



Program is controlling Cedar River knotweed

Invasive knotweed is an aggressive invader of riparian habitats, forming dense stands along stream banks. A collaborative program has been working to control knotweed along the Cedar River and its tributaries. This is often an essential first step in restoring native habitat.

The King County Noxious Weed Control Program began working on knotweed with landowners on the Cedar in 2007. In 2010, King County, Seattle Public Utilities, Forterra (formerly Cascade Land Conservancy), and the Friends of the Cedar River Watershed joined together to form the Cedar Stewardship in Action Program.

Partners reach out to all property owners, public and private, seeking permission to control knotweed on their property and promoting better land stewardship. Hundreds of volunteers participate in over 50 events each year to remove invasives and replant. The process is time-intensive; it takes about a year to treat (and re-treat) two river miles.

VI. Programmatic Actions

Implementation of Actions Related to Land Use and Education & Outreach

Programmatic actions in the Plan related to land use and public outreach may seem less directly tied to salmon in a WRIA 8 stream than on-the-ground habitat projects. But they are actually more critical to the long-term success of our salmon recovery efforts. WRIA 8 is the most populated watershed in the state, and it is still growing. How well we manage growth and development, and motivate people who live in our watershed to take positive actions to benefit salmon, will determine our success in recovering Chinook salmon.

In 2008, the WRIA 8 team administered a survey to jurisdictions in the watershed to assess progress made in implementing programmatic recommendations in the Plan.

The survey found a high rate of implementation for the following actions, ranked as being of “high importance” by a WRIA 8 staff group:

- Forest cover/riparian buffer education
- Water quality education
- Promoting stormwater best management practices
- Critical Areas Ordinances
- Shoreline Master Plan updates
- Tree protection regulations
- Stormwater regulations
- Regulatory flexibility to promote habitat protection/restoration

For these highly-ranked actions, WRIA 8 partners should be vigilant to keep the implementation level high. They should also look for ways to measure their effectiveness.

The following programmatic actions were found to have lower levels of implementation and were ranked as being of high or medium importance to salmon recovery. These Plan recommendations should be revisited by the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council and supporting committees to identify ways to increase implementation:

- Outreach regarding the benefits of large wood in streams
- Education programs for landscape designers/contractors on sustainable design
- Programs to address illegal water withdrawals
- Incentives to protect/restore ecological function
- Outreach to property owners to protect forest cover/habitat
- Promotion of low-impact development
- Natural Yard Care education

WRIA 8 partners are working collaboratively to address many outreach and education actions in the Plan. For example, many WRIA 8 jurisdictions, as part of implementing their stormwater permit requirements, are participating in the Stormwater Outreach for Regional Municipalities (STORM) Consortium. STORM coordinated extensive outreach campaigns related to reducing the water quality impacts of car washing and yard care, which are both high-priority outreach recommendations in the WRIA 8 Plan. Also, lakeshore jurisdictions in the

watershed have partnered with state and federal agencies on the Green Shorelines campaign to work with lakeshore property owners to improve shoreline habitat for salmon (see below). Pooling resources and collaborating has not only been more efficient in these cases, but has also led to much more effective outreach programs.

Non-governmental organizations and community groups and other WRIA 8 partners who were not part of the implementation survey are important partners in implementing many plan recommendations. For example, many nonprofit organizations such as the Mountains to Sound Greenway Trust, Friends of the Cedar River Watershed and Adopt-a-Stream Foundation, offer volunteer stewardship events. Local water districts offer educational programs and incentives to promote water conservation. The Washington Department of Ecology, Parks and Recreation Commission, and Puget Soundkeeper Alliance all have programs and materials to help boaters reduce pollution from recreational boating and boat maintenance.

Connecting People and Salmon

People are more likely to take actions to protect salmon, streams, and beaches if they have a personal experience that connects them with the resource. For several years, WRIA 8 has supported efforts to create personal connections through the annual Salmon SEEson campaign. Salmon SEEson promotes events sponsored by several cities and organizations where people can see salmon traveling upriver to spawn. Trained interpreters from Friends of the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery, Friends of the Cedar River Watershed, Salmon Stewards, City of Redmond, and elsewhere are on site at specific locations to provide information and answer questions.

WRIA 8 also supports the Cedar River Salmon Journey (CRSJ), Beach Naturalists, and Salmon Watchers through King Conservation District grants. These programs train volunteers about the watershed's natural resources and how to educate diverse audiences. Motivated people who know the science and can engage others are valuable resources for salmon recovery.

BRINGING BACK THE BEACH FOR BETTER HABITAT

Bulkheads and rip rap that line the shores of Lakes Washington and Sammamish have greatly reduced essential habitat for juvenile Chinook salmon. WRIA 8 has been working to encourage homeowners to restore their shoreline by adding beaches and native vegetation.

The City of Seattle developed an attractive and informative Green Shorelines guidebook for lakeshore property owners. Thousands of guidebooks have been distributed by jurisdictions, shoreline consultants and contractors, and through other means.

In 2009, WRIA 8 held a series of four green shorelines workshops about the definition of green shorelines, the permit process, incentives, and green shoreline design.

In 2010, lakeshore property owners received mailers with color photos and information about green shorelines. WRIA 8 also developed a Green Shorelines website. WRIA 8 plans to continue Green Shorelines work through outreach to professionals, project case studies, and new media.

