

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Meeting Notes

Zoom Video Conference || January 21, 2021 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 Neal Black	City of Kirkland
8)	CM Adam Morgan	City of Mill Creek
9)	CM Varisha Khan	City of Redmond
10)	CM Ryan McIrvin	City of Renton
11)	CM Keith Scully	City of Shoreline
12)	CM Susan Boundy-Sanders	City of Woodinville
13)	CM Ted Frantz	Town of Hunts Point
14)	CM Carl Scandella	Town of Yarrow Point
15)	Corinne Helmer	Cedar River Council
16)	Larry Franks	Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (FISH)
17)	Kirstin Haugen	King Conservation District
18)	Tor Bell	Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
19)	Eric Adman	Sno-King Watershed Council
20)	John Sherman	The Boeing Company
21)	Gary Smith	Trout Unlimited/Water Tenders
22)	Connie Grant	U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
23)	Mary Shustov	Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
24)	Cleo Neculae	Washington State Department of Ecology
25)	Jordanna Warneck	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Alternates Present		
26)	Jeanne Zornes, Deputy Mayor	City of Bothell
27)	CM Kim Muromoto	City of Clyde Hill
28)	CM Laura Johnson	City of Edmonds
29)	CM Valerie O'Halloran	City of Renton
30)	Michele Koehler	City of Seattle
31)	Brandy Reed	King Conservation District
32)	Josh Thompson	Snohomish County
33)	David Bain	Sno-King Watershed Council
Other Attendees		
34)	Kenny Down	Citizen
35)	Janet Geer	City of Bothell
36)	Allen Quynn	City of Issaquah
37)	Richard Sawyer	City of Kenmore
38)	Rachel Konrady	City of Kirkland
39)	Mike Todd	City of Mill Creek
40)	Peter Holte	City of Redmond
41)	Tom Hardy	City of Redmond
42)	Kristina Lowthian	City of Renton
43)	Toby Thaler	City of Seattle
44)	Joanna Stodden	Environmental Science Center

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45)	Kelly Steffen	Environmental Science Center
46)	Larry Reymann	Environmental Science Center
47)	Eli Tome	Forterra
48)	Garrett Holbrook	King County
49)	Joan Lee	King County
50)	Judy Blanco	King County
51)	Denise Di Santo	King County
52)	Mike Burger	Muckleshoot Indian Tribe
53)	Alexandra Doty	Puget Sound Partnership
54)	Tracy Banaszynski	Sno-King Watershed Council
55)	Ryika Hooshangi	Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
56)	Miles Penk	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
57)	Stephanie Potts	Washington Department of Ecology
58)	Whitney Neugebauer	Whale Scout
59)	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz	WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager
60)	Jason Wilkinson	WRIA 8 Project Coordinator
61)	Lauren Urgenson	WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator
62)	Carla Nelson	WRIA 8 Administrative Coordinator

I) Call to Order / Introductions

Councilmember (CM) Mark Phillips (Vice-Chair) called the January Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) meeting to order at 2:04 pm. Vice-Chair Phillips welcomed everyone and conducted introductions.

- II) **Public Comment** – Kenny Down, citizen, spoke on behalf of his organization, [Wooshh Innovations](#) to announce their interest in working with WRIA 8 and other interested partners to address improvements to the fish ladder at Ballard Locks. Lauren Urgenson, WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator agreed to reach out to him to discuss further.

- III) **Consent Agenda** - SRC Meeting Minutes from November 19, 2020 were discussed.

Action: The Council unanimously approved the November 19, 2020 meeting minutes.

IV) Updates & Announcements

Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (Jason M-K), WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager highlighted the following updates:

- **Puget Sound Regional Update** – The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC) met on November 19. The meeting focused on: Proposals to advance the concept of ‘net ecological gain’; 2021 legislative priorities update; approval of PS SRC’s Funding Subcommittee recommendations; discuss ongoing challenges of operations at the Electron Dam; and, presentations on conservation finance mechanisms. The **South Central Action Area Caucus** met on December 2. The meeting focused on discussion of King County’s new approach to stormwater management planning and resource allocation; and a presentation from King Conservation District on work to map tree canopy and assess its impact on stormwater runoff that could serve as a resource for local governments.
- **2021 Grant Round Announcement and Schedule** - The 2021 WRIA 8 grant round opened on January 5. Please note key deadlines: Notice of intent to apply deadline (SRFB) is 2/1/21; Notice of Intent deadline to apply (CWM) is 2/10/21; SRFB application deadline is 2/24/21; and CWM application deadline is 3/24/21. If you have any questions, please contact Jason Wilkinson, WRIA 8 Project Coordinator (jason.wilkinson@kingcounty.gov).
- **WRIA 8 E-News** – The December edition of the WRIA 8 E-newsletter included topics on climate impacts, virtual community events, salmon in the news, and local conservation and restoration efforts. The next edition is scheduled for release on February 26. Please submit topics by February 12 to Carla Nelson (carnelson@kingcounty.gov).

