

WRIA 8 Updates and Committee Reports

September 19, 2019

- **Puget Sound Regional Update** – The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC) last met on May 23. The meeting focused on approving the policy for Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) 10% monitoring funds for the 2019 grant round, deciding whether to recommend incorporation of the Salmon Benefit Index (SBI) into the 2021-2023 Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Large Capital projects scoring process, an update on the recently negotiated Pacific Salmon Treaty and alignment of Treaty implementation funding with Puget Sound priority projects, an update from NOAA on its timeline and process for finalizing the Puget Sound Steelhead Recovery Plan, and approving the watershed allocation formula for the 2019 SRFB grant round. The PS SRC meets next on September 26. Diane Buckshnis, Edmonds City Councilmember, and Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz represent WRIA 8.
- **The South Central Action Area Caucus** (Local Integrating Organization (LIO)) last met on May 1. The meeting focused on an update regarding how the LIO will engage with the Environmental Protection Agency, updates from Puget Sound Partnership, discussion of integrating performance measures for the LIO’s Puget Sound recovery priorities, and a panel presentation on shoreline armoring and current restoration efforts, education/outreach and incentive programs, and assessment efforts. Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz currently attends to represent WRIA 8. The Caucus Group meets next on September 25.
- **Snohomish County’s status as a WRIA 8 cost share partner** – On September 5, John Stokes (WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council Chair), Diane Buckshnis (Edmonds Councilmember), and Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz met with Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers for a follow-up discussion regarding the County’s status as a cost share partner in 2020. Executive Somers explained that he plans to include a surface water management rate increase as part of his 2020 budget proposal to the County Council for consideration at the end of September, which includes funding for Snohomish County to re-join the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council as a cost share partner. Once Executive Somers’ budget is transmitted to the County Council, communications from the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council to Snohomish County Councilmembers to express support for the funding for the County’s participation in WRIA 8 will be important.
- **Washington Congressional Representatives Co-Sponsor PUGET SOS Bill** – Washington State Congressmen Denny Heck and Derek Kilmer are co-sponsors on House Bill 2447, the Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound (PUGET SOS) Act. Many partners in Puget Sound recovery, representing local governments, community organizations, business, and private citizens, recently signed onto a Puget Sound Partnership letter of support for the bill, prior to review by the U.S. House Committee on Transportation and Infrastructure. WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council Chair and Vice Chair signed onto the letter, along with several WRIA 8 partners. The bill authorizes Puget Sound to receive up to

\$50 million per year in federal funds (a significant increase over the current \$28 million funding level), codifies the Puget Sound Federal Task Force to implement the Puget Sound Action Agenda, and establishes a Program Office in the Environmental Protection Agency. Supporting passage of the PUGET SOS Act is one of WRIA 8's 2020 federal legislative priorities.

- **Salmon returns update** – Historically, about 99.9% of the **sockeye** salmon run has passed through the Ballard Locks by this time. Sockeye salmon numbers are the lowest since counting started in 1972: as of September 8, about 17,408 sockeye are estimated to have entered the Lake Washington system. The 10 year average is around 84,500 by this time, so this year the run is just 20% of average. **Chinook** salmon typically are about 92% through the Locks by this time. So far (as of September 8), around 5,494 Chinook have been estimated to have passed into the Lake Washington system. The 10 year average for Chinook at this time is 7,318 individuals.
- **Salmon SEEson** – The 13th annual Salmon SEEson program is underway, coordinating and promoting salmon viewing opportunities for the public throughout King County watersheds. New sites this year include Flaming Geyser State Park and the new pedestrian bridge over the Duwamish River in Tukwila. WRIA 8 manages the program with sponsorship from the Saving Water Partnership. The program receives additional support from Duwamish Alive, King County, the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed, and the Snoqualmie/Skykomish Watershed. The program is being promoted through press releases, a photo contest, social media, and distribution of posters, brochures, and signs.
- **E-news** – The August 28 WRIA 8 E-newsletter included information about Salmon SEEson; House Bill 2447, the Promoting United Government Efforts to Save our Sound (PUGET SOS) Act; the effect of sedimentation on kokanee spawning; the STREAM team program; the Community Action Training School; the Draft VISION 2050 Plan; King County's Land Conservation Initiative; funding opportunities; and events and news stories. Please send ideas for the October edition of E-news to Laura West at lwest@kingcounty.gov by October 4. E-news distribution now includes over 900 recipients.

WRIA 8 Committee Reports

- **WRIA 8 Technical Committee** – The Technical Committee met on August 14 and September 10. Meeting topics included discussion of the Technical Committee's purpose and objectives; annual work plan topics; synthesis of information on Lake Washington Ship Canal temperature and dissolved oxygen issues; 2019 wood survey on Issaquah Creek, evaluation and potential revision to the habitat tier designations; and technical review of two habitat restoration projects.
- **WRIA 8 Implementation Committee** – The Implementation Committee met on September 10. Meeting topics included general WRIA 8 updates; presentation of the WRIA 8 Project

Subcommittee recommendation for 2019 Salmon Recovery Funding Board grant funding and adjustments to the 2020 grant round schedule; revisiting the Implementation Committee purpose and objectives to ensure clarity on the Committee's role and function at this stage in salmon recovery; discussion and feedback on a proposed WRIA 8 communications and outreach strategy; and, review of agenda topics for the September 19 Salmon Recovery Council meeting.