

WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) Meeting Notes

Zoom Video Conference || July 21, 2022, 2:01 pm – 4:12 pm

Members Present		
#	Name	Affiliation
1)	CM John Stokes, Chair	City of Bellevue
2)	CM Vanessa Kritzer, Vice Chair	City of Redmond
3)	Deputy Mayor Jeanne Zornes	City of Bothell
4)	CM Diane Buckshnis	City of Edmonds
5)	Paul Crane	City of Everett
6)	CM Victoria Hunt	City of Issaquah
7)	CM Melanie O’Cain	City of Kenmore
8)	CM Lorri Bodi	City of Lake Forest Park
9)	CM Jason Moon	City of Mukilteo
10)	Mayor Keith Scully	City of Shoreline
11)	CM Ted Frantz	Town of Hunts Point
12)	CM Carl Scandella	Town of Yarrow Point
13)	Larry Franks	Friends of Issaquah Salmon Hatchery (FISH)
14)	Kirstin Haugen	King Conservation District
15)	Mary Shustov	Washington Association of Sewer and Water Districts
16)	Cleo Neculae	Washington State Department of Ecology
17)	Jordanna Warneck	Washington State Department of Natural Resources
18)	Hank Myers	Washington Policy Center
Alternates Present		
19)	CM Neal Black	City of Kirkland
20)	Michele Koehler	City of Seattle
21)	Diana Hart	City of Woodinville
22)	CM John Brock	Town of Woodway
23)	Sarah Heerhartz	Mid-Sound Fisheries Enhancement Group
24)	David Bain	Sno-King Watershed Council
Other Attendees		
25)	Cheryl Paston	City of Bellevue
26)	Janet Geer	City of Bothell
27)	Rachel Konrady	City of Kirkland
28)	Peter Holte	City of Redmond
29)	Kristina Lowthian	City of Renton
30)	Toby Coenen	City of Sammamish
31)	Judy Blanco	King County
32)	Janne Kaje	King County
33)	Joan Lee	King County
34)	Sarah McCarthy	King County
35)	Jason Wilkinson	King County
36)	Carston Curd	Snohomish County
37)	Daniel Howe	Snohomish County
38)	Mayor Katy Kinney Harris	Town of Yarrow Point
39)	Alexandra Doty	Puget Sound Partnership
40)	David Kyle	Trout Unlimited
41)	Laura Arber	WDFW
42)	Whitney Neugebauer	Whale Scout
43)	Carrie Byron	WRIA 8 Projects and Funding Coordinator
44)	Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz	WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager
45)	Lauren Urgenson	WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator
46)	Megan Moore	WRIA 8 Interim Administrative Support
47)	Lauren Triplett	WRIA 8 Interim Administrative Support
48)	Roger Urbaniak	Puget Sound Anglers

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- I) **Call to Order / Introductions** – Councilmember (CM) John Stokes, Chair, called the July 21, 2022 Salmon Recovery Council (SRC) meeting to order at 2:01 pm. Chair Stokes welcomed everyone and established quorum by conducting roll call.
- II) **Public Comment** – There was no public comment.
- III) **Consent Agenda** – SRC meeting minutes from May 19, 2022 were discussed. No edits were received prior to this meeting. CM Diane Buckshnis motioned to approve the minutes; Paul Crane seconded the motion.

Action: The Council unanimously approved the May 19, 2022 meeting minutes.

