

**WRIA 14 Lead Entity Committee**  
**Mason County Public Works Public Meeting Room B**  
**2/15/2018**

In attendance	
Margie Bigelow, WDFW	Carolyn Maddox, Citizen
Dan Calvert, PSP	Erica Marbet, Squaxin Island Tribe
Brian Combs, SPSSEG	Mitch Redfern, MCD
Sarah Gage, GSRO	Laurence Reeves, Capitol Land Trust
Jamie Glasgow, WFC	Gary Schuyten, Citizen
Shaun Hamilton, Western Rivers Conservancy	Erik Schwartz, MCPW
Jennifer Holderman, MCD	Bill Young, Citizen
Jeanne Kinney, TC	Sarah Zaniewski, Squaxin Island Tribe
Jenn Symons-D'Annibale, note taker	

**Skookum Watershed Action Plan Overview—Erica Marbet, Squaxin Island Tribe**

Erica presented high level details on draft plan that identifies the priority parcels for restoration and acquisition in the Skookum basin. Erica is seeking input from the public on the draft plan and will seek final approval from the Tribal council. Ultimately the plan helps to fulfill requirements for RCO funding, demonstrating acquisition is based on scientific analysis, public engagement and strategic prioritization. Details on current conditions in the basin (wetland distribution, channel configuration and restoration needs), possible historic conditions based on LIDAR (former channel planform), current acquisition prospects and other conservation efforts were presented and discussed. Restoration will go beyond mere riparian enhancement; the channel of Skookum Creek appears to have been rerouted over time. Ultimately the Tribe seeks to acquire all high priority properties in the basin and promote restoration on the others.

**Kennedy Creek Conservation Area—Shaun Hamilton, Western Rivers Conservancy**

In partnership with DNR, Western Rivers Conservancy helped establish a Natural Resources Conservation Area, encompassing over 1000 acres along Kennedy Creek. With the passage of the 17-19 Washington Capital Budget, approximately 2 M is available to acquire property within the conservation area. Once 2 M is under contract, negotiation with Green Diamond, current land owners, will begin. Additional funds will be sought in the future to acquire other properties as well as complete acquisition of Green Diamond property in the basin. The opportunity to acquire and preserve Kennedy Creek is unique, with a significant portion of the basin under one ownership, Green Diamond. DNR and Western Rivers Conservancy intend to acquire land above the falls, a natural barrier to fish passage, for temperature and water quality purposes and to potentially open public access from the estuary to Summit Lake. Additional work to enhance infrastructure at the Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail is also being pursued.

**Water Typing and eDNA in WRIA 14—Jamie Glasgow, Wild Fish Conservancy**

Jamie provided an overview of water typing and eDNA in the basin. Water Typing is a stream classification system used to delineate fish habitat to determine buffer width. Originated in forest practices and used by counties in critical area ordinance. WFC found major discrepancy between their water typing work and what was done by the DNR. While conducting water typing, WFC also makes field calls on culvert passability. WFC hosts an interactive map on their webpage with their water typing findings for WRIA 14. In 2015, WFC received funding to pursue eDNA sampling in WRIA 14. Water

sampled at a 1 km resolution, filtered and the filters are sent to a lab for analysis. These samples are used to determine the presence of species of interest over approximately the previous week. WFC currently samples for steelhead and chinook in the basin but other species may be pursued. Research into eDNA is currently pursuing answers to fish abundance. WFC has resources to complete another 20 samples in the basin (out of 60) and would like to get feedback from the group on where to sample next. Jamie also said others can access the eDNA species-specific markers developed by WFC and their partner (USFS Rocky Mountain Research Station) and submit their own samples for analysis at \$85/sample.

### **2018 Grant Round Reminders**

2018 Grant Round Schedule was distributed and discussed; site visits are scheduled for May 10, 2018. First deadline: letters of intent due March 9, 2018. Reviewed changes to applications and manual 18 for 2018. Kay Caromile, RCO grant manager, will follow up with an email reiterating these points.

### **December 2018 Parking Lot**

Jennifer provided thoughts on how to revise citizen criteria for ranking, providing an example from the Puget Sound Partnership and their large capital projects. Criteria considered include:

- Geographic distribution of projects
- Reorder to more fully fund a project near funding cut-off line
- Uncertainty of implementation
- Project types: multiple benefit, balance of project types, balance of acquisition and restoration

Group convened discussion on one vote per organization, as per current bylaws. More than one individual can participate on committee but will need to convene on any voting decision. A scenario has arisen where two employees from the same organization have attended meetings and have requested each have a vote. The group discussed whether this was a violation of the bylaws and was able to distinguish that one employee would not sit on the committee in her capacity as an employee of the organization but as a community member who is also a member of the organization. The conflict of interest policy in the bylaws will also help address perceived conflicts from this arrangement. This scenario is distinguished from that covered in the bylaws and therefore doesn't rise to revising the bylaws.

