



2020 Legislative Priorities for Salmon Recovery and Puget Sound Watershed Health

Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Partners

Updated: July 2019

NOTE: WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council members may be requested to participate in legislative outreach to support the following state and federal salmon recovery priorities. In so doing, they are acting on behalf of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council, representing policies, programs, and actions identified in the WRIA 8 Chinook Conservation Plan.

<https://www.govlink.org/watersheds/8/reports/chinook-plan-update.aspx>.

Federal Priorities

- **Support a \$70 million Fiscal Year 2020 appropriations request for the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF) in Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill.** The PCSRF program is the primary federal funding for salmon recovery and supports annual grants for priority salmon habitat protection and restoration projects.
- **Support funding in the Army Corps of Engineers (Corps) Fiscal Year 2021 Work Plan to advance design and construction of critical prioritized infrastructure repairs to the Hiram M. Chittenden (Ballard) Locks (amount TBD, based on Seattle District capability number) and to participate in a stakeholder process to identify concepts addressing elevated water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen in the Lake Washington Ship Canal.**
- **Support an initial investment of \$57.1 million in 2020 to initiate implementation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty through priority Puget Sound habitat protection and restoration projects, hatchery conservation programs, and a Southern Resident Orca prey program, and support an ongoing annual investment of \$52.4 million implement this international treaty.** The Pacific Salmon Treaty is critical to meeting the provisions of the federal Endangered Species Act, addressing tribal fishing rights, and maintaining sustainable U.S. fisheries that provide 26,700 full time equivalent jobs and \$3.4 billion in economic value

FOR MORE INFORMATION ABOUT THESE PRIORITIES PLEASE CONTACT:

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annually. Signed by the United States and Canada in 1985, it provides a framework for the two countries to cooperate on the management of Pacific salmon and is revisited roughly every 10 years to reflect current conditions and address new challenges. The revamped Treaty (2019-2028, approved January 2019) reflects the international commitment to ensure a better future for salmon and Southern Resident Orcas.

- **Support increasing funding to \$750,000 (up from \$600,000 in previous fiscal years) for each National Estuary Program (NEP), including the Puget Sound Partnership, plus \$4 million for competitive grants and programs.** This NEP funding is core program funding for Puget Sound Partnership and for competitive grants supporting implementation of near-term actions called for the Action Agenda for Puget Sound recovery.
- **Support the “Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound Act” (PUGET SOS Act), H.R. 2247, which will establish a Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office in the Environmental Protection Agency to coordinate federal Puget Sound recovery efforts with state, local and tribal recovery efforts and enable greater levels of federal funding for Puget Sound recovery.** The bill enhances the federal government’s role and investment in Puget Sound by amending the Clean Water Act to add a new section dedicated to Puget Sound recovery, providing lasting and structural recognition of the Puget Sound as a waterbody of national significance on par with the Chesapeake Bay and the Great Lakes.
- **Support \$35 million for the Puget Sound Geographic Program in the Environmental Protection Agency,** which coordinates federal Puget Sound recovery efforts with state, local and tribal recovery efforts.
- **Support legislation that seeks to increase funding and incentives for green stormwater retrofits and infrastructure, including:**
 - In May 2019, Congressman Kilmer introduced legislation titled, “Preventing Pollution through Partnerships Act” or the “P3 Act” (H.R. 2718), which would incentivize private investment in green infrastructure through creation of a new category of tax-exempt Green Infrastructure Private Activity Bonds (PBAs) that state and local governments can use to encourage developers to include green infrastructure in development plans. These PBAs enable local governments to leverage private investment in projects that benefit the public interest, while also providing a potential revenue source for developers.

The bill authorizes each state to evaluate and approve projects that qualify for a Green Infrastructure PAB. This ensures each qualified project will effectively address the unique challenges faced by the community where the project is located. Developers can use proceeds from the Green Infrastructure PAB to cover the cost of planning, engineering and design, construction, and third-party site certification for any qualified green infrastructure project.

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State Supplemental Budget Priorities

- Identify and support specific funding requests priority projects identified in and/or consistent with the WRIA 8 salmon recovery strategies.
- Support state agency budget requests for monitoring salmon populations and for studies and management of predation, disease, and other issues that affect WRIA 8 salmon populations.

State Policy Legislation Priorities

- Support and explore opportunities to engage in developing legislation that seeks to provide immunity from liability for entities that implement habitat restoration projects involving the placement of large wood.
- Track and support legislation that seeks to improve regulatory protections for areas that are important for salmon habitat, and oppose legislation that reduces regulatory protections for these areas.
- Track and participate in continued efforts to explore watershed-based and/or regional funding authorities to support multiple-benefit projects that address salmon habitat protection and restoration, water quality, stormwater management, and flood management.

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