and Tuesday. Jason MK referred the SRC to the two-page update he sent out on 3/20 with key messages geared towards House/Senate Budget Committee leaders. Jason MK will send around a more customized letter template for use by interested SRC members. CM Scandella reminded SRC members to emphasize *why* these funding sources are important. CM Hunt encouraged SRC members to add their own personal touches to the messaging.

Jason MK noted that the WRIA 8 team would begin developing 2020 legislative priorities in May.

VII) Southern Resident Orca Task Force – Status of Recommendations and Next Phase of Work

Jason MK introduced Mindy Roberts, an appointed member of the Governor's Orca Task Force (OTF) and the Puget Sound Program lead for the Washington Environmental Council (WEC). Mindy asked SRC members what they were most interested in hearing about regarding the Southern Resident Orca. CM Buckshnis asked why whale watching boats are still allowed to operate. CM Frantz asked how the OTF recommendations are influencing state budgets. CM Hunt asked what actions cities can take. Mindy commented that this is the first time she can remember where cities/counties are asking what they can do, which is exciting. Noel Gilbrough asked how many of the Chinook-related recommendations are new suggestions. Mindy provided an overview of the orca decline and acknowledged that we've known what we need to do in relation to Chinook for a while. After raising the issue in Fall 2017, the Governor launched the two-year OTF in March 2018. Public comment was strong and shaped the outcome of the 36 recommendations. Mindy would describe the recommendations as ambitious, but not truly bold.

Mindy provided an overview of the three main threats to orcas: prey, vessel traffic/noise, and toxic contaminants. For prey, the first recommendation is salmon recovery. On average, the legislature has funded 14% of shovel ready projects in the last 10 years, which is simply not enough. WEC doesn't normally advocate for hatchery fish, but 80% of salmon that orcas currently eat are hatchery origin and scientists are unsure if the orcas can tell the difference. CM Frantz asked how the experiment of feeding Chinook to sick orcas went last summer. Mindy replied that the researchers weren't sure if the orcas actually consumed the fish or not. There are currently conversations taking place to determine whether this should/can be done for other sick orcas. In regards to harvest, the OTF recommended evaluating the current levels in 2028 as fishery catch makes up roughly 1% of the population. There are also conversations taking place about predation and forage fish. For the vessels category, the threats include whale watching, navy/military activity, shipping, and ferries. The urban part of the Salish Sea is already very noisy. For the contaminants category, the highest concentrations of toxic chemicals are found in orca calves. Needs include learning more about PCBs, ending toxic chemical release, controlling hot spots, enforcing existing laws, monitoring chemicals from waste water treatment plants, and reducing stormwater. Some of these are actionable by cities. CM Stuart asked about the impact of plastics and microplastics on orcas and salmon. Mindy replied that the OTF did not discuss plastics. Microplastics tend to be sticky and attract other toxic chemicals but there isn't enough science yet looking into the impact on orcas or salmon. Microplastics have been found in juvenile Chinook, but it is unclear if they are a cause of mortality.

Mindy outlined the following policy legislation:

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- **HB 1579- Habitat Protections.** This bill would give Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife (WDFW) civil penalty and compliance authority/tools to better enforce habitat degradation. This bill would also change fishing licenses and encourage fishing of nonnative predatory fish. Larry Reymann commented that there are currently signs around Lake Washington warning people not to eat the fish, which likely deters fishing of nonnative predators. Mindy will follow up with Larry on the specifics of the bill.
- **SB 5577- Vessel Noise and Disturbance.** This bill would institute a “go slow” bubble around orcas and create a permit system for commercial whale watching. It would also create a rulemaking process for WDFW on the number of boats allowed to whale watch at one time. CM Frantz asked how the “go slow” buffer would be enforced. Mindy replied that enforcement would be from WDFW boats on patrol. CM Buckshnis expressed concern that this process extends 18 months and that the whale watching boats don’t follow the rules. Mindy replied that during this process, the whale watching community told the OTF that of the 100 or so boats in the community, 70 are Canadian and 30 are based in the U.S. The vast majority of the time, the boats are watching other species of whales and only spend about 10-15% of the time watching Southern Residents. This bill has strong bi-partisan support.
- **SB 5135- Toxics.** This bill will identify, prioritize, and create actions for toxic chemicals.
- **HB 1578- Oil Transport Safety.** This bill will reduce the threat of oil spills.

Mindy commented that while the Governor’s budget contained an estimated \$1.1 billion for orca and salmon issues, more support for salmon is needed. The House and Senate budgets are expected to be released next week. Mindy recommended SRC members contact legislators and work with city lobbyists, emphasizing *why* these programs are important and telling their own story. There is also an opportunity to sign onto a WEC letter supporting the bills Mindy outlined. Mindy highlighted a few resources to learn more, including <https://orca.wa.gov/> and [WEC’s 17 days, 17 ways campaign](#). June is orca month.

Carl Scandella asked if the source of contaminants is known. Mindy replied that scientists are unsure which chemicals have the greatest effect on orcas. The biggest sources are likely stormwater or pharmaceuticals in waste water. Chair Stokes asked if there is an effort to prioritize actions where orcas spend most of their time. Mindy replied that NOAA and WDFW have done population studies to identify the most important fish stocks, which are Northern and Central/South Puget Sound runs. This is a reminder that urban populations are critical. Mindy suggested that WEC, the SRC, and partners re-group after the current legislative session to plan for future lobbying efforts. CM Frantz commented that Canada is looking to build an oil terminal near Vancouver and asked if Washington State was involved in any effort to stop this. Mindy replied that the US Tribes are working with First Nations in Canada to block the terminal and the Governor is involved.

VIII) Success Story: Zackuse Creek Fish Passage and Stream Restoration

Tawni Dalziel, Stormwater Program Manager for the City of Sammamish, presented on the Zackuse Creek Fish Passage and Stream Restoration Project. Tawni told the story of how two citizens presented their stories of Kokanee recovery and the Snoqualmie Tribe’s cultural history around Lake Sammamish and appealed to the City Council to restore fish passage on Zackuse Creek. The Council was moved and as a result, the city removed three culverts and restored 400 feet of stream within two years. The Snoqualmie Tribe hosted planting events to restore the riparian areas along the restored stream channel, which involved over 100 volunteers. Tawni discussed the challenges of the project, including a construction operator strike. The project was successful due to coordination with project partners and permit regulators. The project cost \$2.4 M and \$1.2 M was paid for by grants. CM Buckshnis and Gary Smith congratulated Tawni and the project partners. There is a documentary coming out this summer about restoring Lake Sammamish Kokanee salmon, which Gary and Jason MK will send around a link for. CM Frantz asked about kokanee monitoring. Tawni replied that the Kokanee Work Group annually surveys kokanee use of streams, and the City of Sammamish and King County will also be doing monitoring. CM Stuart added that monitoring has increased with the risk of kokanee extinction. The Kokanee Work Group is also executing emergency actions to investigate predators, parasites, different hatchery strategies and other potential issues affecting kokanee survival.

IX) Next Meeting

The next SRC meeting is May 16, 2019, 2:00 – 4:15 pm, at the Department of Ecology Bellevue office.