

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Meeting Notes

Zoom Video Conference || November 19, 2020 2:00 – 4:15p.m.

Members Present		
#	Name	Affiliation
1)	Councilmember (CM) John Stokes, Chair	City of Bellevue
2)	CM Mark Phillips, Vice-Chair	City of Lake Forest Park
3)	CM Tom Agnew	City of Bothell
4)	CM Bruce Dodds	City of Clyde Hill
5)	CM Diane Buckshnis	City of Edmonds
6)	CM Victoria Hunt	City of Issaquah
7)	CM Melanie O’Cain	City of Kenmore
8)	CM Neal Black	City of Kirkland
9)	CM Lisa Anderl	City of Mercer Island
10)	CM Varisha Khan	City of Redmond
11)	CM Ryan McIrvn	City of Renton
12)	CM Pam Stuart	City of Sammamish
13)	CM Susan Boundy-Sanders	City of Woodinville
14)	CM Ted Frantz	Town of Hunts Point
15)	CM Carl Scandella	Town of Yarrow Point
16)	Corinne Young	Cedar River Council
17)	Larry Franks	Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatcheries (FISH)
18)	Kirstin Haugen	King Conservation District
19)	Noel Gilbrough	Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
20)	Tor Bell	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
21)	John Sherman	The Boeing Company
22)	Gary Smith	Trout Unlimited/Water Tenders
23)	Connie Grant	U.S. Army Corp of Engineers
24)	Mary Shustov	Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
25)	Stewart Reinbold	Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife
26)	Joanna Warneck	Washington Department of Natural Resources
Alternates Present		
27)	CM Jeanne Zornes	City of Bothell
28)	CM Valerie O’Halloran	City of Renton
29)	Michele Koehler	City of Seattle
30)	Christine Stephens	Forterra
31)	Brandy Reed	King Conservation District
32)	Garrett Holbrook	King County
33)	Sarah Heerhartz	Mid Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
34)	Josh Thompson	Snohomish County
35)	David Bain	Sno-King Watershed Council
36)	Terry Lavender	Trout Unlimited/Water Tenders
Other Attendees		
37)	Larry Reymann	Environmental Science Center
38)	Janet Geer	City of Bothell
39)	Allen Quynn	City of Issaquah
40)	Richard Sawyer	City of Kenmore
41)	Rachel Konrady	City of Kirkland
42)	Mike Todd	City of Mill Creek
43)	Michael Ciaravino	City of Mill Creek
44)	Kim Jones	City of Newcastle

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45)	Pete Holt	City of Redmond
46)	Kristina Lowthian	City of Renton
47)	Diana Hart	City of Woodinville
48)	Joanna Stodden	Environmental Science Center
49)	Eli Tome	Forterra
50)	David St. John	King County
51)	Denise Di Santo	King County
52)	Jim Bower	King County
53)	Judy Blanco	King County
54)	Perry Falcone	King County
55)	Alexandra Doty	Puget Sound Partners
56)	Ryika Hooshangi	Sammamish Plateau Water
57)	Whitney Neugebauer	Whale Scout
58)	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz	WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager
59)	Jason Wilkinson	WRIA 8 Project Coordinator
60)	Laura West	WRIA 8 Salmon SEESon Coordinator
61)	Lauren Urgenson	WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator
62)	Carla Nelson	WRIA 8 Administrative Coordinator

I) Call to Order / Introductions

Council Member (CM) John Stokes (Chair) called the November Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) meeting to order at 2:04 pm and welcomed everyone. Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, (Jason MK) WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager, reviewed Zoom best practices and Chair Stokes conducted introductions.

II) Public Comment – No public comment.

III) Consent Agenda - SRC Meeting Minutes from September 17, 2020 were discussed.

Action: The Council unanimously approved the September 17, 2020 meeting minutes.

IV) Updates & Announcements

Jason MK highlighted the following updates:

- **Puget Sound Regional Update** – Review of primary meeting topics from Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council and the South Central Action Area Caucus Group.
- **Status of WRIA 8 Interlocal Agreement (ILA) amendment for Snohomish County to rejoin as a cost share partner** - As of early November, 26 out of 28 partners have approved and signed the amendment. Approval by the final two partners is anticipated by the end of November.
- **King County Flood Control District approval of motion confirming commitment to integrated floodplain management and multiple benefit projects** – The King County Flood Control District (District) approved a motion on November 4, confirming its commitment to integrated floodplain management and multiple benefit projects. Approval of the motion further in consistent with the District’s increase in Cooperative Watershed Management grant funding and creation of three new grant programs.
- **WRIA 8 SRC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee meeting** – The new Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion Subcommittee met biweekly since late September. Subcommittee discussions focused on establishing ground rules; defining key DEI terms and purpose; outlining DEI goals; establishing a goal-strategy-outcome-assessment framework for achieving the goals; and beginning to work through some initial strategies including potential revisions to WRIA 8 grant applications and ranking criteria.
- **Salmon returns status** – Preliminary results from Chinook spawner surveys in the Cedar River and returns to the Issaquah Hatchery indicate far fewer salmon may have returned than were reported coming through the Locks. Redd counts throughout the watershed have been much lower than the Locks count would suggest. Preliminary data suggest the Cedar River Chinook redd count was the third lowest returns on record since 1999.

