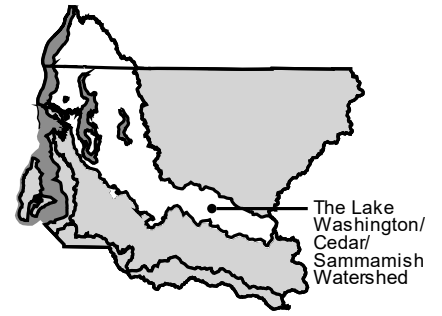




DRAFT – For discussion purposes only

Month 1, 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

- 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

The Honorable Senator/Representative

Name

Address

Address

Address

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

Dear **Senator/Representative**:

On behalf of the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Salmon Recovery Council, we wish to share our enclosed 2023 federal budget and legislative priorities. The Council is comprised of 29 local governments and stakeholder representatives from businesses, community groups, concerned citizens, and state and federal agencies working collaboratively since 2000 to recover Chinook salmon, listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). The federal government’s leadership is critical to ensuring we can continue to protect and restore habitat for iconic Pacific Northwest salmon, returning them to sustainable, harvestable levels for current and future generations, to meet tribal treaty right obligations, and to ensure the long-term availability of Chinook salmon as the primary prey resource for critically endangered Southern Resident Orcas.

Thank you for your strong support for continued federal investment in salmon recovery and Puget Sound restoration. We are pleased to see support for several salmon recovery priorities in the unprecedented federal investment through the Infrastructure and Jobs Act and the Inflation Reduction Act. We look forward to working to align this funding with high priority, multi-benefit projects on the ground. In these challenging times, the federal government’s investment in salmon recovery and Puget Sound ecosystem restoration is more important than ever. Construction of habitat restoration projects is providing jobs, supporting local economies, and helping achieve multiple objectives, including flood risk reduction, water quality improvement, and open space conservation. Economic studies document that every \$1 million invested in watershed restoration results in between 16 and 24 new or sustained jobs and \$2.5 million in total economic activity, of which 80 percent stays in the local community where the project is constructed.

In 2023, we encourage you to build on existing progress and momentum for salmon recovery and watershed health in Puget Sound and throughout Washington State. We ask that you support the following:

- **\$70 million Fiscal Year 2023 appropriations for the Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund (PCSRF)** in Departments of Commerce and Justice, Science, and Related Agencies Appropriations Bill. This program is the foundation of salmon recovery in Washington State. These critical federal funds help leverage substantial state and local resources and amplify on-the-ground habitat protection and restoration progress.
- **Support the Army Corps of Engineers' (Corps) Fiscal Year 2023 Lake Washington Ship Canal Work Plan request to advance design and construction of critical prioritized infrastructure repairs to the Hiram M. Chittenden (Ballard) Locks.** Also, support the Corps' continued engagement in the process to address elevated water temperatures and low dissolved oxygen in the Lake Washington Ship Canal that threaten salmon survival, and support the Corps' identifying important upgrades and improvements to the fish ladder.
- **\$50 million for the National Estuary Program in the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA),** which is core funding for Puget Sound recovery.
- **\$54 million for the Puget Sound Geographic Program in the EPA,** which provides key funding to support Puget Sound recovery priorities, including innovative approaches to addressing stormwater, habitat, shellfish, flooding, water quality and quantity, and endangered species recovery, including Chinook salmon and Southern Resident orcas.
- **Support passage of the "Promoting United Government Efforts to Save Our Sound" (PUGET SOS) legislation (currently in the House version of the National Defense Authorization Act),** which enhances the federal government's role and investment in Puget Sound recovery, including establishing a Puget Sound Recovery National Program Office in the Environmental Protection Agency to coordinate federal Puget Sound recovery efforts with state, local and tribal recovery efforts and enable greater levels of federal funding for Puget Sound recovery.
- **Support federal funding for research and management of stormwater runoff to reduce impacts to salmon.** Stormwater is the largest source of pollution to the Puget Sound and much of the developed landscape does not have stormwater treatment. Federal funding is needed to support local governments in implementing critical stormwater retrofit projects to capture and treat toxic runoff. Federal infrastructure funding provides a once in a generation opportunity to effectively address stormwater management.
- **Support and create mechanisms to enable innovative funding approaches, including public/private partnerships, that engage federal agencies and private funding sources to implement projects, especially those under federal authority.**
- **Support aligning funding from the Infrastructure and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act with priority state and local habitat restoration and water infrastructure improvement programs and priorities.**

We appreciate the challenges involved in federal policy and budget decisions and applaud your leadership. Thank you for advancing salmon recovery in Washington State and restoring the health of Puget Sound.

If you have any questions about how these priorities advance our salmon recovery objectives, please feel free to contact Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager, 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

Enclosure: 2023 WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council federal budget and legislative priorities

cc: Jay Inslee, Governor, State of Washington
Barry Thom, NOAA West Coast Regional Administrator
Scott Rumsey, NOAA Deputy Regional Administrator
Alexander Bullock, Colonel, Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District
Justin Parker, Executive Director, Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission
Jeff Breckel, Chair, Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board
Laura Blackmore, Director, Puget Sound Partnership
Megan Duffy, Director, Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office
Hillary Franz, Commissioner of Public Lands, Washington State Department of Natural Resources
Chris Pettit, Director, Washington State Conservation Commission
Kelly Susewind, Director, Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife
Laura Watson, Director, Washington State Department of Ecology
Erik Neatherlin, Executive Coordinator, Governor's Salmon Recovery Office
Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed Salmon Recovery Council members
Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Salmon Recovery Manager