IV) Updates & Announcements

Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz (Jason MK), WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager, gave the following updates:

- **Regional updates:** Jason MK highlighted WRIA 8's work with the South Central Local Integrating Organization (LIO) to identify potential projects to secure regional funding to further Diversity, Equity, and Inclusion (DEI) efforts as part of the LIOs annual work planning priorities.
- **Cooperative Watershed Management funding recommendations approved:** Jason MK reported the King County Flood Control District (FCD) approved the SRC's Cooperative Watershed Grant (CWG) program funding recommendations, totaling \$3.8M. Projects are in contracting now.
- **Pilot project to address Artificial Light at Night (ALAN) impacts:** WRIA 8 is also working with the Kokanee Work Group and other partners to develop a scope of work to implement a pilot project to address ALAN impacts on salmon on Lake Sammamish funded through a legislative budget proviso.
- **Proposed site visits & tours:** WRIA 8 hosted a tour for Congresswoman Kim Schrier at King County's Riverbend project on the Cedar River on July 7. Rep. Schrier was very impressed with the project and asked what federal support is needed to support projects like Riverbend. She was interested in seeing the "completed project.

The SRC has promoted getting funders and legislators out to see restoration projects. WRIA 8 staff drafted a memo describing possible in-person site visits/tours for summer/fall. Jason MK reviewed possible site visit locations, noting they should be projects recently completed or with something to show, like active construction. Some could be for this year, others for next year. Some may be appropriate for larger celebration and/or media events, such as Riverbend. The Meadowdale Beach and Estuary Restoration project in Snohomish County, which is in construction now, will also be highlighted in the future. Tours could also include non-project specific sites, including the Ballard Locks/Ship Canal, Issaquah Creek/Lake Sammamish State Park, or the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery. WRIA 8 staff will schedule three to four tour opportunities for partners. Carrie Byron, WRIA 8 Project and Funding Coordinator, is lead on coordinating site visits; anyone with feedback should contact Carrie.

- **Draft Legislative Priorities & Forming Legislative Subcommittee:** Jason MK said WRIA 8 develops a set of state and federal legislative priorities annually to support WRIA 8 interests and guide communications with decision makers to support salmon recovery in the watershed. The process is starting now; there is a lot of prework to influence proposals introduced in this session. WRIA 8 plans to send a letter to Governor Inslee in September or October. Jason MK stressed these communications should begin as early as possible.

Jason noted he will convene a new Legislative Subcommittee based on a suggestion last year, to focus on and discuss legislative priority issues in "real time" to make WRIA 8 more nimble in responding to these priorities. He suggested anyone on the SRC can participate. Meetings should begin in August or September, with monthly meetings after that until the legislation session starts, then meetings would be scheduled on an as needed basis. Jason reviewed a draft priorities list, included in the meeting packet. This will be refined over several months.

Discussion:

There was no discussion on these items.

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V) Recommendation for Additional Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) Grant Awards – Carrie Byron, WRIA 8 Projects and Funding Coordinator

Carrie Byron reviewed the memo in the meeting packet outlining a proposed approach for allocated additional state funding through the SRFB. In the last state legislative session, an additional \$75M was awarded for salmon recovery: \$50M appropriated for projects more than \$5M, and \$25M for projects under that \$5M threshold. The SRFB allocated this funding to every lead entity in the state, and Puget Sound Partnership is distributing to Puget Sound lead entities. WRIA 8 is getting an additional \$512K.

Carrie reviewed options to allocate the additional \$512K, including a Project Subcommittee recommendation that would fund a cost increase request from the East Side Wayne Sammamish-Waynita project and the balance supporting the Cedar River Royal Arch Reach Floodplain Restoration project that was partially funded through this year's grant round. Jason MK added the Project Subcommittee did consider rolling funds over to 2023, but there was concern about what happens to unallocated funds. It was recommended to allocate funds to known priorities now. Carrie said since WRIA 8 still has projects that need funding, the priority is to show the money can be spent, and there will be opportunities for more funding in the future.

Discussion:

There was no discussion on this item. Vice Chair CM Vanessa Kritzer motioned to approve the Project Subcommittee's recommendation. CM Ted Frantz seconded the motion.

Action: The Council unanimously approved a motion to approve the WRIA 8 Project Subcommittee recommendations to allocate additional grant funding.

