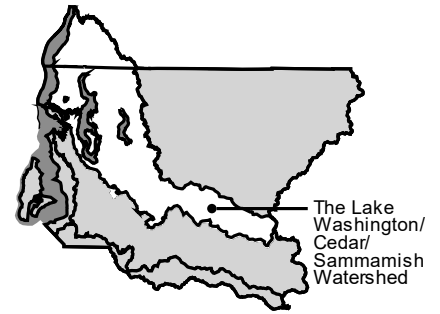




DRAFT – For discussion purposes only

September XX, 2022



Beaux Arts Village
 Bellevue
 Bothell
 Clyde Hill
 Edmonds
 Everett
 Hunts Point
 Issaquah
 Kenmore
 Kent
 King County
 Kirkland
 Lake Forest Park
 Maple Valley
 Medina
 Mercer Island
 Mill Creek
 Mountlake Terrace
 Mukilteo
 Newcastle
 Redmond
 Renton
 Sammamish
 Seattle
 Shoreline
 Snohomish County
 Woodinville
 Woodway
 Yarrow Point

The Honorable Jay Inslee
 Office of the Governor
 PO Box 40002
 Olympia, WA 98504-0002

RE: Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Salmon Recovery Council State Legislative Priorities

Dear Governor Inslee:

Thank you for advancing significant investment in salmon recovery during the 2022 legislative session, which was a critical boost to salmon restoration and scientific research. Your ongoing leadership is critical to ensuring we can continue our efforts—and Washington State’s commitment—to protect and restore habitat for salmon listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act. On behalf of the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Salmon Recovery Council, we urge you to build on last year’s investments by supporting priority salmon funding programs and habitat restoration efforts, which improve fish passage in streams, support tribal treaty fishing rights, ensure adequate stream flows, protect public access to open space, and make our watersheds and communities resilient to a changing climate.

The state’s recent investment in salmon recovery is enabling local watershed groups and the Puget Sound region to make significant progress on our highest priority projects. However, our state’s salmon populations continue to decline. To reverse this trend, we need to build on and sustain the increased investment in salmon recovery you supported last year. During the upcoming legislative session, we encourage you to accelerate this progress and momentum for salmon recovery and watershed health in Puget Sound and statewide.

Attached are the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council’s priorities for the 2023-2025 biennium. We ask your support for the following:

Capital and Operating Budget Requests:

- Support \$3,263,294 for **salmon recovery Lead Entities** in the Recreation and Conservation Office operating budget, which will enhance capacity to develop projects and proposals to secure available federal resources for projects in Washington State.
- \$82 million for **Salmon Recovery Funding Board** in the Recreation and Conservation Office budget, which funds habitat protection and restoration projects statewide, as well as half of the operating costs of the salmon recovery

Alderwood Water and Wastewater District
 The Boeing Company
 Cedar River Council
 Forterra
 Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery
 Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
 Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust
 National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
 Sno-King Watershed Council
 Trout Unlimited
 US Army Corps of Engineers
 Washington Departments:
 Ecology
 Fish and Wildlife
 Natural Resources
 Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
 Washington Policy Center
 Water Tenders

Lead Entity program to coordinate implementation of salmon recovery in local watersheds throughout the state.

- \$65-\$70 million for **Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration** in the Recreation and Conservation Office budget, which will fund critically important habitat projects in all Puget Sound watersheds and a prioritized list of large salmon recovery projects around Puget Sound.
- \$70.4 million for **Floodplains by Design** in the Department of Ecology’s budget, which will implement a prioritized list of multi-benefit floodplain projects around the state that enhance salmon habitat and protect public health and safety.
- \$20 million for **Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program** in the Recreation and Conservation Office budget, which supports nearshore protection and restoration.
- \$94 million for **Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board** in the Recreation and Conservation Office budget, which supports removal of barriers to fish passage.
- Support funding for other important funding programs including Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program, Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account, Water Quality Combined Funding program.

Priority Policy and Legislative Issues:

- Support state agency budget requests for monitoring salmon populations, and for studies and management of predation, elevated water temperatures, artificial light at night, priority aquatic invasive weeds, and other issues that affect survival of WRIA 8 salmon populations.
- Support improving regulatory protections for areas that are important salmon habitat, including defining and implementing “net ecological gain,” and enhancing protection of riparian areas and lake and marine shorelines.
- Support reforms to the Growth Management Act that align with salmon recovery goals and targets, including efforts to integrate salmon recovery and climate change into comprehensive planning.
- Support streamlining regulatory review and permitting for habitat restoration projects, and increased funding to regulatory entities for permit enforcement regarding land use regulations.
- Support legislation and funding requests that promote stormwater management planning, coordination, and implementation at a watershed scale, address critical data/information needs, and that seek innovative solutions to achieve multiple benefits from integrating stormwater management and habitat protection and restoration. Support advancing research and policy/product changes to address impacts of the tire dust chemical 6PPD-quinone on salmon survival. Establish a dedicated funding source for local governments to implement stormwater retrofit projects.
- Support improving existing funding authorities to support salmon recovery and Puget Sound restoration priorities and to develop new watershed-based and/or regional funding authorities to support multiple-benefit projects that address salmon recovery and Puget Sound restoration priorities.
- Support efforts to address effects of climate change on salmon and salmon habitat.

WRIA 8 appreciates the challenges involved in making state budget decisions and applauds your leadership. Thank you again for your work to continue Washington State’s commitment to

salmon and orca recovery, restoring the health of Puget Sound, and working to address effects of climate change.

If you have any questions about projects funded in WRIA 8 or how these priorities advance salmon recovery objectives, please feel free to contact Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, Salmon Recovery Manager for the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8), at 206-477-4780 or jason.mulvihill-kuntz@kingcounty.gov. Thank you for your consideration.

Sincerely,

John Stokes
Chair, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council
Councilmember, City of Bellevue

Vanessa Kritzer
Vice-Chair, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council
Councilmember, City of Redmond

cc: Laura Blackmore, Director, Puget Sound Partnership
Megan Duffy, Director, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office
Hillary Franz, Director, Washington Department of Natural Resources
Kelly Susewind, Director, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Laura Watson, Director, Washington Department of Ecology
Justin Parker, Executive Director, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Nick Streuli, Executive Director of Policy and Outreach, Office of the Governor
Ruth Musgrave, Natural Resources Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
Carrie Sessions, Natural Resources Policy Advisor, Office of the Governor
David Schumacher, Director, Office of Financial Management
Nona Snell, Assistant Director Budget Division, Office of Financial Management
Jim Cahill, Senior Budget Assistant, Natural Resources, Office of Financial Management
Matthew Hunter, Budget Assistant, Natural Resources, Office of Financial Management
Jennifer Masterson, Senior Budget Assistant, Office of Financial Management
Myra Baldini, Capital Budget Assistant, Office of Financial Management
Jeff Breckel, Chair, Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board
David Troutt, Chair, Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council
Erik Neatherlin, Executive Coordinator, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office
Mike Lithgow, Chair, Washington Salmon Coalition
Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed Salmon Recovery Council members
Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, Salmon Recovery Manager, Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed