



WRIA 8 Community Engagement Framework

September 2025

Vision

Decision-makers and people who live, work, learn and play in the watershed value salmon recovery and support policies and funding to protect and restore habitat, adopt and implement protective land use regulations, advance equity in salmon recovery outreach and education, take personal actions to reduce impacts to salmon and improve the health of the WRIA 8 watershed.

Goals

1. Raise awareness of people who live, work, learn and play in the watershed about salmon recovery needs and priorities, while committing to advancing equity in salmon recovery outreach and education.
2. Build and sustain decision-maker support for salmon recovery funding and policy priorities
3. Establish and maintain shared watershed salmon recovery messaging and integrate messages into communications and outreach for other related priority topics (e.g., climate resilience, stormwater management, Orca recovery, land conservation, etc.)
4. Motivate people who live, work, learn and play in the watershed to take actions supporting salmon recovery needs and priorities

Key Audiences

- **WRIA 8 partners** – share information and coordinate messaging
 - Tribes
 - Local governments
 - State and federal agencies
 - Community organizations, special purpose districts and businesses
- **People who live, work, learn and play in the watershed** – raise awareness, build support, promote behavior change, and advance equity in salmon recovery outreach and education
- **Decision-makers** (local, state, and federal elected officials) – raise awareness and build support

- **Shoreline and waterfront property owners** – educate and promote behavior change for improved stewardship and restoration on private lands

Purpose / Background

The original WRIA 8 Communications and Outreach Framework provided the vision, goals, and strategies to guide WRIA 8 communications and outreach through 2025. This refreshed document will serve as an updated framework to guide actions until the WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan is updated. Once the WRIA 8 Plan is updated, WRIA 8 staff will engage the WRIA 8 Implementation and Technical Committee and other partners, as appropriate, to comprehensively update this document.

The framework's purpose is to:

- Identify priority communication and community engagement, including outreach and education programs and actions, to support salmon recovery efforts in the WRIA 8 watershed
- Direct investment of resources to highest communications, education and outreach priorities
- Coordinate salmon recovery messaging and broaden community engagement in salmon recovery
- Inform local partners' communications, education and outreach programs
- Guide ongoing WRIA 8 staff communications

The WRIA 8 Implementation and Technical Committee will review and update this document, as needed, and implement priority strategies and actions. The Implementation and Technical Committee will seek Salmon Recovery Council approval for substantive changes to this framework. Strategies guided by the framework will be completed by the WRIA 8 staff team, WRIA 8 partners, and other jurisdictions and community organizations.

WRIA 8 partners can use the framework to help ensure their local programs and actions align with watershed priorities.

Watershed Demographics

WRIA 8 is the most populated watershed in the state, with over 30 local governments, 15 state legislative districts and five Congressional districts – more than any other watershed. The watershed has experienced tremendous development and economic growth, resulting in the loss and alteration of much of the watershed's salmon habitat. The Central Puget Sound region's strong economy continues to accelerate population growth and development pressure. While increasing population growth and ongoing development impacts habitat, it also offers opportunities to engage watershed residents and visitors to learn about salmon, empower and promote their making behavior and lifestyle choices to improve conditions for salmon, and grow their support for policies, programs, and funding for salmon recovery.

Over the last 25 years, the region’s population has become more diverse quicker than the rest of the nation. Since 2000, growth among people of color represents 98% of the population increase in the central Puget Sound region.¹ In 2016, 20.3% of King County’s population was foreign born and 25.4% of people speak a language other than English at home.² Hispanics/Latinos are the region’s fastest growing minority group, followed by Asian/Pacific Islanders. Areas of south King County and southwest Snohomish County have experienced significant increases in diversity, and the cities of Bellevue and Renton both now have majority-minority populations. The changing demographics of communities and areas of the watershed are important to consider in planning communications, advancing equity and environmental justice in salmon recovery outreach and education, and developing appropriate and effective community engagement strategies.

Existing Ongoing Efforts

Local governments, community organizations, and the WRIA 8 staff team provide a variety of existing and ongoing salmon recovery-related communications and community engagement efforts. The WRIA 8 Community Engagement Framework seeks to integrate messaging and leverage these existing efforts and programs to advance WRIA 8’s communications and community engagement objectives in support of salmon recovery priorities.