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- **Ballard Locks Stoney Gate Valves update** – At the end of last year, the Army Corps of Engineers completed work to replace six failing large lock gate valves and machinery at Ballard Locks. This was the highest priority Locks facility repair for improved fish passage.
- **2020 State of Salmon in our Watersheds report** – The report released on January 15 from Washington State Recreation Conservation Office provides details on the status of the state’s salmon populations, habitat restoration, and overall recovery efforts.
- **WRIA 8 Diversity, Equity and Inclusion (DEI) update** – Since its inception late last fall, the WRIA 8 DEI Subcommittee focused on incorporating DEI principles into revisions to the WRIA 8 grant round application and ranking criteria. They are now working to complete their foundational work to finalize goals, vision and identifying opportunities to expand communication efforts using the newly adopted WRIA 8 Communications and Outreach Framework.

Updates Discussion:

- CM Ted Frantz asked if the Locks Stoney Gate valves were fish friendly. Jason explained that being fish friendly was a primary purpose for replacing them, and that these slow-fill valves will improve juvenile fish passage.
- Chair John Stokes commented on recent statements of support for diversity and equity a consortium of local businesses put in the newspaper. He suggested the DEI Subcommittee consider this statement in developing WRIA 8’s DEI vision statement. WRIA 8 staff will obtain and provide this statement to the DEI Subcommittee for consideration.
- Alexandra Doty expressed the importance of equity and environmental justice for the State of Washington. She noted that Puget Sound Partnership is supporting House Bill 5141, which establishes a formalized and environmentally just body within their agency. Alexandra also encouraged the SRC to attend Puget Sound Day on the Hill. Formal details are forthcoming; however, these virtual events will happen every Friday starting in late April into May.
- CM Boundy-Sanders asked that the nexus between DEI and salmon recovery be made clear in the DEI Subcommittee’s work.
- CM Ted Frantz asked when the DEI Subcommittee will present to the SRC. Lauren Urgenson affirmed that the subcommittee will present proposed vision, goals, and a strategy framework at the March 18 meeting.

V) Legislative Priorities Update and Draft Letters to State Legislators and Congressional Delegation – Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz

Jason M-K reviewed the Governor’s budget funding levels for WRIA 8’s state and legislative priorities. He then led the discussion for the Council to approve two draft letters conveying WRIA 8’s priorities to (1) state legislators, and (2) the state Congressional delegations. Jason also introduced the opportunity for SRC members to meet with legislators and asked for those interested to contact him directly.

Legislative Discussion:

- CM Victoria Hunt asked if WRIA 8 has a legislative platform that jurisdictions should discuss. Jason M-K explained that WRIA 8 does not currently hold a specific position on draft legislation but will be requesting the SRC to consider a position on a short list of draft legislation to support in meetings with legislators.
- Chair Stokes asked about the reduction in the funding amounts for salmon recovery budget programs in the Governor’s budget compared to what was requested. Jason remarked that in prior years, the funding received for most programs has been nowhere near the request amount, and 2021 is the first year where the Governor’s budget includes the full amount requested for a couple programs. Jason expressed that WRIA 8’s priorities support the higher funding request amounts as they are based on substantiated salmon recovery costs.
- CM Diane Buckshnis asked if WRIA 8 staff would draft a template letter for SRC partners to use to send individual letters to their respective legislators. Jason M-K agreed to send a template.

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- CM Mark Phillips commented on the importance of sending the letters. He noted the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board budget being more than \$20 million less than requested. He added that successful fish passage improvement projects are a visible sign of work happening on the behalf of salmon recovery and encouraged Council members to highlight the importance of salmon recovery as well as their local restoration efforts in their letters.
- Chair Stokes emphasized the importance for the jurisdictions to have individual conversations with their local governments.
- CM Victoria Hunt asked for more information on the scope of SB5220 regarding making state salmon recovery grants exempt from business and occupation tax. Tor Bell explained that the bill is specific to salmon recovery grants. The legislation is based on a multi-year conversation and he hopes that this bill will provide non-profit groups some security assurances.

Action: The SRC unanimously approved to send the letters to state legislators and Congressional delegation.