VI) Draft 2023 WRIA 8 Budget – Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Manager

Jason MK said the budget approval process has shifted this year, so approval will be in September rather than July. The Management Committee will meet in August to bring a budget and work plan recommendation to the SRC in September for consideration. Jason MK noted that no final decision is needed on the information being presented today, just feedback on the proposed options and identifying any additional information needs. Jason MK reviewed a budget memo and several cost share funding tables, which were included in the meeting packet. The budget memo outlines two budget options: Option 1 presents an 8.8% cost share increase to cover anticipated costs, and Option 2 reflects a 3.47% increase based on the March Consumer Price Index for Wages estimate, which would leave a gap of \$34K in budget.

Discussion:

- There was discussion about the data presented not reflecting a June 2022 CPI-W increase for Seattle of 9.5%, and if this meant the numbers presented today would increase. Jason MK explained WRIA 8 costs aren't necessarily driven by Seattle's CPI-W, which is why the data uses the King County CPI-W, which had an estimated increase of 3.47% in March 2022. He acknowledged that inflation has likely increased costs beyond what was captured in the CPI-W estimate from March.
- Vice Chair Vanessa Kritzer asked if King County would absorb costs that go beyond the estimated increase. Jason MK said if costs are higher than budgeted, the County might come to the SRC for a separate decision to consider covering those costs. Janne Kaje, King County, explained the budget numbers set out for the next two years by the County are estimates, which get reconciled at year-end. Often costs come out lower than budgeted and WRIA budgets receive "refund" adjustments. When costs do go a little higher, the County has absorbed some of those costs. Dramatic increases in budget, however, would be brought before the SRC for discussion.
- Vice Chair Kritzer said she preferred Option 1, to preserve more carryforward balance for various expenses. Kritzer noted when looking at the increase in overhead costs per jurisdiction, there is not a significant dollar difference between Option 1 and 2, but Option 1 would provide more carryforward to cover additional project and funding needs.
- CM Diane Buckshnis agreed with Kritzer, but said each jurisdiction should still review these amounts closely. CM Ted Frantz said the estimated expenditures and corresponding cost share increase has gone down from 10% when the SRC originally discussed the budget in May to 8.8%. Frantz also supported

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Option 1, to not require use of more reserve funds to cover the budget shortfall. Chair John Stokes also agreed with Option 1, praising the “well laid out” WRIA 8 work program. When Stokes asked if any jurisdictions present had concerns about the cost increases proposed with Option 1, none were voiced.

- Jason MK asked any questions to be sent to him directly. The Management Committee will convene in August to develop a final recommendation for SRC consideration.

VII) King County Flood Hazard Management Plan Update – Jason Wilkinson, King County

Jason Wilkinson, King County Floodplain Management Plan Project Manager, presented an update on King County’s Flood Hazard Management Plan (FHMP). The FHMP fulfills federal and state requirements and is a functional plan of the King County Comprehensive (“Comp”) Plan, defining floodplain management policies in the County. It identifies and assesses flood hazards and describes actions to reduce risk. It also establishes King County eligibility for federal grant funds. It is the foundational planning document for the King County Flood Control District (FCD). Wilkinson noted while the County and FCD are separate government entities, the FCD uses the County plan to inform their work, and will be working closely with the County as this update continues.

Wilkinson said the FHMP has not been updated since 2006. This update has three main focuses: improving community engagement through an equity lens; advancing “multi-benefit” project/action outcomes; and climate change adaptation and resiliency. Wilkinson reviewed the plan’s scope, planned engagement practices, and timeline. The process is transitioning from preplanning to a more focused underpinning of the plan, with a hope to transmit to King County Council (KCC) by early 2024. There will be multiple opportunities to submit feedback, including the partner outreach process and the Environmental Impact Statement (EIS).