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- **Implementation Progress Report** –WRIA 8 staff are working on the first progress report based on the WRIA 8 Plan update, to provide a baseline status on habitat goal metrics, highlight projects that are advancing priority recovery strategies, and highlight where WRIA 8's recovery work is headed. This progress report will be produced as an online "Story Map." WRIA 8 staff are working to present the report to the Salmon Recovery Council in early 2021.
- **Salmon SEEson program status** – The 2020 Salmon SEEson is about to conclude after a successful, although unusual, viewing season. Most Salmon SEEson sites were self-guided for 2020, to follow public health guidelines. Many partners pivoted to virtual content, providing online curriculums and activities. The [new Salmon SEEson website](#) has been well received, and the program was featured on a [KIRO 7 news clip](#) in late September.
- **2021 Salmon Recovery Council meeting schedule** – Beginning January 2021, the Salmon Recovery Council will continue to meet on the third Thursday of every other month, from 2:00-4:15pm. Currently, all meetings are presumed to be virtual until further notice.
- **WRIA 8 E-News** – The October edition of the WRIA 8 E-news included topics on seal predation, virtual events, and local restoration updates. The next edition is scheduled for release on December 22nd. Please submit topics by December 11 to Carla Nelson (carnelson@kingcounty.gov).

Updates Discussion:

- Low Locks count discussion: Larry Franks commented that Chinook returns at the Issaquah Hatchery were well below Locks counts. They are studying the potential pre-spawn mortality issues. Mary Shustov asked what was the cause of the discrepancy between Lock counts and spawning ground surveys. Jason MK answered there are a variety of potential factors, with the primary assumption being inflated counts at the Locks. CM Carl Scandella stated that measurements fluctuate, and poor measurement could be a key component. Lauren Urgenson, WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator, explained why the process for counting fish needs to remain consistent to enable comparisons over time, and this anomaly could also be because salmon behavior has drastically changed. CM Frantz asked: has there been a count comparison from the Columbia River or Fraser River returns? Lauren agreed to look at data from the Columbia and Frasier River systems and report back. Larry Reymann added that 2020 saw a 40% pre-spawn sockeye mortality rate.

V) **WRIA 8 Chair and Vice-Chair selection – Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz**

Jason MK provided an update on the selection status for the 2021-2022 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Chair and Vice-Chair positions. Current Chair, Councilmember John Stokes, and current Vice-Chair, Mark Phillips, both expressed their continued interest in serving in their current roles for another two-year term.

Chair Selection Discussion:

- CM Phillips noted his current city councilmember term ends in 2021, and he is undecided about running for another term, which, if he does not, would require him to step down as WRIA 8 Vice Chair. CM Diane Buckshnis expressed interest in serving as Vice-Chair should CM Phillips need to step down. Jason MK noted that the SRC would hold a selection process to fill a vacant leadership position should that happen.

Action: The SRC unanimously approved CM John Stokes as Chair and CM Mark Phillips as Vice-Chair for the 2021-2022 term.

VI) **Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) Grant Funding Guidance Options – Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz**

- Jason MK reviewed the revised funding guidance options presented to the SRC in September, noting there was general support for amounts in options 5 & 6 (option 5: Designating 20% for monitoring/assessment and 5% for education and outreach; or option 6: Doubling designated funding caps for monitoring/assessment and education and outreach). Option 7 emerged from discussion with the Technical Committee, and is essentially the same amounts as option 6, only removing the funding

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cap. Based on discussions with the Technical Committee and the implementation Committee, the recommendation to the SRC is:

- Monitoring and assessment: \$721,525
- Education and outreach: \$192,000
- Habitat projects: \$2,694,104

Jason noted that the Project Subcommittee would continue to have the discretion to deviate from the funding guidance based on their best professional judgement and the merit of proposals received in developing funding recommendations. Additionally, the balance of any funds not awarded in the monitoring and assessment and/or the education and outreach categories would continue to be added to the amount available for habitat projects.

