



## Chapter 1: Background

The 2005 Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed Salmon Habitat Plan, *Making Our Watershed Fit for a King*, represented the culmination of over five years of technical reconnaissance, research, and policy development. The Plan was a local watershed-based response to the federal government's 1999 listing of Puget Sound Chinook salmon as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. The 2005 Plan – which received a Puget Sound Regional Council Vision 2020 Award – translated a tremendous wealth of science into discrete policy recommendations and management actions necessary to support recovery of natural origin Green River Chinook salmon.

The 2005 Plan provided the blueprint for Chinook salmon recovery in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound for 15 years. It helped watershed partners leverage upwards of \$200 million dollars of local, state and federal funding for salmon recovery. Plan implementation resulted in nearly 2 miles of levee setbacks, over 4,500 feet of marine shoreline restoration, and approximately 500 acres of revegetation. Despite of these accomplishments, the continued decline of Chinook salmon – both locally and regionally – highlights the urgent need for expanding and accelerating recovery efforts.

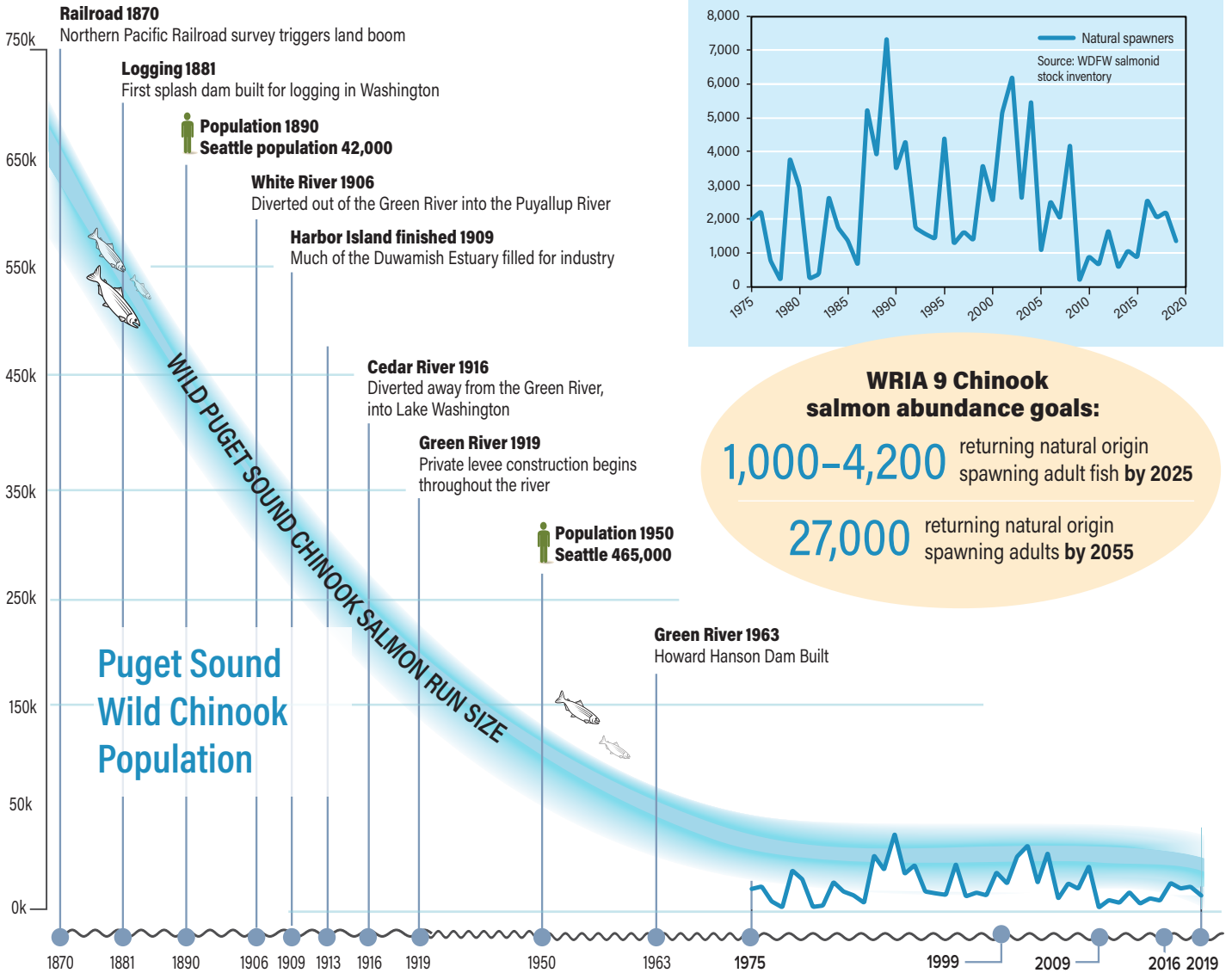
This Salmon Habitat Plan Update represents the next chapter of salmon recovery efforts in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed. It provides a science-based framework for identifying, prioritizing and implementing salmon recovery actions over the next 10-15 years. The integration of over a decade of new science informed important refinements to recovery priorities and investment strategies outlined in the 2005 Plan. These refinements reflect the watershed's commitment to adaptive management and ensure that limited resources are directed to where they can provide the greatest benefit towards Chinook salmon recovery. Although the focus of this plan is on Chinook salmon recovery, implementation will also provide parallel benefits to other salmon and steelhead.