Discussion:

- David Bain asked if any thought is going into when sea level rise causes saltwater intrusion into Lake Washington. Wilkinson said while this hasn’t been specifically discussed, this is the sort of feedback that will be useful going forward.
- Deputy Mayor Jeanne Zornes asked how King County is interfacing with Snohomish County. Wilkinson replied that while this is a King County-focused plan, he’s connected with staff in Snohomish County. Snohomish is doing their own thinking about flood-planning.
- CM Ted Frantz asked how much the plan accounts for protection of fish and allowing some streams to overflow their banks. Wilkinson answered the plan accounts for fish habitat needs via its multi-benefit project focus. Salmon recovery through natural river process is part of that discussion. The 2006 plan includes a goal statement to reduce flood risk in a way that does not harm the environment, which supports assessing how risk can be reduced and habitat improved at the same time.
- Some SRC members asked for clarification on the nature of the FCD and its relationship to the County. Wilkinson explained the FCD is separate from the County, and gets jurisdictional authority from the state. The FCD Board of Supervisors is the King County Council operating as a separate government entity. There is some overlap between King County Emergency Management and the FCD in handling natural disasters, but Wilkinson was unsure on the specifics.
- CM Hank Myers asked about an expansion of the Sammamish River floodplain several years ago, and if this updated plan is further expansion of that. Wilkinson wasn’t sure what prompted the Sammamish change, but noted the County will reevaluate places where there are different development standards for floodplains vs. floodways. There are also federal requirements around minimum standards, which the County usually exceeds.
- Vice Chair Kritzer said it would be good to ensure WRIA 8 has a clear path to engage in this process, and asked about the SRC choosing a representative to serve on the group developing this plan. Wilkinson said the partner/stakeholder planning committee would be the place for this, but that recruitment has not begun yet. Kritzer continued that Jason MK and WRIA 8 staff should determine how to engage on this issue. Jason MK explained he and Wilkinson are in close communication about WRIA 8 engagement. The idea is that as planning gets underway, Wilkinson would reach out to WRIA 8 to ask how best they can engage in the process.

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VIII) Update – Status of WRIA 8 Salmon Returns – *Lauren Urgenson, WRIA 8 Technical Coordinator*

Lauren Urgenson reported the latest fish counts at the Ballard Locks. Each year from June 12 to October 2, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (i.e., the “Co-Managers”) count the fish coming through the Locks. Co-managers also forecast how many salmon are expected to return to the watershed. Counts as of yesterday, July 20:

- Sockeye are about 88% through the Locks. 10,200 were predicted, but actual returns have been above 27,000. This includes both natural- and hatchery-origin fish.
- Chinook are starting to come through the Locks. Expected returns are 5,200, half the 10-year average.
- Coho returns are forecast at about 14,000, just below the 10-year average.

Urgenson said WDFW and the Muckleshoot Tribe are experimenting with several emergency actions to try to save the Cedar River sockeye run. Sockeye were captured at the Locks and the broodstock collection facility, and transported by truck to the Cedar River hatchery. These fish were put into round holding tanks with cold water. Their pre-spawn mortality was basically zero, proving this can be significantly decreased by fish skipping over the Ship Canal and Lake Washington and improving holding conditions.

This year another experiment is being conducted with 900 sockeye transported from the Locks to the Cedar River hatchery. Another 400 were taken, with 200 released at the Locks and 200 at the Atlantic City boat ramp on Lake Washington. These fish were PIT-tagged, to track how many reach the Cedar River. Urgenson said this work dovetails with WRIA 8’s work to understand conditions in the Ship Canal and their impacts on salmon.