CWM Guidance Discussion:

- CM Ted Frantz asked if there were any capital projects ready for funding in the near future. Jason MK answered there are several; however, WRIA 8 will likely not meet the need for project funding in any of the listed options. CM Mark Phillips asked to explain the benefit of “no caps.” Jason answered that caps were originally put on the monitoring and assessment and education and outreach categories to ensure a majority of grant funding went to habitat project implementation. He noted that WRIA 8 now has a much more refined understanding of salmon recovery funding needs in the watershed, which, given the increase in available funds, warrant considering increasing funding for education and outreach and monitoring and assessment efforts. Susan Boundy-Sanders expressed her excitement that these numbers are increasing but would like to know if the monitoring columns are smaller in options 5/6. Jason clarified option 6 reflects double the current amount, and option 5 shows a 20% figure for monitoring and assessment based on increasing the amount by 5% in the different options. Noel Gilbrough noted that he was in favor of option 5, noting he is keenly interested in trying to answer questions like why there is such a discrepancy between fish counts at the Locks and spawning ground surveys. Jason explained that the recommendation supports the same funding level for monitoring and assessment as option 5, but also captures the increase in education and outreach supported by the Implementation Committee. CM Diane Buckshnis commented that based on what we’ve learned over the years, she supports increasing the funding amounts for monitoring and assessment and education and outreach. CM Carl Scandella encouraged WRIA 8 staff to seek out studies to help us better understand what is happening to salmon. Jason thanked the group for the discussion and approval of the revised guidance.

***Action:** The SRC unanimously approved to adopt the recommended revised funding guidance of \$192k for education and outreach, \$721k for monitoring and assessment and \$2.6m for habitat acquisition and restoration.*

VII) Communications and Outreach Framework – Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz

Jason MK asked the SRC to move to approve the WRIA 8 Communications and Outreach Framework (Framework) recommended for approval by the Implementation Committee and discussed by the SRC in September. The framework’s purpose is to direct investment of resources to the highest priority communication, education, and outreach programs and activities; coordinate salmon recovery messaging; inform local partners’ communications and outreach programs; and guide ongoing WRIA 8 staff communications.

Communication Framework Discussion: Chair Stokes thanked the staff and the Implementation Committee for this framework and appreciated the work put into its development.

***Action:** The SRC unanimously approved to adopt the Communications and Outreach Framework.*

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VIII) Lake Sammamish Kokanee Recovery Status – Perry Falcone, Kokanee Recovery Manager

Perry Falcone, King County Kokanee Recovery Manager, provided an update on the Lake Sammamish kokanee and fall return results.

Kokanee Discussion:

- Larry Reymann asked Perry to describe any potential non-native predator mitigation pilot projects. Perry said studies are being conducted on trapping and various fishing techniques to determine the most effective practices for yellow perch that do not impact salmon populations. Jason MK added that the yellow perch predation work is to identify and inform management efforts and that Perry is coordinating with a lot of partners and departments on this work, including WRIA 8. CM Carl Scandella asked about kokanee return numbers for 2020. Perry said that surveys are not yet final; however, 2019 was the lowest, and 2020 is expected to be low as well. King County scientists will be watching over the next two years, hoping current efforts to support the population will result in a stronger return. Jim Bower added that he hoped this year is the last year of the negative recruitment cycle. Jim also added that poor ocean conditions from 2013-2016 impacted recruitment survivability. Noel Gilbrough commented that addressing rising water temperatures is also a key issue to deal with. Perry answered that he is coordinating with the partner cities and acknowledged the challenges posed by increasing water temperatures.. CM Scandella pressed the need to address water quality issues. Perry said elevated summer lake temperatures created a “squeeze” between water that is too warm and water that has low dissolved oxygen (a band where fish have a limited habitat window to survive). This narrow band of 5-10 feet in the middle of the lake creates a funnel for the predators to feed on kokanee and salmon. Chair Stokes raised the issue of lakeshore development contributing to increasing water temperature. He added that City of Bellevue is working with neighboring cities and communities to adopt land use codes, such as updates to the Shoreline Master Program, that support development that considers habitat conditions for salmon and other aquatic species.

IX) Success Story: Bear Creek Wood Placement Project at Keller Farm – Tom Hardy, City of Redmond

Jason MK introduced Tom Hardy, Stream and Habitat Planner for the City of Redmond. Tom presented Redmond’s project to install large wood along 4, 000 feet of Bear Creek adjacent to the Keller Farm Wetland Mitigation Bank. He presented images of the project area pre-project and images of the 37 log jams that were installed. The project was completed with several key partnerships, and integrated with an Adopt A Stream Foundation stream restoration project immediately upstream and the Keller Wetland Mitigation Bank. Combined goals were to increase complexity, enhance riparian areas, and native planting and noxious weed removal.

Bear Creek at Keller Discussion:

- Gary Smith asked if Tom could post drone footage of the project area? Tom said he would share drone footage once it’s available. Jason MK added that he would like to add it to the December WRIA 8 e-newsletter. CM Ted Frantz asked if there will be any effectiveness monitoring post restoration. Tom answered that Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) conducts spawner surveys in this reach, and those surveys will continue. CM Ted Frantz added his interest in any future reporting on spawning numbers when they are available.

X) **Next Meeting:** Chair Stokes noted the next SRC meeting is January 21, 2021, 2:00 – 4:15 pm, via Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:20 pm.