

Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Shared Strategy Feedback for Decision-Makers

I. Key Questions for Regional Summit: The following questions are important to determine the contribution of the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish watershed to regional salmon recovery in the next ten years. Answers to these questions by the end of December 2004 will support regional consensus on the direction for Puget Sound salmon recovery at the January 2005 summit.

1. What are the goals for the long-term and objectives for the next ten years? Of the habitat conditions which you identified as necessary for the populations which use your watershed, which can you make significant progress on in the 10-year timeframe?
2. What are the conditions necessary to implement the actions identified in your 10-year timeframe? Are they supported by those responsible for implementation?
3. What actions are necessary to achieve the protection of existing functions? What conditions must be in place to achieve protection? Are those conditions supported by those responsible for implementation?

II. Essential Decisions for Final Watershed Chapter: Based on the June submittal, the summer review process, and our best scientific understanding, the Technical Recovery Team and the Work Group consider the following policy decisions as the most important to answer and include by April 30, 2004. This will increase the certainty that actions taken in the next ten years will move us on a trajectory toward recovery.

1. Measurable habitat protection and restoration and fish population goals: The magnitude of change which the planning group decides to pursue for the populations should be identified and the sequence of restoration actions should be clearly defined. Particular attention should be given to articulating a vision and the steps to determine the feasibility to restore ecological functions within the Sammamish Valley channel, including consideration of expected productivity, flows and channel structure.
2. 3-H integration: Potential negative interactions (competition and predation) from hatchery sockeye in Lake Washington should be addressed with co-managers, and identification of the actions to mitigate impacts and the commitment for implementation of the actions.
3. Protection: the level of protection of all freshwater tributaries and nearshore (forage fish spawning beaches and habitats) habitats which provide functions and values that support Chinook and bull trout; timetable and steps to provide protection where gaps exist

4. Water Quality: timetable and steps to address temperature and dissolved oxygen levels where these are significant factors limiting productivity
5. Adaptive Management: An adaptive management structure to monitor and manage progress toward recovery.

III. Increasing ESU Certainty: The Technical Recovery Team suggests that addressing the following will increase the certainty of meeting ESU recovery and should be noted in the plan with a brief statement of long-term strategy to address even if it is not possible to develop actions at this time.

1. All-H Integration: All-H integration must be reflected in recovery planning efforts. Hatchery management practices must address and resolve the high stray rate of hatchery origin fish and broodstock program.
2. Water Quantity: Identification and the timeframe for implementation of actions to address peak and low flows
3. The potential to increase natural production of Issaquah Creek Chinook in order to move the population from high risk.
4. Identify and address critical issues to salmon recovery related to fish passage at Landsburg Dam in the short term and long term.

IV. Highlights of Summer Review 2004: This section summarizes our understanding of your responses to the six questions from your June submission and August discussions.

A. Information about the planning approach, conditions necessary to achieve recovery, and measurable goals

1. **Planning Group:** Jurisdictions within the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish watershed are supporting a habitat planning process to contribute to ESU-wide salmon recovery. Co-managers are not jointly engaged in the WRIA 8 planning effort. However, the WDFW Habitat Steward provides consistent input and participates in technical meetings and technical-policy linkage workshops.
2. **Recovery Conditions: Has the watershed group identified the conditions (habitat, harvest, and hatchery) necessary to reach recovery?**

Participants in the WRIA 8 habitat plan are evaluating habitat conditions and recommendations of actions that will be necessary to achieve habitat goals. Co-managers have not yet jointly identified conditions to reach recovery.

3. Measurable Goals: Has the watershed group endorsed the planning targets as a long-term measurable goal? If not, what is their goal?

Planning targets have not been established and provided to the WRIA 8 habitat planning participants. Proposed Chinook salmon population goals are based on the analysis of population status contained in the VSP Framework. For abundance, the WRIA 8 technical team is evaluating what it would take to meet co-manager escapement goals of 1,250 naturally spawning adults on the Cedar and 350 in Bear/Cottage Creek. The team cautions, however, that achievement would reflect a significant increase for the WRIA 8 population. (*Conservation Strategy*, June 30, 2004, p. 47).

4. Long Term contribution to ESU Recovery: What is the long term contribution of the independent spawning populations using this watershed for ESU recovery? To achieve ESU recovery, the TRT draft delisting criteria recommend that all populations show significant improvements. Also, based upon the delisting criteria, 2-4 populations in each of the five sub-regions must achieve the planning targets and other viable salmonid population parameters (VSP). These criteria are not intended to limit additional populations in each of the five regions from achieving the planning targets.

Based upon the TRT draft delisting criteria, the Central Sound populations that must meet the planning targets have not been defined, with the exception of the White River (early run) Chinook, which must meet planning targets and other VSP parameters (VSP) (core population/low risk). There is not yet sufficient information for the Cedar Sammamish Chinook populations to know whether the long term contributions of these populations will be supportive or core/low risk.

B. Highlights of improvements completed or underway and existing protections of ecological functions that support recovery (Note: Results for fish have not been evaluated).

1. Fish access/passage: Improvements at the Locks represent a significant advance for Chinook and other species of salmon.
2. Riparian: The implementation habitat restoration projects and Fish and Forest and Habitat Conservation Plans contribute to the protection of riparian functions and values that support chinook and bull trout.
3. Water Quantity: A multi-jurisdiction Instream Flow Committee advises the City of Seattle on spring flows for juvenile migration and fall flows for adult migration, as well as other flow decisions and adaptive management for the flow regime over time.
4. Water Quality: Wastewater treatment, stormwater management and other programs and actions to improve water quality are providing benefits for Chinook and other fish.

5. Protection: The implementation of each jurisdiction's Critical Areas Ordinance, Shoreline master Program, Waterways 2000, and other ordinances and voluntary programs contributes to the protection of habitat functions and values that support Chinook and bull trout.

C. Significant proposals – Proposed strategy that strives to significantly protect or improve an important factor for recovery with actions that can be evaluated qualitatively or quantitatively evaluated for their results for fish); total cost of proposal(s)

1. King County has proposed a revised Critical Areas Ordinance that is expected to provide protections for habitats that provide important functions for Chinook and other salmon species.
2. WRIA 8 has proposed acquisition and restoration proposals for consideration by SRFB and other funding sources.

D. Poised – The watershed has designed or initiated a process that will result in the development of significant proposals to improve conditions for fish. Resulting proposals should be included in the recovery chapter.

1. The June 30th Draft and subsequent work provide hypotheses and on-the-ground actions that address limiting factors and are intended to improve viable salmonid population attributes; these are under consideration by elected officials and other participants in the habitat conservation plan process.
2. Identification of strategies and sets of actions addressing limiting factors: EDT was used to diagnose limiting factors and provide a relative sense of the protection and restoration potential of stream reaches and sub areas. The EDT model will be further utilized with other studies to identify and prioritize habitat protection and restoration actions.