



## Technical Priorities Funding Request

### Workshop on Pinniped Predation of Salmon at the Ballard Locks – Lessons Learned and Future Management Options

September 2022

#### Request Summary

	Estimated Cost
<p>WRIA 8 staff requests Salmon Recovery Council approval to direct a portion of available carry forward funds in WRIA 8’s budget to support a workshop focused on pinniped (harbor seal and sea lion) predation on salmon at the Ballard Locks. Additional resources are needed to host the workshop and contract facilitation support.</p> <p>Predation on salmon by pinnipeds at the Ballard Locks is a long standing and complex issue in WRIA 8 salmon recovery. Decades of management studies and observations have resulted in substantial insights and understanding of this issue over time. However, much of the existing information is accessed only in older government reports or through consultation with individuals who conducted the work. There is a real need to share knowledge and understanding of pinniped predation on salmon and prior management outcomes at the Ballard Locks, explore relevant pinniped management approaches in the region, and identify an agreed upon strategy grounded in best available information moving forward.</p>	<p><b>\$25,000 – 50,000</b></p>

#### Background

Predation on salmon by pinnipeds, including harbor seals and sea lions, at the Ballard Locks is a long standing and complex issue affecting salmon recovery in WRIA 8. Pinnipeds aggregate just downstream of the Locks where they easily feed on adult salmon returning through the fish ladder and the locks and juvenile salmon as they out-migrate through the smolt slides. Since the mid-1980’s a variety of active hazing and management measures have been attempted to keep pinnipeds away from this critical salmon migration bottleneck. For example, between 1993-2017, Acoustic Deterrence (ADD) or Startle Device (ADS) were deployed and studied intensively at the Locks below the fish ladder. In 2021, WRIA 8 directed KCD Cooperative Watershed Management funding to support trials of a newly developed acoustic startle device. Hazing pinnipeds away from the fish ladder using firecrackers or “seal bombs” is ongoing. Decades of management studies and observations have resulted in substantial insights and understanding of pinniped predation and responses to various management approaches overtime. However, much of the existing information is accessed only in older government reports or through consultation with individuals who conducted the work.

For the past two years, the WRIA 8 Technical Committee identified the need to “inform and develop strategies to reduce pinniped predation on adult salmon returning to the Ballard Locks” among the top monitoring and assessment priorities for the watershed. Developing a well-informed, common understanding of past management results, ongoing efforts, and future opportunities is a critical next step to inform decisions on project priorities and funding support.

The proposed workshop will focus on four primary topics:

1. Share knowledge and understanding of pinniped predation on salmon at the Ballard Locks based on previous studies and ongoing observations. [Which strategies have worked, which haven't?].
2. Strengthen understanding of the Marine Mammal Protection Act and its relevance for management.
3. Learn about current pinniped management approaches in the region and discuss the relevance of using similar strategies at the Locks.
4. Based on the information shared, identify an adaptive plan moving forward including priority strategies and next steps.
5. Identify and implement a communication strategy to educate congressional staff and other decision makers about the issue and recommended actions based on best available information.

This funding request presents a timely opportunity for WRIA 8 to help facilitate critical discussion among key salmon recovery partners, support shared understanding of pinniped predation on salmon at the Ballard Locks, and develop an adaptive strategy for the watershed. We are requesting funds to host the workshop and contract meeting facilitation support. The requested funding range (>\$25,000 not to exceed \$50,000) will allow for flexibility in the type(s) of products or desired outcomes identified through the workshop. For example, production of outreach materials, a communication strategy, and/or documentation of a plan describing a set of recommended and adaptive actions.

### WRIA 8 Budget Request

Task	Cost
Host workshop	\$1000
Contract meeting facilitation	\$25-30,000
Contract product creation (e.g. action plan, education materials)	\$10-25,000
<b>Total funding request</b>	<b>\$25,000 – not to exceed \$50,000</b>

### WRIA 8 Carry Forward Funding Status

If the Council approves this proposal, approximately between \$256,646 - \$281,646 in carry forward fund balance would remain.

Beginning balance (as of 8/29/22)*	\$306,646
Current Funding Request: Pinniped Workshop	\$25,000 - \$50,000
Remaining balance	\$256,646 - \$281,646

\*NOTE: The beginning carry forward fund balance amount does not include amounts reserved for unanticipated operating/staffing costs and previously approved amounts allocated to priority work items.