WRIA 8 Plan Priorities

The 2017 update to the WRIA 8 Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (WRIA 8 Plan) includes a recovery strategy to increase awareness of and support for salmon recovery, as well as the following recommended education and outreach (EO) actions to advance salmon recovery in the watershed:

- **EO-1:** Develop project-specific outreach (e.g., fact sheets, media, tours, etc.) to support site-specific projects.
- **EO-2:** Promote riparian stewardship through non-profit and jurisdictional programs and landowner outreach.
- **EO-3:** Promote lakeshore restoration messages and outreach/social marketing programs and efforts (e.g., Green Shorelines handbook, Green Shores for Homes, etc.).
- **EO-4:** Conduct outreach (e.g. briefings, factsheets, media, tours, etc.) to state legislators, Congress, and federal agencies to improve fish passage and water quality conditions at the Ballard Locks and in the Ship Canal.
- **EO-5:** Promote water conservation programs to protect stream flows and raise awareness about the impacts of low stream flows and elevated water temperatures.

¹ Puget Sound Regional Council, “Central Puget Sound Demographic Profile, October 2024,” https://www.psrc.org/sites/default/files/2024-09/PSRC_Demographic_Profile_2024_0.pdf. (accessed August 25, 2025).

² Felt, C. (2016 update to original presentation to King County Council from June 2013), King County’s Changing Demographics, [PowerPoint presentation/slides], King County Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget, <https://www.kingcounty.gov/depts/executive/performance-strategy-budget/regional-planning/Demographics.aspx> (accessed on July 23, 2020).

- **EO-6:** Promote water quality BMP's (e.g., tree planting, improved infiltration, etc.) and green infrastructure incentive programs (e.g., Rainwise) in key areas to improve water quality.
- **EO-7:** Promote marine shoreline restoration messages and outreach/social marketing programs and efforts (e.g., Green Shores for Homes, Shore Friendly, Your Marine Waterfront guide, etc.).
- **EO-8:** Promote source control BMP's to protect water and sediment quality.
- **EO-9:** Support use of WRIA 8 Plan as best available science (by partners in assessing impacts to salmon and in developing land use regulations).
- **EO-10:** Conduct salmon biology/recovery-related outreach and education programs (e.g., Salmon SEEson, Cedar River Salmon Journey, Beach Naturalists, etc.) to build awareness and foster public support for funding and implementation of recovery strategies and action.

This Framework is intended to build on these education and outreach actions from the WRIA 8 Plan, to establish a more clear and actionable vision for WRIA 8 community engagement. These actions will be referenced in the Implementation Section that follows, to illustrate how they align with specific Framework goals.

Implementation Plan

Implementation of WRIA 8’s Community Engagement Framework requires partner engagement and coordination, funding, and building partnerships. The Implementation Plan that follows is intended to organize the priority community engagement strategies according to each of the Framework’s goals. In particular, it is important to keep the watershed’s demographics at the forefront when developing community engagement plans to appropriately and effectively reach the growing diversity of WRIA 8 communities. Geographic equity should also be considered in implementing community engagement strategies and activities.

Goal #1 – Raise awareness of people who live, work, learn and play in the watershed.

Related WRIA 8 Plan education and outreach priorities:

- **EO-5:** Promote water conservation programs to protect stream flows and raise awareness about the impacts of low stream flows and elevated water temperatures.
- **EO-6:** Promote water quality BMP’s (e.g., tree planting, improved infiltration, etc.) and green infrastructure incentive programs (e.g., Rainwise) in key areas to improve water quality.
- **EO-8:** Promote source control BMP’s to protect water and sediment quality.
- **EO-10:** Conduct salmon biology/recovery-related outreach and education programs (e.g., Salmon SEEson, Cedar River Salmon Journey, Beach Naturalists, etc.) to build awareness and foster public support for funding and implementation of recovery strategies and action.

Key Audience	Strategy/Activity	Responsible Party
People who live, work, and play in the watershed	Share and promote salmon recovery related BMPs	WRIA 8 staff WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)

	Salmon SEEson program	WRIA 8 staff
	Education and outreach programs seeking to raise public awareness of salmon and habitat protection and restoration efforts	WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)
	Implement education programs for students, focusing on engagement with underserved schools and communities	WRIA 8 partners (community organizations and special purpose districts)
	Promote programs to train and engage watershed residents to become leaders in promoting environmental stewardship	WRIA 8 partners

Goal #2 - Build and sustain decision-maker support for salmon recovery funding and policy priorities

Related WRIA 8 Plan education and outreach priorities:

- **EO-1:** Develop project-specific outreach (e.g., fact sheets, media, tours, etc.) to support site-specific projects.
- **EO-4:** Conduct outreach (e.g. briefings, factsheets, media, tours, etc.) to state legislators, Congress, and federal agencies to improve fish passage and water quality conditions at the Ballard Locks and in the Ship Canal.
- **EO-9:** Support use of WRIA 8 Plan as best available science (by partners in assessing impacts to salmon and in developing land use regulations).

