

## MEMORANDUM

May 2, 2019

**TO:** WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum

**FR:** Doug Osterman, WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Manager

**RE:** Watershed Ecosystem Forum Meeting – Thursday, May 9, 2019, Tukwila Community Center, 4 to 6:30 pm

The spring meeting of the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum (WEF) is Thursday, May 9, from 4:00 p.m. to 6:30 p.m. at the Tukwila Community Center, Social Hall. The agenda for the meeting is included in the meeting packet. Review of Agenda Items:

### **2019 WRIA 9 Capital Project and Program Priorities**

Suzanna Smith, WRIA 9 Habitat Projects Coordinator, will present on the Implementation Technical Committee's recommended 19 projects and programs for funding to the WEF for its consideration. The 2019 priority habitat projects and programs implement the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan, and include:

- High Priority Capital Projects
- Priority Project Cost Increase Requests
- Education and Stewardship Awards
- 'ReGreen the Green' small grant round
- 1 Million Trees Funding (pass through)
- Monitoring Proposals
- Capital Projects Operations Implementation Support

Funding for the habitat projects and programs is provided by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund (PSAR), Cooperative Watershed Management (CWM) grants, King Conservation District WRIA grants (legacy WRIA 9 funding), and the 1 Million Trees Initiative (King County). The meeting packet includes the presentation talking points, fact sheets for the projects and programs funding recommendations, and a funding budget table.

The Forum will be asked to approve the recommended 2019 priority projects and programs.

### **Management Committee membership and Leadership Positions for 2020**

As discussed at the February WEF meeting, WRIA 9 is facing a transition for 2020 largely due to imminent changes in leadership of the Management Committee and the WEF. Two of the long-time leaders of WRIA 9, Tukwila Councilmember Dennis Robertson, long-time Chair of the Management Committee, and Auburn Deputy Mayor Bill Pelosa, long-time Co-Chair of the WEF and Vice-Chair of the Management Committee, are retiring from their public service roles at the end of 2019. By the end of this year, the WEF needs to decide how to replace these steadfast WRIA 9 leaders. The Management Committee is seeking volunteers for these leadership roles in WRIA 9. Included with the meeting packet is a briefing paper that describes the WRIA 9 organization, its membership and leadership, and the estimated annual time commitment of key duties of the WRIA 9 leadership team. At this time, some elected officials of WRIA 9 cities have indicated interest in a leadership position. The history of the WRIA 9 leadership team is included with the meeting packet.

Kollin Higgins, Senior Ecologist at King County Water and Land Resources Division, will give a presentation on monitoring surveys of the WRIA 9 marine shoreline undertaken in 2016 and 2018. A primary strategy to recover Chinook salmon in the marine environment is to reduce the amount of shoreline armoring (e.g. bulkheads, seawalls). Evaluating trends in marine shoreline armoring has been a priority for the WRIA since the Status and Trends monitoring report was completed in 2012. This presentation explores the question: “Is the progress restoring marine shoreline being offset by new actions that degrade habitat, and if so, were those actions permitted?”

### **Seattle University Senior Project—Duwamish River Oxbow Habitat Restoration**

Since last fall, a Seattle University Civil Engineering Senior Design Team has been working on conceptual design alternatives for habitat restoration at the Desimone Oxbow on the Duwamish River in Tukwila. The design alternatives will address the declining wild Chinook salmon population of the Green/Duwamish River, analyzing integration of habitat restoration into re-development of the site. The senior team will provide a status report on their progress.

By way of background, the Desimone Oxbow (at River Mile 5.3 to 6.2) has been long identified as one of, if not the greatest potential sites to restore the nearly lost shallow estuarine water habitat of the once mighty Duwamish River as it formerly meandered across the valley to its mouth at Elliott Bay. The WRIA 9 2005 Salmon Habitat Plan is clear that Chinook salmon recovery in the watershed depends on improving the quality and quantity of estuarine habitat in the Duwamish River. Policy MS-1 of the Salmon Habitat Plan identifies restoration of Duwamish River “transition zone” juvenile rearing habitat as a top priority. The transition zone of the Duwamish River extends from River Mile 1 to 10.

The following links to [important countywide parks and recreation levy information](#), King Conservation District [marine shoreline classes](#) at [Dumas Bay](#), [Vashon Island](#), and [Discovery Park](#), [conservation scholarship opportunities](#), and the results of the recent [King County survey of WRIA 9 staff services to the WEF](#) are provided.

Lastly, the April Salmon Recovery Manager Report is included with the meeting packet. As you’ll see, we didn’t know the final state legislature budget numbers when drafting the report. Included with your packet are the final funding allocations for programs important to WRIA 9.

### **Meeting Packet materials include:**

1. WEF Agenda
2. Summary of February 28, 2019 WEF meeting
3. Habitat Project and Program Recommendations talking points
4. Project and Program Fact Sheets
5. Project and Program Budget Table
6. WRIA Organization and Leadership Discussion Paper
7. History of WRIA 9 Leadership Team
8. April 2019 Salmon Recovery Manager Report
9. WRIA 9 Capital Budget Priorities and Final Funding Numbers

Meeting materials are also available on the [WRIA 9 website](#).

Please contact me with questions, I am happy to walk you through the packet information. I look forward to seeing you at the meeting.

WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum  
May 2, 2019

**Doug Osterman, AICP**

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