

**WRIA 14 Lead Entity Committee**  
**Mason County Public Works Public Meeting Room B**  
**4/19/2018**

In attendance	
Margie Bigelow, WDFW	Paddy McGuire, Citizen
Evan Bauder, MCD	Carolyn Maddox, Citizen
Dan Calvert, PSP	Mitch Redfern, MCD
Brian Combs, SPSSEG	Laurence Reeves, Capitol Land Trust
Keith Dublanica, GSRO	Gary Schuyten, Citizen
Jamie Glasgow, WFC	Erik Schwartz, MCPW
Jennifer Holderman, MCD	Shelley Spalding, Citizen
Colin Hume, DOE	Scott Steltzner, Squaxin Island Tribe
Jeanne Kinney, TC	Bill Young, Citizen
James Lossee, WDFW	Sarah Zaniewski, Squaxin Island Tribe
Jenn Symons-D'Annibale, note taker	

**Purpose of the meeting**

Does the WRIA 14 Freshwater Strategy need to be updated? If so, to what extent? The current strategy is nearly 15 years old, with data gaps and update needs. It also lacks a clear sense of priority. Ask for committee endorsement of a path forward.

**Puget Sound Watershed Characterization Overview—Informative**

WDFW and DOE work in the Puget Sound Basin to prioritize upland and coastal watersheds for restoration and protection based on water quality, flow and habitat factors. The group reviewed an example of this model as it applies to Salmon restoration in WRIA 7. In this analysis, local data sets were included in the Puget Sound wide assessment to understand the relative importance of water quantity in upper watersheds of the Snoqualmie basin. The model provides an output of *importance, degradation, protection and restoration* of basins relative to each other. Group also discussed how Watershed Characterization and the Squaxin Island Tribe’s Catchment Analysis tool can integrate.

**Review Oct 2017-Dec 2017 subcommittee work—Informative**

Provide an overview of topics presented and discussed by subcommittee from October 2017-December 2017. The subcommittee met 3 times during this time. October 2017 meeting included a presentation on data collection and analysis that has occurred since 2004. Nov 2017 meeting involved a discussion of how to approach a strategy update. At the conclusion of this meeting, the group decided to host a workshop to delve deeper into the limiting factors analysis from 2002, to attempt to fill some data gaps. Dec 2017, the group along with a few invited guests set out to answer a series of questions around the data gaps in the limiting factors analysis. After this meeting, it was apparent that the group needed to seek additional guidance from the larger committee on the approach for updating the strategy.

## Review potential paths forward—Informative and Discussion

LEC checked in with each participant from the December 2017 workshop, asking for prospective paths forward. These discussions generated the following list:

Prospective Paths Forward	
Limiting factors beyond 2002	Targeted basin approach
Best available science works cited	Escapement and smolt numbers
Revise goal statement	Winnow down limiting factors

### Limiting factors: winnow down

Originally completed in 2002, the *Salmonid Habitat Limiting Factors WRIA 14, Kennedy-Goldsborough Basin*, includes a list of 16 habitat factors that may be limiting salmon productivity within 20 sub-basins in WRIA 14. Scores for these factors were assigned for the entire sub-basin. Several factors have significant data gaps, a few factors have no data and few sub-basins have no data. One suggestion for a path forward: *Can the list of 16 factors and 20 basins be narrowed down to resolve data gaps but to also acknowledge that project selection decisions can be effectively made based on a subset of the 2002 list?*

During the conversation two main themes arose: continue to strive to fill all gaps and retain list in its entirety v the list of limiting factors is old, contains significant data gaps and considering the gradation of ratings (sub-basin instead of reach specific) we're better off with looking at a smaller subset of factors, especially those with a more direct correlation with limited fish runs (flows, temperature, habitat complexity). The work from 2002 was seminal and critical and should not be forgotten however a subset would likely support prioritization efforts. The group also discussed current terminology (stressors) and limiting factors is a relic term and a change would help align our documents with Partnership and regional recovery plan language.

### Limiting factors: beyond 2002

During the Dec 2017 conversation, the group mentioned other limiting factors (climate change, nearshore factors, impacts of harvest, hatcheries and hydropower) that impact prospective functionality of habitat projects. Should these factors be considered in an update? If so, how?

The group acknowledges that many of these other limiting factors are beyond the control of this committee but should be acknowledged. Invariably additional data gaps will arise with this list but there can be value in this as it may provide opportunities for coordination with other entities in the future.

- ✓ To-do: Review other stressor/limiting factor lists for some guidance on how to narrow the list.

### Escapement and smolt numbers

Any discuss about habitat will benefit from an understanding of fish productivity and abundance; See WDFW and Squaxin Island Tribe on abundance data (smolt and spawner), covering several basins and several years, with Coho as the source of the most reliable data. DFW reviewed these data sets with the group.

Group discussed how these numbers may be indicative of habitat limiting factors. Challenging work but may have potential to illustrate carrying capacity concepts and a good data set to include in the strategy.

### Targeted Basin Approach

With limited resources to get work done on the ground, a committee member has suggested that efforts be focused on one or two sub-basins in WRIA 14. If a goal of salmon habitat restoration is to demonstrate a return on investment and only 3-4 projects are implemented/year, concentrating efforts in one basin will ensure may be the only way to demonstrate measurable improvements. One approach to choose a target basin is to look at Tier A and choose at random.

The committee discussed the realities of project development for salmon habitat projects; work is many times opportunistic and concentrating efforts in one basin may stymie restoration progress in WRIA 14. The committee noted that if an opportunity arises then regardless of this approach it should be considered. The committee also noted that this proposal, whether it takes the shape of narrow Tier A or reorganizing the tiers entirely would benefit from a data update first. The committee also discussed a half targeted, half opportunistic approach. The committee also expressed an interest in pursuing outreach efforts (i.e. cold calls) in Tier A streams.

### Revise goal statement

Although the current statement is wordy and contains grammatical errors, it will suffice until work is done with data updates and potential prioritization approaches.

### Best Available Science Annotated Bibliography

Cataloguing and critique data out there is an important first step towards a strategy update.

- ✓ To-do: LEC will work on best available science annotated bibliography.

### **Wrap up path forward discussion—decision**

Wrap up path forward discussion. Ask for committee go-ahead to proceed on a path forward. How do we get all this work done? Via capacity dollars? Via consultant or committee members?

Recovery plans for each basin that include measurable objectives and adaptive management approaches. This potential may exist in Goldsborough but likely not as conclusive in other basins. How do we meet expectations of the Feds and PSP with planning efforts within our means? How do we plan in the nearshore? Follow guidance of Chinook Recovery Plan or create something distinct for WRIA 14 since the recovery plan isn't fully implemented in the South Sound.