

Youth Seat Proposal for the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum

March 18, 2022

Purpose:

Add two youth seats to the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum to:

- Promote regular and active civic engagement in youth within the WRIA 9 watershed
- Develop knowledge and skills for the next generation of local leaders; and
- To integrate a youth perspective and promote youth involvement in salmon recovery

Learning Objectives:

- Learn about Puget Sound salmon recovery
- Learn how local governments engage in salmon recovery and work together to fund scientific research and projects that advance salmon recovery goals
- Build relationships with elected officials, non-profit organizations, and local government staff
- Develop public-speaking and communication skills
- Provide youth perspective about salmon recovery to elected officials on WEF
- Learn how to engage peers and classmates on topics related to salmon recovery within the Green/Duwamish watershed¹

Membership Criteria:

- Applicants must live or attend school within the WRIA 9 watershed².
- Applicants must be between the grades of 9 and 12 (entering grade 9 summer 2022).
- Terms shall be for one year.
- All applicants will be considered regardless of race, color, gender, national origin, or ability.
- Applicants under 18 must have parent permission to serve.
- Applicants must have demonstrated interest in sustainability, watershed science, salmon recovery, environmental policy, or related subject matter

Application and Selection Process:

See attached Application Form.

All applicants will be screened for eligibility by WRIA staff and top applicants will be forwarded for an interview with a panel of WRIA 9 partners. Applications will be due by May 23, 2022.

Proposed interview questions:

- Why are you interested in being involved in salmon recovery in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed?
- What do you know about salmon recovery in Puget Sound? What do you think are some of the biggest opportunities to help recover salmon?

¹ To learn more about watersheds please visit: [King County watershed information - King County](#)

² School districts include Enumclaw, Tahoma, Auburn, Kent, Federal Way, Renton, Highline, Vashon, and Seattle. You can see a more detailed map of WRIA 9 here: [0411WRIA9LocalActionMap.ai \(govlink.org\)](#)

- How would serving in this position contribute to your personal learning objectives and professional goals?

Expectations:

- Applicants should try to attend all four WEF meetings within their term. Forum meetings within the term are the second Thursday from 4-6 pm in August, November, February, and May.
- Applicants should demonstrate an interest in public service and environmental stewardship, and a commitment to engage on the topics discussed by reading meeting materials, asking questions, and being an active member of the Forum.
- Applicants will be asked to give a short presentation to the WEF at the end of their term about what you learned during your term and your thoughts about how youth in WRIA 9 can become more engaged in salmon recovery.

Onboarding and Mentorship:

A youth member would be onboarded and mentored by WRIA 9 staff and a member of the Forum with capacity to be accessible as a resource for questions and support for any youth member contributions. An onboarding packet will be developed with educational materials and information to ensure the selected candidates are prepared to fully engage as Forum members. Youth members would receive regular briefing calls prior to any Forum meetings or events and will be included on all Forum correspondence.

In addition to participation in the WRIA 9 Forum meetings, youth members will be given additional opportunities for involvement in important WRIA work. This could include:

- Volunteer opportunities and community events with partners,
- participation in project ranking,
- spend a day at the Green River Smolt trap,
- assist in coordinating project tours,
- and other learning opportunities as they become available.

Timeline: Applications are due May 23, 2022. Applicants recommended for interviews will be notified by June 6 and interviews will be held virtually in late June/early July. Youth members will be onboarded by late July/early August, 2022. We anticipate members to join at the August Forum meeting, with their term running from August – May.

Other Considerations:

Transportation: Youth members may not have reliable transportation. WRIA staff will discuss transportation needs with youth members once in-person events resume.

Compensation: Active participation in the WRIA 9 Forum would reduce hours available to those that work and attend school. Therefore, a \$500 stipend will be administered to compensate for time spent preparing, traveling to and from, and attending WRIA 9 Forum meetings and other events as appropriate. This can be structured in three different ways depending on the preference of the selected applicants.

1. Honorarium model, with payouts twice a year
2. Gift card option for cash or preferred vendor
3. W-9 model contractor with a scope of work and quarterly invoices/payments