



WRIA 8 Updates and Committee Reports

May 19, 2022

- **Puget Sound Regional Update** – The **Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PS SRC)** last met on March 24. The meeting focused on:
 - Funding Subcommittee presentation on results of the pilot project to integrate salmon recovery priorities into county Conservation Futures Levy programs.
 - Update on the substantial rise in cost increase requests for projects funded by Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration grants.
 - Screening of the 2021 State of the Sound video.
 - Discussion and approval of the Chinook salmon Vital Sign to include in the 2022-2026 Action Agenda for Puget Sound recovery.
 - Review of the draft 2022-2026 Action Agenda for Puget Sound recovery.
 - Presentation from Northwest Fisheries Science Center on an analysis of the spatial distribution of habitat restoration.
 - Update on an effort to coordinate fund a Puget Sound juvenile salmon monitoring program and presentation on a regional monitoring framework.
 - Update on the 2022 legislative session and status of priorities and policy proposals.

The PS SRC is scheduled to meet next on May 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 March 3, and hosted an online workshop for King County partners to review and discuss feedback on the draft 2022-2026 Action Agenda for Puget Sound recovery. Comments from the workshop were collated and presented to the Puget Sound Partnership as part of the public comment period that closed on April 15. The LIO is also discussing possible projects and programs to consider recommending for federal funding to advance LIO priorities. Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz represents WRIA 8 on the LIO.

- **Letter to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board regarding allocation of salmon habitat restoration funding from the legislature** – The state Salmon Recovery Funding Board will consider options at their June 2 meeting for distributing \$75 million appropriated for salmon habitat restoration in the 2022 Supplemental Operating Budget. WRIA staff drafted a comment letter supporting the use of established salmon recovery funding processes using science-based funding allocation formulas to provide additional financial capacity for the state’s salmon recovery regions and watershed-based lead entities. The Implementation Committee reviewed the draft letter, and because the May 16 submittal deadline does not allow for the letter to be reviewed at a meeting of the full Salmon Recovery Council, the Management Committee considered approval to send the letter on the Salmon Recovery Council’s behalf. Please note the final letter will be added to the packet closer to the meeting.

- **Pilot Project to address effects of artificial lighting on Lake Sammamish** – At the request of state Representative Bill Ramos, WRIA 8 worked with other interested parties to develop a budget proposal during the 2022 legislative session for a pilot effort to implement a series of actions to address the harmful impacts of artificial light at night on native salmon along the shoreline of Lake Sammamish. The legislature awarded \$125,000 – half of what was requested – to support the pilot project. The planning group will meet in late May/early June to revise the scope of work and schedule for implementation. State funding will be available on July 1. Rep. Ramos expressed interest in building on this initial pilot phase of work to support future legislative policy and budget requests on this topic.
- **2021 WRIA 8 Partner Survey results** – King County, as WRIA 8 service provider, conducts an annual survey to gauge partner satisfaction with the WRIA 8 watershed salmon recovery services. In general, survey results indicate good to excellent satisfaction with the WRIA 8 team’s services in terms of identifying priorities, coordinating and facilitating meetings, project coordination, technical services, tracking and advising partners of emerging issues, overall effectiveness. Responses to several open-ended questions affirm the approach and effectiveness of the services provided by WRIA 8, as well as several excellent suggestions for adjustments and improvements for consideration. Please see a summary of results from the survey of 2021 services in the meeting packet.
- **Partner meeting preferences survey results** – WRIA 8 is taking every precaution to ensure the health and safety of our partners as restrictions on in-person gatherings are lifting. Over the past two months, we invited Salmon Recovery Council members to share feedback through a brief survey to inform scheduling future meetings. Survey results suggest a majority of partners are either not comfortable or only somewhat comfortable with meeting in-person. Most partner responses indicate a preference for either all virtual meetings or a mix of virtual and in-person, with a strong preference for only scheduling in-person meetings as needed. There was also a strong interest in and comfort with scheduling an outdoor in-person meeting. Please find a summary of survey results in the meeting packet.
- **Lake Washington Ship Canal temperature and dissolved oxygen roundtable process** – The goal of the Roundtable is to act urgently to improve juvenile and adult salmon health and survival in the Lake Washington Ship Canal by lowering water temperatures, increasing dissolved oxygen, and reducing abrupt transitions in those conditions. WRIA 8 and Long Live the Kings (LLTK) are working on a write-up of prioritized alternatives to be completed this summer. LLTK is seeking funding for feasibility analysis and modeling of top-tier alternatives with WRIA 8 support.
- **WRIA 8 E-News** –The [April edition](#) of the WRIA 8 E-news included the following topics and updates: A map that can locate and highlight pollution levels harming Puget Sound, presentation on restoration efforts on City of Sammamish’s Ebright Creek fish passage project, Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery utilizing climate change resilient plans in their Native Plant Garden, and several partner program announcements such as upcoming Community Action Training School sessions, the American the Beautiful Challenge federal funding opportunity, and Whale Scout’s Diverse Voices Internship program. The next

edition is scheduled for June. Please submit proposed topics to Carla Nelson (carnelson@kingcounty.gov).

WRIA 8 Committee Reports

WRIA 8 SRC Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee meeting – The Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) Subcommittee continues to focus on implementation of actions identified in WRIA 8’s DEI Strategic Plan. Sponsor and reviewer feedback on the revised grant funding criteria focused on community engagement and equity/environmental justice has been positive. Based on discussions with the WRIA 8 SRC, the Subcommittee identified a series of priority actions for the coming year. These include a request for South Central LIO funding to highlight “bright-spot” projects and initiatives illustrating the nexus of salmon recovery and DEI. Anyone interested in learning more or joining the WRIA 8 DEI Subcommittee should contact Carla Nelson (carnelson@kingcounty.gov).

WRIA 8 Technical Committee – The WRIA 8 Technical Committee met in April and May to review proposal presentations in WRIA 8’s monitoring/assessment category of the Cooperative Watershed Management grant round. There is \$773,000 in available funding this year. There were 14 proposals submitted, total requested funding \$1,323,669. Proposals focused on predation (7 proposals), status and trends population monitoring (3 proposals), alternatives for improving temperatures and dissolved oxygen conditions in the Ship Canal (2 proposals), parasites/disease (1 proposal), pinniped deterrence (1 proposal).

WRIA 8 Implementation Committee – The Implementation Committee met on May 3. Meeting topics included updates on the 2022 WRIA 8 grant round, WRIA 8 partner survey results, pilot project to address effects of artificial lighting on Lake Sammamish, funding request for predation synthesis report, and updates from Committee members. The Committee reviewed and discussed the draft letter to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board offering comments on the approach for allocating funding appraised by the legislature for salmon habitat restoration. The Committee also reviewed and discussed the draft 2023 WRIA 8 work plan and heard a presentation on the scope, status, and schedule for the update to the King County Flood Hazard Management Plan and reviewed the May 19 Salmon Recovery Council meeting topics.