

Lake Washington Ship Canal Roundtable

Convening Partners to Improve Water Quality Conditions for Salmon

Aug. 27, 2021

On June 3 and July 7, over 35 attendees from sixteen agency, tribal, and community organizations met to discuss impacts on salmon from high temperatures and low dissolved oxygen in the Lake Washington Ship Canal (LWSC). The purpose was to build a common understanding of the issue and to inform a process, goals, and criteria to advance solutions. The information below summarizes conclusions and next steps from this collaborative effort.

Values, Ideas, and Attributes to Inform Solutions

Attendees collaborated on a virtual whiteboard activity to aggregate ideas and perspectives. The group brainstormed, discussed, and prioritized key concepts. Common priorities and values identified through this activity are summarized below and the complete whiteboard can be viewed [here](#).

Species – Prioritize strategies to address all Pacific salmon impacted by high temperatures and low dissolved oxygen, rather than more targeted species-specific strategies that improve individual species survival, but may not address limiting environmental conditions.

Scope – Address temperature and dissolved oxygen conditions in the LWSC as the focus of this effort but consider how solutions link with a watershed-based approach to salmon recovery. Consider a range of alternatives across the LWSC to assess feasibility and effectiveness, rather than predetermine or prioritize any specific approach.

Timeframe – Consider both near-term strategies with potential to immediately mitigate impacts to salmon and illustrate progress/build momentum/prevent further decline, while also assessing longer-term, more comprehensive solutions. The group identified a need to consider both current and future conditions in vetting alternatives.

Value Drivers – The group emphasized the importance of Tribal treaty fishing rights and identified the value of multi-beneficial solutions (economic, social, equity/human-wellbeing, ESA species, environmental quality/protection, locks maintenance, stormwater) with potential to tap into a variety of interests and funding resources. The group also highlighted a need to evaluate public cost/benefit, potential regulatory barriers, and sociopolitical feasibility of alternatives in addition to assessment of technical feasibility and effectiveness.

Other – Recommendation to quantify and/or model benefits to salmon directly, in addition to changes in biophysical conditions that would result from alternative actions.

Group Structure

Following initial roundtable meetings, attendees organized into smaller, more focused work groups:

Information, Input, and Advocacy Work Group

A larger, diverse array of representatives from public, private, and non-profit entities who would like to stay involved and advocate for the project's goals and objectives. This group will meet as needed and stay informed via email. All attendees of the LWSC Roundtable are included in this group and others are welcome.

Steering and Strategy Work Group

Includes five to eight senior management level representatives from organizations who are invested in this issue and can contribute time and expertise to strategic planning.

Technical Work Group

Includes five to eight individuals with technical expertise in water quality, fisheries, engineering, or close working knowledge of LWSC. This group will set goals and criteria and identify and vet alternatives. This group will invite additional expertise as needed.

Timeline and Next Steps

The Technical and Steering and Strategy Work Groups will establish project goals, criteria to evaluate alternatives, brainstorm and research conceptual alternatives, and rank alternatives. Phase I will produce a small number of alternatives to advance through additional feasibility assessment and implementation.

Workgroups (Jun. 2021 – Feb. 2022)		
Aug. 26	Steering and Strategy	Initial meeting
Sept.	Information, Input, and Advocacy	Email update
Sept. 17	Technical	Set goals and alternative ranking criteria
Sept.	Steering and Strategy	Review goals and alt. ranking criteria
Sept. 30	Technical	Approve goals and alt. eval. matrix
Oct. 6	Steering and Strategy	Review/set goals and criteria
Nov.	Technical with specialists	Workshop 1 – Brainstorm alternatives
Nov./Dec.	Technical with specialists	Workshop 2 – Rank alternatives
<i>Workshop summary report produced</i>		
Jan.	Steering and Strategy Work Group	Approve ranking and strategy
Jan.	Information, Input, and Advocacy	Update to review alternatives

Acknowledgements - LWSC Roundtable Organizations

Representative on Technical Group (bolded); Representative on Steering and Strategy Group (asterisk).

Army Corps of Engineers*

City of Seattle*

WA Department of Ecology

WA Department of Natural Resources

U.S. Environmental Protection Agency

King County*

Muckleshoot Indian Tribe*

Nat. Oceanic and Atmospheric Admin.*

Puget Sound Partnership

Suquamish Tribe

U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service

Port of Seattle

U.S. Geological Survey

WA Department of Fish and Wildlife*

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council*

Long Live the Kings (Facilitation)

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