Discussion:

- CM Ted Frantz asked if PIT-tagged fish are being tracked in their movements, or only if they come in and out of the Cedar River. Urgenson replied while PIT tags can be used to track movement, they usually provide single point location information. There are PIT tag readers at the Locks. The PIT tags are put in some juvenile fish as they are captured and counted by WDFW at the Bear Creek and Cedar River weirs, which provides an estimate of juvenile abundance. WRIA 8 has funded this work for 20 years. Last year, for the first time, WRIA 8 funded a PIT tag reader in the Cedar River, so there will be a better sense of which juveniles make it back to the river as adults. These readers are at the broodstock collection facility on the lower Cedar in Renton. This is considered “point” data, and it’s still uncertain what happens between tagged points in terms of what influences fish survivorship.
- CM Frantz said it’s great to have more data to figure out where predation may be happening, or other mortality factors, such as temperature in the Ship Canal. Urgenson said WRIA 8 is sponsoring more work on predation. For juveniles, predation is believed to be a big limiting factor as they go through the Ship Canal.
- Hank Myers asked if the recent sockeye trucking experiment is like one years ago on Issaquah Creek, when salmon were trucked downstream from the hatchery. Jason MK confirmed that was a similar approach, but with juveniles rather than adults, and with Chinook rather than sockeye. Urgenson added that as part of the Lake Washington Ship Canal Roundtable, the Muckleshoot Tribe presented on their salmon truck-and-haul actions over the years. They have refined this approach and know how to do it well.
- Mary Shustov asked where PIT tags are inserted in the fish. Urgenson replied that a needle-like syringe inserts the tag into their underside. The fish don’t ingest or pass it; it stays in their body.
- Jason MK said there would be more fish count updates in September and November.

IX) Project Update – Riverbend Levee Setback and Floodplain Restoration – *Sarah McCarthy, King County*

Sarah McCarthy, King County Ecological Restoration and Engineering Services, provided a construction update on the Riverbend project on the Cedar River. Riverbend is a multi-benefit project which received funding from WRIA 8 and other partners. Its goals are to improve in-stream and off-channel salmon habitat, reduce flood hazards and long-term maintenance and repair costs, and re-initiate natural river processes.

McCarthy reviewed the original project design, describing impacts from a major flood in February 2020, which required reassessment and redesign of the project. Phase 1 of the project included demolition of the former Riverbend mobile home park. Phase 2 involves excavating side channels to connect to the Cedar River, extending setback protection and open up the floodplain to initiate natural river processes, and adding wood

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“roughness” to direct flow away from the Cedar River Trail (CRT). Construction started in May 2022, and the scale of change to the landscape is already striking. The work window ends in August, and planting will start in October. There is also a 10-year post-construction monitoring and maintenance period.

Discussion:

- Jason MK said the work is very exciting and hopes SRC members can visit the site later this summer or fall, perhaps as part of a celebration for the project coordinated by King County. He added the project is a great example of how many entities can come together to fund and implement large-scale projects.
- Jason MK noted as WRIA 8 looks at legislative priorities, they should seek to streamline permitting and regulations for habitat restoration to support projects like this. McCarthy said Riverbend did benefit from federal and state streamlined processes. For local permitting, McCarthy thinks Riverbend is part of why there have been changes to how projects are reviewed.
- McCarthy said the project team focused on stretching limited salmon recovery dollars as far as possible. She said for flood permitting, existing conditions are seen as the baseline, not the predevelopment condition. Jason Wilkinson is aware of these issues as part of the context for the County’s flood plan update. Anything to streamline flood permitting for restoration work in these waterways will go a long way. Area rivers are incised, much deeper and less complex than they were pre-development. To meaningfully restore them, their surface water elevations – without impacting public safety – need to be raised to reconnect them to the floodplains.
- Michele Koehler asked about the project’s scale and how it compares to others in the region and state. McCarthy replied that at 50 acres it’s on the bigger end of the scale, and on its own achieves 40% of WRIA 8’s 10-year floodplain reconnection goals for the Cedar River.
- Chair John Stokes praised the work at Riverbend, saying it gives the SRC hope that positive changes can be made. He praised the multi-benefit nature of the project and the approach of restoring natural processes.

X) **Next Meeting:** Chair Stokes noted the [next SRC meeting](#) is September 15, 2022, from 2:00 pm – 4:15 pm.

Meeting Adjourned at 4:12 pm.