### **April 2018 meeting**

Committee has agreed to meeting in April to provide feedback to the strategy revision subcommittee on path forward. Jennifer provided a quick rundown of correspondence sent to subcommittee, outlining progress since October 2017 and member's perspectives on paths forward. See correspondence below.

**From:** Jennifer Holderman

**Sent:** Tuesday, February 6, 2018 4:06 PM

**To:** Jamie Glasgow ([jamie@wildfishconservancy.org](mailto:jamie@wildfishconservancy.org)); Jennifer Symons; Evan Bauder; [james.losee@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:james.losee@dfw.wa.gov); [szaniewski@squaxin.us](mailto:szaniewski@squaxin.us); Scott Steltzner ([ssteltzner@squaxin.us](mailto:ssteltzner@squaxin.us)); Erik Schwartz; Brian Combs ([brianc@spsseg.org](mailto:brianc@spsseg.org)); Bill Young ([thefleen@gmail.com](mailto:thefleen@gmail.com))

**Cc:** Jeff Dickison; John Bolender

**Subject:** Follow up from Dec 12, 2017 subcommittee meeting

Dear LE Strategy Update Subcommittee,

Starting in October 2017, you began discussions on updating the Salmon Habitat Protection and Restoration Plan for WRIA 14 (aka the Freshwater Strategy) document. Highlights of these conversations include:

October 2017: Squaxin Island Tribe provided a high-level overview of analysis, data collection and prioritization efforts conducted in WRIA 14 since strategy was completed. The Subcommittee began a discussion on prioritization approaches.

November 2017: The Subcommittee discussed goal statement, strategies for updating the strategy and settled upon hosting a workshop in Dec 2017 to do a status check on the LFA with subcommittee members and invited guest from SIT, WFC and WDFW.

December 2017:

The Subcommittee attempted to answer three questions about the current LFA, identified approaches to updating LFA, critiqued the current tiered system, identified data gaps that have been filled, discussed potential LFA factors that go beyond those identified in 2002, the role of WRIA committees in recovery and paths forward for strategy revision. See below for more specifics on these topics.

*At the conclusion of the Dec 2017 meeting, it was apparent that the subcommittee needed to revisit their goals and objectives for engaging in a strategy revision. To facilitate this process and in response to concerns expressed by the Tribe that “lead entities have never been authorized to pursue hatcheries or harvest issues”, I reached out to workshop participants for feedback. I’ve included a list of these suggestions for your consideration:*

- Good biological processes data throughout WRIA; focus on that
- WRIAs are in the business of habitat restoration; we need to focus on that
- Acknowledge *LFA factors beyond those identified in 2002* (climate change, other Hs)
- Create survey of the best available science
- Capture list of issues the group has encountered in Oct-Dec 2017
- Start somewhere, avoid the circle; incorporate new data into characterization to scope prioritization

- Need escapement and smolt numbers for the basins; are we getting enough coho back in creeks to get self-sustaining #s?
- Focus on one basin at a time
- Public should be aware of relative influence of 4-H in our basins
- Stronger goal statement for the group

Also in response to the Dec 2017 meeting, I sought answers to these questions:

- **What is the role of lead entities in recovery planning? Where are hatchery and harvest management strategies considered?**

To answer this question, I reviewed Salmon Recovery Statute (CH 77.85 RCW), the Co-Managers Harvest Plan for 2017 (*Comprehensive Management Plan for Puget Sound Chinook: Harvest*), Forecast predictions (*2017 Wild Coho Forecasts for Puget Sound*), the South Sound Chapter of the Chinook Recovery Plan, and the WRIA 14 strategy. I also reached out to staff at the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office. Here are excerpts from these documents and the discussion I had with state agency staff:

- ✓ *This Plan (Co-Managers Harvest Plan) will constrain fisheries to the extent necessary to enable rebuilding of natural Chinook Salmon populations in the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon ESU provided that habitat capacity and productivity are protected and restored...The ultimate goal of this plan is to promote rebuilding of natural Puget Sound Chinook Salmon, to the extent possible in light of habitat constraints.*
- ✓ *The Plan (Co-Managers Harvest Plan) asserts a specific role for fishery management in contributing rebuilding the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon ESU: to ensure that sufficient mature adults escape fisheries to utilize currently available spawning and rearing habitat to the optimum degree.*
- ✓ *The Recovery Plan addresses integrated factors affecting the survival and recovery, including the management of fisheries and hatchery production, and conservation and restoration of freshwater and marine habitat, all of which are necessary to achieve recovery goals.*
- ✓ *A Salmon Recovery Plan is designed to address limiting factors including but not limited to 4-Hs. The regional plans then roll up to create a statewide strategy that addresses all factors limiting the recovery of Washington's listed salmon stock, including habitat and water quality degradation, harvest and hatchery management, inadequate streamflows, and other barriers to fish passage.*
- ✓ *The LE Committee in coordination with the LE TAG provide[s] a citizen-based evaluation of the projects proposed to promote salmon habitat...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.*