### Regional Salmon Recovery Context

This addendum updates the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound watershed chapter of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)-approved 2007 Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan. The Green River Chinook salmon population is one of six Chinook salmon populations in the Central/South sub-basin and one of 22 remaining populations in the Puget Sound Chinook salmon evo-

Figure 1. Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Chinook salmon recovery timeline.

# Chinook Salmon Recovery Timeline



### Why does the data on salmon abundance begin to improve in 1975?

The quality of data on annual salmon population runs improves starting in 1975, when the Washington Department of Fisheries (predecessor to the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife) initiated data collection in response to the federal court mandate to develop and share annual abundance of salmon returning to individual rivers in Puget Sound.

lutionary significant unit (ESU). NOAA ESU recovery criteria require status improvement in all populations and two to four viable populations in each of the sub-basins.

The Puget Sound Partnership (Partnership), the state agency leading the region's collective effort to restore and protect Puget Sound, serves as the regional salmon organization for the 15 lead entities within the Puget Sound, advised by the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council. The Partnership co-manages the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund and works in partnership with the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) on statewide salmon recovery issues. The Salmon Recovery Funding Board, facilitated by the RCO, is a Governor-appointed 10-person board with a primary responsibility for making grants and loans for salmon habitat projects and salmon recovery activities. This salmon recovery infrastructure, and the grant and loans for habitat project implementation, is supported through state and federal funds from NOAA's Pacific Coast Salmon Recovery Fund and the State Salmon Recovery Funding. Additionally, within Puget Sound, salmon recovery is supported by the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund.

## WRIA 9 Organizational Structure

Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 9 serves as a lead entity for salmon recovery under the State of Washington's watershed-based framework for salmon recovery established under RCW 77.85. It is a watershed-based organization comprised of local, state and federal partners, non-profit organizations, business interests, and citizens. Per statute, WRIA 9 is mandated to "compile a list of habitat projects, establish priorities for individual projects, define the sequence for project implementation, and submit these activities as the habitat project list. The committee shall also identify potential federal, state, local, and private funding sources."

The 17 local governments within the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed (WRIA 9) formalized a partnership under an interlocal agreement (ILA) (WRIA 9 ILA) in 2000. The initial ILA (2000–2005) funded a strategic, science-based assessment of the watershed and a long-term, comprehensive recovery plan for the Green River Chinook salmon population. Following approval of the 2005

Salmon Habitat Plan, the local government partners forged a 10-year ILA from 2007–2017 intended to guide plan implementation and adaptive management. The ongoing commitment to watershed-based salmon recovery was renewed in 2017. The current ILA extends through 2025.

The WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum (WEF) serves as the advisory body for plan implementation and adaptive management. It is comprised of elected officials from the ILA partners and other watershed stakeholders. The Management Committee serves as the executive committee to the WEF. It directs work plan development and manages the ILA budget. The Implementation Technical Committee (ITC) is a technical- and policy-focused subcommittee that supports plan implementation and adaptive management. The ITC defines monitoring and research priorities, interprets new technical information as it relates to salmon recovery, and provides science-based recommendations to WEF.

## Equity and Social Justice

Salmon recovery efforts within the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound watershed overlap with numerous communities experiencing deeply entrenched social, economic, and environmental inequities. Race and place influence opportunity and quality of life. People of color, immigrants, and low-income residents experience inequities in access to key determinants of equity – including access to parks and natural resources. Although best available science drives project identification and prioritization, equity and social justice (ESJ) issues should be carefully considered. Applying an ESJ lens to habitat projects can help ensure salmon recovery efforts align with ESJ initiatives and do not inadvertently reinforce existing inequities. Integrating residents and community-based organizations into project design can help build community support and achieve multi-benefit outcomes that advance equity in the watershed.