VI) Final Draft Plan from Ecology-led Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee in WRIA 8 – Stephanie Potts

Jason M-K introduced Stephanie Potts from Washington State’s Department of Ecology to present the recommendations from the final draft plan developed by the Ecology-led Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee (WREC) in WRIA 8, responding to the legislature’s Streamflow Restoration Act (RCW 90.94) passed in response to the “Hirst decision” to help address withdrawals from permit-exempt wells and restore and enhance streamflows in watersheds around the state.

WREC Plan Discussion:

- Eric Adman asked if all projects listed in the plan were funded. Michele Koehler replied that they were not, but they are eligible for funding since they are in the plan. Eric added that these are important talking points that partners could use to advance projects.
- CM Susan Boundy-Sanders asked how a new well can be permit exempt. Stephanie referred to RCW 90.050 which lists types of wells that are exempt, including for small homes, gardens/landscaping and small businesses. CM Boundy-Sanders then asked about the well approval criteria and who grants approvals. Stephanie said Counties approve wells through building permits. She added that most compliance is managed by educating landowners and businesses, then providing them the tools to manage flows. CM Boundy-Sanders then asked about the trade-offs of using reclaimed, from the Brightwater Treatment Plant for example, that is often warm to supplement streamflows. Stephanie said that there are protocols in place to remedy the flow of this type of water, such as infiltration to allow the water to combine with groundwater before returning to a stream.
- Chair Stokes asked about the plan’s final approval process. He asked if one agency does not agree, then the work and input from the committee process is not included in how Ecology proceeds? Stephanie said this is correct. Chair Stokes added that he believes that it should be a locally approved plan as it is a locally based process that is implemented through statewide rules. He noted he supports having an approved plan, so the issue does not require a rule-making process at the state level.

VII) 2021 Meeting Themes and Priority Topics – Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz

Jason M-K presented a compiled list of topics and key issues to inform what the SRC wants to focus on for the year. Jason noted that it would not be possible to address the large number of topics, but that staff will use this as a guide for topics to develop to bring forward to the SRC during the year.

2021 Meeting Themes Discussion:

- CM Ted Frantz indicated his interest in understanding the status of salmon populations in other watersheds across a wider geography to compare with WRIA 8. He believes other experiences and solutions could assist or inform WRIA 8’s work.

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- Larry Reymann asked if the tire run-off flows from the I-90 floating bridge go directly into Lake Washington. Jason M-K confirmed he believes that is the case; however, newer bridge construction like the SR 520 Bridge captures stormwater runoff. CM Buckshnis noted that stormwater runoff from the older SR 104 structure by Edmonds Marsh flows right into the Marsh. Cleo Neculae offered to look into the question of stormwater runoff from the I-90 Bridge and report back.
- Chair Stokes said he believes WRIA 8 is in a good position to be more involved with other organizations and integrate our findings on several of these topics. He noted the King County Clean Water Healthy Habitat initiative and suggested WRIA 8 should seek to support and influence this initiative. As Chair, he is motivated to find ways to assert WRIA 8's priorities into local government decision-making, especially with land use and development.

Action: The SRC unanimously approved the 2021 meeting themes and priority topics.

VIII) **Success Story: Salmon Heroes Program by Environmental Science Center – Kelly Steffen**

Jason M-K introduced Kelly Steffen from the Environmental Science Center (ESC), who presented on the Salmon Heroes program. Kelly provided insight on how the Salmon Heroes program adjusted its programming in response to COVID-19 pandemic restrictions to continue serving disadvantaged south King County youth. ESC created virtual content and distributed kits containing educational material to help youth understand how to perform water quality and habitat surveys to determine if local rivers provide suitable habitats for salmon. Kelly thanked the King County Flood Control District and the SRC for providing funding to support the Salmon Heroes program.

Environmental Science Center Salmon Heroes Program Discussion:

- Chair Stokes asked if the shift to a virtual format increased the number of students participating in the program. Kelly confirmed that there is a potential to grow the student base even more now that the program can run through the winter months since it is virtual.
- CM Diane Buckshnis asked if ESC has collaborated with other organizations offering similar youth-focused programming. Kelly said that they are open to collaborating and CM Buckshnis mentioned the success of the CATS: Community Action Training School program as one example of a potential collaborative opportunity.
- David Bain added that Friends of North Creek Forest is taking a similar approach with virtual material and outreach efforts. He said that their reach increased more virtually than in person.

IX) Next Meeting: Chair Stokes noted the next SRC meeting is March 18, 2021, 2:00 – 4:15 pm, via Zoom.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:20 pm.