To Department of Ecology, NEP Watershed Protection & Restoration Grant Program:

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is pleased to provide this letter in support of the Lower Skykomish River Riparian Edge Habitat Enhancement proposal for the National Estuary Program (NEP) Watershed Protection and Restoration Grant Program (Theme 3-Protect/Restore Riparian or Floodplain Habitat).

The Lower Skykomish River Riparian Edge Habitat Enhancement is a 2.8 mile phased, multi-site, multi-partner restoration project born from the 2010 reach-scale, Lower Skykomish River Restoration Assessment. This project involves application of in-stream and edge habitat enhancements designed to restore natural river processes and establish an enduring riparian buffer along 2,000 feet of the Skykomish River. Particular activities include elimination of a remnant riprap revetment, placement of in-channel woody complexes, installation of vertical wood boles to a meander bar, application of bio-engineering techniques to temper sections of vertical and eroding bank, and enhancement of 6.5 acres of riparian buffer (2000 lineal feet, at a minimum of 100 foot depth).

The project is fully designed, partnership agreements have been executed, final permits are in process, and the construction contracting process is underway. Project partners include three agricultural landowners, the state Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Public Utility District No. 1 of Snohomish County, Snohomish County Public Works, Snohomish County Conservation District and USDA Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program. Ecology NEP funds will close a crucial construction funding gap, enabling completion of all construction phases. In addition to this site-specific construction work, NEP funds would facilitate invasive species management activities from the head of the Skykomish River to this construction site. This element involves aerial mapping and analysis of Japanese knotweed infestations along the mainstem, ground truthing on identified smaller tributaries, and establishment of a Cooperative Weed Management Area as the means to strategize and collaborate around basin-wide control efforts.

The proposed project will advance several of the LIO’s recommended near term actions: Local Habitat Protection and Restoration, Knotweed Control, and Salmon/Multi-Species Recovery Plans. We endorse this proposed project that will benefit multiple stakeholders and implement a local project to help achieve targets identified in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Sincerely,

Dave Somers, Chair
Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization Executive Committee
To Washington State Departments of Ecology and Commerce:

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is pleased to provide this letter in support of the *Snoqualmie Agriculture Riparian Implementation Plan* proposal for the National Estuary Program (NEP) Watershed Protection and Restoration Grant Program. The project supports the “land use and working lands” focus of the NEP grant program. The LIO supports this project as it aligns with recommended near term actions (NTA) and will assist in better defining and implementing projects on the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Recovery Plan 3-year work plan.

The *Snoqualmie Agriculture Riparian Implementation Plan* will provide a science-based, locally-derived strategy to implementing buffer restoration that incorporates consideration of the opportunities and constraints inherent in an active agricultural landscape. The plan will be used by project sponsors and funding agencies to ensure that buffers are being restored in a strategic manner that preserves agricultural viability while improving ecological functions. The foundation of the plan will be developed by a technical project team, with review and extensive participation by an advisory taskforce that includes representatives of the King County Agricultural Commission, Tribes, local farmers, Snohomish Basin Salmonid Recovery Technical Committee, the Snoqualmie Fish, Farm, Flood Advisory Committee, WDFW and non-profits.

Completion of the *Snoqualmie Agriculture Riparian Implementation Plan* will advance several of the LIO’s recommended NTAs (Floodplain Management for Farm-Fish-Flood, Local Habitat Protection and Restoration, and Salmon/Multi-Species Recovery Plans) and contribute to the ten-year riparian restoration goals identified in the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Recovery Plan. Overall, this effort will support the viability of the more than 14,000 acres of productive farms in the Snoqualmie Agriculture Production District while addressing a top restoration priority in the lower Snoqualmie River.

The LIO endorses completion of this project that will benefit multiple stakeholders and implement a key local project to help achieve targets identified in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Thank you for considering this project for funding.

Sincerely,

Dave Somers  
Chair, Executive Committee Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization
Dear Washington State Departments of Ecology and Commerce,

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is pleased to provide this letter of support to develop a pilot Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program for the City of Edmonds utilizing a NEP Watershed Restoration and Protection Grant. Although the project would take place in WRIA 8, it would have regional impacts extending into the Snohomish Basin by encouraging future growth to occur in urban areas. In 2011 the State of Washington passed a law (RCW 39.108) creating the Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program. This program takes a coordinated regional approach to protecting and restoring Puget Sound by creating a new financing tool that supports urban infrastructure investment and promotes redevelopment in cities while protecting the region’s resource lands that are critical to watershed health. Through infrastructure investments, cities will promote growth where it is best served, reducing development threats to lands important for watershed health in unincorporated areas.

