



## Executive Summary

This document updates the 2005 Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed (WRIA 9), Making Our Watershed Fit for a King, Salmon Habitat Plan. The 2005 Plan served as the blueprint for salmon habitat recovery in WRIA 9 for 15 years. It is fitting that the Puget Sound Regional Council awarded the original 2005 Plan a Vision 2020 Award. Although the Plan Update reflects over a decade of new science regarding salmon conservation and recovery since the award, the core recovery strategies and underlying scientific framework remain largely valid today and continue to provide an important foundation for salmon recovery. The Plan Update – designed to be a stand-alone document – is intended to update, not replace, the 2005 Plan. The two documents, along with the 2014 Duwamish Blueprint and the 2016 Re-green the Green, provide a science-based framework for identifying, prioritizing and implementing salmon recovery actions.

This document provides a status update for Green River Chinook salmon using the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA)-approved viable salmon population (VSP) criteria. Over 20 years have passed since the listing of the Puget Sound Chinook salmon evolutionarily significant unit (ESU) under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Despite significant investments and large-scale restoration projects, Green River Chinook salmon remain listed

as Threatened. Population abundance, productivity, diversity and spatial distribution have not improved, and in some cases have continued to decline.

A Strategic Assessment Update summarizes new research findings that address important data gaps identified in the 2005 Plan. New information related to habitat use and fish productivity, climate change, temperature, and contaminants supported a reassessment of functional linkages between priority stressors, habitat conditions, and VSP parameters. This information serves as the foundation for the other core elements of the Plan Update.

Although the Plan Update maintains existing NOAA-approved VSP goals, it introduces new 10-year habitat goals (implementation targets) that represent continued progress towards the long-term necessary future conditions for achieving a viable salmon population, as outlined in 2005 Plan. The numerical targets for key habitats serve as a benchmark for evaluating plan implementation over time and informing ongoing adaptive management.

The Plan Update outlines a portfolio of 12 recovery strategies – including embedded policies and programs – to address priority pressures; increase salmon abundance, productivity, and diversity; and build long-term population resiliency. Successful



PHOTO: ELI BROWNELL

Green River Natural Area

implementation hinges on partner coordination and investment to ensure local land use planning, capital investment programs, and community outreach messaging are consistent with identified watershed priorities.

An updated list of capital projects was developed in partnership with interlocal agreement member jurisdictions, non-profit partners, state agencies, and others engaged in salmon recovery. The updated project list identifies 127 capital habitat projects across the five subwatersheds. Individual projects are ranked within their specific subwatershed – not across subwatersheds. Projects are tiered based on overall benefit towards recovery and to provide context for the level of financial need. Tier 1 projects have significant potential to advance recovery and substantively contribute to habitat goals. Tier 2 and Tier 3 have moderate and limited potential, respectively, to advance recovery and contribute to achieving habitat goals.

The Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan (MAMP) outlines monitoring priorities intended to help evaluate progress and inform strategic adaptation of the recovery strategies. The MAMP establishes a framework for (1) tracking implementation goals, (2) assessing project effectiveness, (3) evaluating habitat status and trends, (4) evaluating the population status of Green River Chinook salmon, and (4) prioritizing research and monitoring investments. This framework will guide data collection to support regular assessment of progress and allow the WRIA to reassess prioritization and sequencing of recovery actions.