- ✓ Feedback from GSRO: Any discussion of harvest and hatchery in a lead entity implementation strategy should be consistent with, and coordinated with, the regional recovery plan. Additionally through funding from NOAA, the state funds hatchery reform projects to implement recommendations to:
  - Conserve indigenous salmonid genetic resources,
  - Assist with the recovery of naturally spawning salmon populations,
  - Provide sustainable fisheries and
  - Improve the quality and cost effectiveness of hatchery programs

More details about these projects can be found at <http://hatcheryreform.us/>

- ✓ WRIA 14 strategy: *Educate the public that fixing the habitat does not bring fish back by itself. Many other factors impact fish returns (e.g., hatcheries, harvest, ocean conditions)*

In conclusion, the LE Committee’s role as defined in statute is to develop a list of habitat projects based on a prioritization approach that consider scientific and community factors particular to their basin. With the limited resources available to a LE, the strategy should focus on this. Analysis and recommendations regarding the other Hs is primarily the role of other entities (regional and state) involved in salmon recovery. Any discussion of harvest and hatchery in a lead entity implementation strategy should be consistent with, and coordinated with, the regional recovery plan.

- **What steps can the committee and the LEC take to demonstrate commitment and achieve progress towards updating the strategy and limiting factors analysis for WRIA 14 considering current capacity?**

Several LE across Puget Sound are working on strategy updates and are joining forces to ask for financial assistance. In the meantime, it’s essential that local groups continue to demonstrate momentum towards this goal. Defining our strategy will help us present a clear path forward to position ourselves favorably for future technical and funding opportunities. It’s an imperative that we get out in front of these opportunities to show readiness to proceed. Since the inception of Lead Entities in the early 2000s these groups have been tasked with important functions, working with the community and integrating local watershed knowledge to develop feasible and effective habitat recovery projects. The conversations in the last few months, although important, have seemed to stray from this core mission.

The subcommittee has put forth several recommendations. Here are a few I’ve gleaned:

- Create annotated bibliography of all new sources of analysis, data and prioritization in WRIA 14 since 2002
- Define goal statement for subcommittee work
- Winnow down limiting factors (currently 16). Possible approaches include

- Salmon recovery statute identifies fish passage barriers, degraded estuarine areas, riparian corridors, stream channels and wetlands as primary.
- Where data gaps exist and the likeliness of filling those in the next 5 years.
- Plot escapement and smolt numbers for period of record in WRIA 14.
- Explore biological process data mentioned by James Losee at workshop. He said it's available for all subbasins except Malaney and Harstene.

I'd like the subcommittee to prioritize a few of these tasks and give me their blessing to proceed. I appreciate everyone's passion for these topics but feel that it's an imperative that we settle on a path forward to demonstrate readiness to proceed with priority salmon habitat restoration and acquisition based on best available science and in line with Puget Sound wide efforts to be more strategic about how public money is awarded.

Thanks,

Jennifer Holderman

Watershed and Lead Entity Coordinator

Mason Conservation District

Shelton, WA

(360)427-9436 Ext. 101

#### Summary from December 12, 2017 LFA Workshop

- Objective of the meeting
  - With 15 years passing since the limiting factors analysis was written, have any data gaps been filled? With this new information along with scientific advancements, would the ratings highlighted in Table 7 change significantly?
  - Have any major landscape changes occurred in the last 15 years or are there any known to occur in the near future that warrant changing the current stream tiers (I've included the tiers on the second tab of the excel document)?
  - Are there any basins out of the 22 or any limiting factors out of the 16 identified that present obvious opportunities or barriers to restoration and/or protection?
- Approaches to updating LFA factors

- Riparian conditions—LIDAR analysis, relative comparison of basins and identify a bottom line
- Fish passage assessment complete for publically owned ; completing for privately owned in near future
- Water quality—DOE data and Erica from Squaxin
- Critique current tiered system
  - Based on number of miles, impervious surface; doesn't capture VSP
  - Independent tribs need inclusion because of the contribution to the larger PS basin; work around—DISCLAIMER: demonstrate value even though data gap
- Data gaps filled
  - Skookum and Schumocher have been filled
  - Biological process have been filled for all but Malaney and Harstene
- LFA factors beyond those identified in 2002
  - Climate Change
  - Harvest
  - Hatchery
  - Impact to wild salmon from hatchery stock
- Role of WRIA committees in recovery
- Suggested paths forward for strategy revision
  - Focus on subset of LF for more spatially consistent data
  - Reach break down of best available science
  - Understand lifecycle limiting factors on the reach scale
  - Is EDT suitable in Goldsborough, do we repeat it elsewhere and ask for funding?
  - Reduce LFs