

Approved DATE

SNOHOMISH-STILLAGUAMISH LOCAL INTEGRATING ORGANIZATION PROPOSED POLICIES FOR LETTERS OF SUPPORT

Background

The Snohomish-Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization (LIO) receives requests from time to time for letters of support from various partner organizations. Most often, the letters are requested in support of grant applications for restoration projects or programmatic initiatives taking place within the Stillaguamish and/or Snohomish Watersheds. The highest volume of requests typically occurs in the winter and spring due to the application deadlines of several state and federal grant programs. These proposed policies are intended to provide clarity for LIO members, staff and partner organizations about the conditions under which the LIO may offer a letter of support.

To date, the decisions to provide or not provide a letter have been made largely on a case-by-case basis, depending on several factors, such as:

- 1) the consistency of the proposal with LIO priorities and strategy recommendations;
- 2) adequacy of lead time for staff to prepare a letter;
- 3) adequacy of lead time to provide a chance for the Chair(s) to review the letter; and
- 4) in some cases, the adequacy of lead time for full Committees review;

These factors are captured in the proposed policies, below.

Proposed policies

Policies applicable to all letters of support

- The LIO will not provide letters of support for proposals to EPA's National Estuary Program Geographic Fund grants because the LIO and/or its Committee members participate directly in the evaluation of all proposals in this program.
- A letter of support may be provided only to projects, programs or other activities that are clearly consistent with the goals and priorities of the LIO as determined by the Snohomish Implementation Committee (IC) and Stillaguamish Watershed Council (SWC);
- Letters that include pledges of significant LIO staff support or direct financial support must be approved by the full LIO prior to submission unless consistent with the adopted LIO budget and work plan.
- The LIO may choose not to provide a letter of support at its discretion.

Policies applicable to letters signed by the LIO Executive Committee (EC) Chair(s)

- With the exception of staff-signed letters (see below), letters should be signed by the LIO EC Chair(s).

- Letters that (in the opinion of staff or the EC Chair(s)) may raise concerns for individual LIO member jurisdictions or partners or are otherwise potentially contentious should be circulated for review by the full LIO.
- Copies of each letter shall be distributed to all LIO members.

Policies applicable to letters signed by staff (or IC Chairs) without review by the LIO EC Chairs

- A staff/IC Chair-signed letter may be provided only for projects that are clearly consistent with LIO priorities and are non-controversial;
- A staff/IC Chair-signed letter should be limited to situations when review and signature by the LIO EC Chair(s) is deemed impractical;
- Staff/IC Chair-signed letters should be reviewed and signed by the LIO Coordinator and or IC Chair(s) as appropriate;
- Copies of each letter shall be distributed to all LIO members.