Key Audience	Strategy/Activity	Responsible Party
WRIA 8 Partners (local government staff)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Identify salmon recovery related best management practices (BMPs) and best available science and share information with partners, decision-makers, and the public 	<p>WRIA 8 staff</p> <p>WRIA 8 partners (community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)</p>

Decision-makers (local)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share and promote salmon recovery related BMPs • Present information about WRIA 8 and salmon recovery to local City and County Councilmembers • Arrange project tours 	<p>WRIA 8 staff</p> <p>WRIA 8 partners (community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)</p>
Decision-makers (state)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Share and promote salmon recovery related BMPs • Communicate and promote annual WRIA 8 state legislative priorities (letters, emails, and meetings/briefings) • Participate in “Salmon Day in Olympia” and other coordinated events to engage state legislators • Arrange priority project tours 	<p>WRIA 8 staff</p> <p>WRIA 8 partners (community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)</p> <p>Local decision-makers</p>
Decision-makers (federal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Communicate and promote annual WRIA 8 federal legislative priorities (letters, emails, and meetings/briefings) • Participate in “Puget Sound Day on the Hill” and other coordinated events to engage members of Congress and key federal agency staff • Arrange priority project tours 	<p>WRIA 8 staff</p> <p>WRIA 8 partners (community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)</p> <p>Local decision-makers</p>

Goal #3 – Establish and maintain shared watershed salmon recovery messaging and integrate messages into communications and outreach for other related priority topics (e.g., climate resilience, stormwater management, Orca recovery, land conservation, etc.)

Related WRIA 8 Plan education and outreach priorities:

- **EO-2:** Promote riparian stewardship through non-profit and jurisdictional programs and landowner outreach.

- **EO-3:** Promote lakeshore restoration messages and outreach/social marketing programs and efforts (e.g., Green Shorelines handbook, Green Shores for Homes, etc.).
- **EO-5:** Promote water conservation programs to protect stream flows and raise awareness about the impacts of low stream flows and elevated water temperatures.
- **EO-6:** Promote water quality BMP's (e.g., tree planting, improved infiltration, etc.) and green infrastructure incentive programs (e.g., Rainwise) in key areas to improve water quality.
- **EO-7:** Promote marine shoreline restoration messages and outreach/social marketing programs and efforts (e.g., Green Shores for Homes, Shore Friendly, Your Marine Waterfront guide, etc.).
- **EO-8:** Promote source control BMP's to protect water and sediment quality.

Key Audience	Strategy/Activity	Responsible Party
WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Convene partners to develop and refine common salmon recovery messaging • Identify opportunities to integrate salmon recovery messages into existing environmental and watershed health programs and communications to promote messaging (e.g., stormwater management, open space protection, clean water, etc.) • Share salmon recovery messages with partners 	WRIA 8 staff
People who live, work, learn and play in the watershed	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote salmon recovery messages through environmental and watershed health programs, events, and communications • Support youth education programs, including kindergarten – 12th grade students 	<p>WRIA 8 staff</p> <p>WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)</p>
Decision-makers (local, state, and federal)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • Promote salmon recovery messages in briefings and communications with decision-makers • Connect salmon recovery to other priorities (e.g., stormwater management, orca recovery, clean water, education, public health, etc.) 	<p>WRIA 8 staff</p> <p>WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)</p>

Goal #4 – Motivate people who live, work, learn, and play in the watershed to take actions supporting salmon recovery needs and priorities

Related WRIA 8 Plan education and outreach priorities:

- **EO-2:** Promote riparian stewardship through non-profit and jurisdictional programs and landowner outreach.
- **EO-3:** Promote lakeshore restoration messages and outreach/social marketing programs and efforts (e.g., Green Shorelines handbook, Green Shores for Homes, etc.).
- **EO-7:** Promote marine shoreline restoration messages and outreach/social marketing programs and efforts (e.g., Green Shores for Homes, Shore Friendly, Your Marine Waterfront guide, etc.).
- **EO-8:** Promote source control BMP’s to protect water and sediment quality.

Key Audience	Strategy/Activity	Responsible Party
Shoreline and waterfront property owners	Develop and implement behavior change programs for streamside, lakeshore and marine shoreline landowners seeking to enhance and restore habitat on their property including replacing shoreline armoring with “soft” or natural shoreline alternatives, reducing artificial light impacts, removing invasive species, and planting native riparian vegetation	WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies) Federal agency partners
People who live, work, learn, and play in the watershed	Develop common messaging about what individuals can do to improve water quality and habitat conditions for salmon	WRIA 8 staff WRIA 8 partners (local government staff, community organizations, special purpose districts, and state agencies)