An outcome of this project that aligns with our LIO near term actions is the reduction of development pressures on lands that are important to watershed health. This is paired with an incentive-based approach to protect farms and forestlands, whose retention in resource use helps to reduce flooding and stormwater impacts across the Puget Sound region. In 2013 the City of Seattle became the first municipality to adopt a Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program as part of its South Lake Union rezone. This proposed study will investigate application of a Landscape Conservation and Local Infrastructure Program in a smaller city involving lower densities.

Overall, this proposal is part of an integrated, regional effort to strengthen watershed protection by creating dense, attractive communities offering a variety of uses and access to transit. These outcomes advance the grant’s objectives of improving land use decisions so the location of growth protects watershed processes. We endorse this proposed project that will benefit multiple stakeholders and implement a local project to help achieve targets identified in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Sincerely,

Dave Somers, Chair
Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization Executive Committee
To Washington State Departments of Ecology and Commerce:

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is pleased to provide this letter in support of the Building a Decision Support Framework for Puget Sound Watersheds proposal for the National Estuary Program (NEP) Watershed Protection and Restoration Grant Program. The proposed project would focus on the Snohomish Basin (WRIA 7) as a pilot area to create a science based, collaborative “decision support framework” that can be used by land use managers, planners and citizens to correctly interpret, apply and implement watershed data and information. This framework will be designed for use by other jurisdictions throughout Puget Sound.

The objective of this project is to develop a system that synthesizes existing watershed information in a manner that can more readily inform and improve the land use and management decisions required of local governments and land management organizations (e.g., land trusts, conservancies, parks departments) in Puget Sound. The primary goals and objectives for this project are to identify:

1) The top watershed problems within an individual assessment unit;
2) The recommended solutions and actions within that assessment unit that would result in maintenance and or restoration of processes within a normal range of function, and protection of habitat and the greatest degree of “lift” for biological processes;
3) How those solutions and actions might be implemented according to the management need (e.g., comprehensive plans, critical area regulations, shoreline master programs, and resource lands management).

The LIO supports this project as it aligns with several of our adopted near term actions related to implementing the Snohomish Basin Protection (SNST4) and will assist in better defining and implementing projects on the Snohomish River Basin Salmon Recovery Plan 3-year work plan SNST13). In addition, the LIO endorses this pilot project that could then be adapted across many jurisdictions and implement a key local project to help achieve targets identified in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Thank you for considering this proposed project for funding.

Sincerely,

Dave Somers, Chair
Executive Committee Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization
To Washington State Departments of Ecology and Commerce:

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) is pleased to provide this letter in support of the Regional Dairy Engagement Initiative pilot project.

The LIO supports this project because it aligns with a number of recommended near term actions for the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds, as well as with the three Strategic Initiatives (Stormwater, Habitat and Shellfish) in the 2014/2015 Puget Sound Action Agenda.

The goal of this two-year pilot project is to provide dedicated and technically trained/certified resource planners to engage dairy producers in the Central Puget Sound (Island, King, Pierce and Snohomish counties – 61 producers) for the purpose of improving the management of potential pollutants. As most dairy operations exist within the floodplains of Puget Sound where water quality issues are intensified by flooding and where salmon recovery goals include restoration of habitat, resource managers need to develop strategies to actively work with dairies to manage their operations and install practices that support recovery and floodplain management goals. The Snohomish Conservation District will be taking the lead on this project, working in partnership with other Central Puget Sound-area conservation districts to implement an outreach and engagement strategy for dairies that will support both the recovery of Puget Sound and a viable dairy industry.

Completion of the Regional Dairy Engagement Initiative will advance four of the LIO’s recommended near term actions (concerning agricultural runoff, floodplain management for farm-fish-flood, the Pollution Identification and Correction project, and coordinated education and outreach leading to behavior change) as well as addressing all three Strategic Initiatives in the 2014/2015 Puget Sound Action Agenda. The LIO endorses the completion of this project which will benefit multiple stakeholders and implement key near term actions to help achieve targets identified in the Puget Sound Action Agenda.

Thank you for considering this project for funding.

Sincerely,

Christie True
Co-Chair, Executive Committee Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization