

**SNOHOMISH BASIN SALMON RECOVERY FORUM**  
**Meeting Summary**  
**Thursday, May 2, 2019 • 9:00 a.m. – 12:00 p.m.**  
**Waltz Building, Snohomish**

On May 2, 2019 the Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum (the Forum) met for a regularly scheduled meeting from 9:00 a.m. until 12:00 noon. The following were in attendance:

<b>Attendee</b>	<b>Organization</b>
Allen Gibbs	Pilchuck Audubon Society
Amy Windrope	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Andrew McDonnell	Snohomish County PUD
Bob Bernhard	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
CJ Jones	Snohomish County Parks and Recreation
Colin Wahl	Tulalip Tribes
Dani Driscoll	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Elissa Ostergaard	Snoqualmie Forum
Erin Murray	Puget Sound Partnership
Gail Gatton	Audubon Washington
Gretchen Glaub	Snohomish County Surface Water Management
Heather Khan	Washington Department of Ecology
Ingria Jones	Washington Department of Ecology
Janne Kaye	King County
Jennifer Ford	U.S. Forest Service (Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest)
Jessie Balbiani	City of Marysville
Jim Miller	City of Everett
Kate Engel	City of Seattle
Keith Binkley	Snohomish County PUD
Kevin Lee	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Kirk Lakey	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Lindsey Desmul	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Lynne Barre	NOAA
Monte Marti	Snohomish Conservation District
Morgan Ruff	Tulalip Tribes
Natalie Sietz	Snohomish County Roads
Paul Crane	City of Everett
Rodney Pond	Sound Salmon Solutions
Terry Williams	Tulalip Tribes
Yorik Stevens-Wajda	Snohomish County Council

## Meeting Summary

### Introductions and Announcements

- **Terry called the meeting to order at 9:10 a.m.**
  - Attendees introduced themselves.
  - The agenda was reviewed and approved.
  - No public comment was made.

### Forum Business

- ***Ex-officio* Seat on the WRIA 7 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee (WREC)**<sup>1</sup>: The Forum drafted a letter ([attachment 1](#)) requesting a seat at the WRIA 7 WREC. The Forum would like to participate in an *ex officio* capacity on the WREC in order to ensure that the WREC process and the Forum's work can operate in coordination and promote complementary efforts where possible. Morgan Ruff would serve as the Forum *Ex Officio* representative. Terry asked the Forum if the consensus was to move forward with the letter, there were no objections. Terry mentioned he could envision a more comprehensive approach if there was community buy in.
- **Letter of Support, Puget Sound Day on the Hill**<sup>2</sup> (May 14-16, Washington, D.C.): The Forum drafted a letter for continued financial support ([attachment 2](#)) for various federal programs—such as U.S. EPA's [Puget Sound Geographic Program](#)<sup>3</sup> and [National Estuary Program](#)<sup>4</sup>, NOAA's [Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund](#)<sup>5</sup>. Elissa Ostergaard (King County/Snoqualmie Forum) and approximately 75 others from the region will be going to Washington, D.C. for two and a half days of events, which will include speaking with senators, house representatives and agencies and thanking them for their continued support of the Puget Sound region. Terry asked the Forum if there were any objections to signing the letter of support. No objections were heard. Additionally, if individuals wished to sign the letter of support an opportunity would be made available.
- **Snohomish Basin Salmon Conservation Plan Status and Trends**: The draft [Status and Trends report](#)<sup>6</sup> is available for a high level review. Comments should be sent to Morgan Ruff and Gretch Glaub by May 10<sup>th</sup>.
- **2020 Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB)**<sup>7</sup> **Grant Round**: The Recreation and Conservation Office's SRFB grant round schedule will be changing for 2020. Final project applications will be due in the beginning of the year (January or February).
- **Cherry Creek Phase 2**: The Forum needs to approve a reduction in budget and scope for the Cherry Creek Phase 2 project ([PRISM # 16-1716](#))<sup>8</sup>. Unused funds will need to be reallocated.
- **Pilchuck River Dam Removal**: Removal of the dam will be given in 2020.
- **Snohomish County Surface Water Management (SWM) Budget Update**: SWM is currently developing an outreach campaign to increase the public's awareness on services provided by the utility. Gregg Farris (SWM Director) will give an update to the Forum in the fall.

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<sup>1</sup> [https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias\\_\\_1962/37310/watershed\\_restoration\\_and\\_enhancement\\_-\\_wria\\_7.aspx](https://www.ezview.wa.gov/site/alias__1962/37310/watershed_restoration_and_enhancement_-_wria_7.aspx)

<sup>2</sup> <https://psp.wa.gov/psdoth2019.php>

<sup>3</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/puget-sound>

<sup>4</sup> <https://www.epa.gov/nep/overview-national-estuary-program>

<sup>5</sup> [https://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected\\_species/salmon\\_steelhead/recovery\\_planning\\_and\\_implementation/pacific\\_coastal\\_salmon\\_recovery\\_fund.html](https://www.westcoast.fisheries.noaa.gov/protected_species/salmon_steelhead/recovery_planning_and_implementation/pacific_coastal_salmon_recovery_fund.html)

<sup>6</sup> [https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/64271/Snohomish\\_Basin\\_draft\\_Status\\_and\\_Trends\\_ReportPDF](https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/64271/Snohomish_Basin_draft_Status_and_Trends_ReportPDF)

<sup>7</sup> <https://www.rco.wa.gov/boards/srfb.shtml>

<sup>8</sup> <https://secure.rco.wa.gov/prism/search/ProjectSnapshot.aspx?ProjectNumber=16-1716>

## Regional Updates

- **Salmon Recovery Council (SRC):** The SRC last met on March 28 ([meeting summary](#)<sup>9</sup>) and will meet next on May 23 at the Edmonds Center for the Arts. NOAA, WDFW, tribes and Long Live the Kings are discussing modeling several recommendations (harvest, hatchery and habitat) from the Orca Task Forces' [report](#)<sup>10</sup>.
- **Puget Sound Partnership (PSP):** PSP gave a [presentation](#)<sup>11</sup> to the SRC on their work with watersheds, technical experts and Vital Sign leads to develop protocols for measuring Common Indicators (e.g., estuary). PSP is also in the process of revising their Vital Signs ([memo](#)<sup>12</sup> and [presentation](#)<sup>13</sup>). Lastly, Laura Blackmore, who had been PSP's deputy director and tribal liaison, is now the executive director.
- **Kate Engel/Imperial Metals Exploratory Mining:** The Seattle Times had an [article](#)<sup>14</sup> about Imperial Metals' application for exploratory mining in the headwaters of the Skagit River. The Forum has agreed to draft a letter in objection to the exploratory mining.

**Focus Topic – Orca recovery:** Lynne Barre (NOAA) and Amy Windrope (WDFW) presented on Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) recovery.

- [Southern Resident Killer Whale Recovery: Emerging and Ongoing Actions](#)<sup>15</sup>
  - [Species in the Spotlight: Priority Actions 2016-2020](#)<sup>16</sup>
    - Recovery of critical prey
    - Improve knowledge of SRKW health
    - Protect SRKW from harmful vessel impacts
    - Protect important habitat areas from anthropogenic threats
    - Raise awareness of recovery needs and inspire stewardship through outreach and education
- [SRKW Recovery Update](#)<sup>17</sup>
  - Orca Task Force priorities and recommendations
    - More prey (16 recommendations)
    - Fewer contaminants (10 recommendations)
    - Less noise and disturbance (10 recommendations)
    - More funding (4 Governor bills budget requests)
  - Salmon recovery budget increased by \$10 million but still not adequate
  - Hydraulic permit authority improvements include
    - civil authority, ability to issue stop work orders
    - authority to deny/amend shoreline armoring requests
    - increased funding

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<sup>9</sup> <https://pspwa.app.box.com/s/gnr34tb11g3ro104rbqyxdgwr0xi7fwl/file/434138321971>

<sup>10</sup> [https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/OrcaTaskForce\\_reportandrecommendations\\_11.16.18.pdf](https://www.governor.wa.gov/sites/default/files/OrcaTaskForce_reportandrecommendations_11.16.18.pdf)

<sup>11</sup> <https://pspwa.app.box.com/s/93erdcuik53g1gwwfxxdcnatta9rx5um>

<sup>12</sup> <https://pspwa.app.box.com/s/g53e95d4usr4z5jk7porenkvjyzxps2>

<sup>13</sup> <https://pspwa.app.box.com/s/bafsdldixoingqlvfbzmaptz30lh4c1>

<sup>14</sup> <https://www.seattletimes.com/seattle-news/environment/canadian-company-applies-for-permit-for-exploratory-mining-in-headwaters-of-skagit-river/>

<sup>15</sup> <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/64338/NOAA-SRKW-Presentation>

<sup>16</sup> <https://www.fisheries.noaa.gov/resource/document/species-spotlight-priority-actions-2016-2020-southern-resident-killer-whale>

<sup>17</sup> <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/64336/WDFW-SRKW-Presentation>

- Food chain protection
  - increased monitoring of forage fish (e.g., sand lance and surf smelt)
  - licensing for smelt fishery
- Dams and barriers – Snake River Dam community had strong presence, approximately \$750,000 allocated to look into the removal/breaching of the dam, working with Idaho
- Decrease predation – liberalize bag limits for invasive fish
- Decrease vessel noise
  - Whales blinded (echo location) for approximately 5 hours/day because of vessel noise
  - 50% decrease in vessel noise = 15% increase in prey detection
  - Purchased another enforcement vessel, increased fleet from four to five vessels and will increase amount of time enforcement vessels are on the water (from 100 to 200 days).
- Toxics and oil spills – funding for a tug to help respond to oil spills
- Hatchery production
  - Increased funding for hatchery production
    - Wallace River Hatchery increases = 400,000 additional Chinook fingerlings; 100,000 Chinook yearlings; 150,000 coho yearlings and 500,000 chum fry
    - Tulalip Hatchery additional 625,000 Chinook fingerlings
- Chinook run size
  - Approximately a 28% decrease in run size from the 1990-1999 ten year average to the 2007-2017 ten year average
  - 2019 Wild Chinook forecast are neutral (75-125%) for the Snohomish and Stillaguamish basins
- Chinook fishing season and catch-limits
  - Six different closures in Puget Sound throughout the year
  - Canadian reductions to protect Fraser River stocks
- Orca Task Force Recommendations
  - Finish up recommendations by November 15, 2019
  - Focus on climate change and human population growth

**Focus Topic – Status of salmon stocks in the watershed:** Colin Wahl (Tulalip Tribes) and Andrew McDonnell (Snohomish County PUD) gave salmonid stock updates on Snohomish basin and Sultan River stocks, respectively.

- [\*Fish In, Fish Out\*](#)<sup>18</sup>
  - Chinook salmon
    - Snohomish: 2018 forecast = 3,744; escapement = 4,210
    - Snohomish: 2019 forecast = 3,695
    - Skykomish: 2018 escapement = 3,048
    - Snoqualmie: 2018 escapement = 1,162
  - Coho salmon
    - 2017 forecast = 91,000; escapement = 18,362 (below critical management status)
    - 2018 forecast = 44,000; escapement = 57,112
    - 2018 is above the critical management status but three years are needed above the critical management status to re-enter normal management status
    - 2019 forecast = 62,600, escapement target >50,000
  - Chum salmon

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<sup>18</sup> <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/64337/Snohomish-Basin-Fish-In-Fish-Out-2019>

- 2018 escapement = 11,557
- Two declines in stock: 2004-2009 and 2014-2017
- 2019 forecast = 4,583
- Pink salmon
  - 2018 escapement = 57,500
  - 2019 forecast = 128,300
- Winter Steelhead
  - 2018 escapement = 1,992
  - Gradual increase in eastern Puget Sound stocks beginning around 2010
- Out-migration
  - Chinook are looking good, probably a five year high
  - Coho are at or above average with a peak at week 20
- [Sultan River Salmon and Steelhead](#)<sup>19</sup>
  - Sultan River steelhead declining while Pilchuck River steelhead are increasing
    - Skykomish River (near Sultan) is a mixed-stock fishery during summer fishing season. High fishing pressure during the summer run for steelhead (hatchery) = high smolt mortality.
      - Fishery is depressing wild steelhead escapement to the Sultan and Skykomish Rivers
      - 2018: 28 steelhead in Sultan River, 372 steelhead in Skykomish River vs. 588 steelhead in Pilchuck River
  - Questions/comments
    - What is WDFW doing about this? Fishing season begins in late spring/early summer. A delay in the fishing season could help the wild steelhead.
    - Ask Jenny from WDFW to speak to the Forum about settings seasons and the impacts it has on Sultan steelhead stocks

#### **Around the Basin**

- Gretchen brought up the idea of having the August meeting as more of a social event, perhaps at a SRFB site. The Forum liked the idea and so Gretchen will reach out to project sponsors to find a location.

#### **Adjourn**

- The meeting adjourned at 12:15 p.m. The next Forum meeting will be held on August 1, 2019.

#### **Key Decisions**

- Approved a letter requesting an *ex officio* seat on the WRIA 7 WREC and a letter of continued financial support for federal programs.
- Approved the drafting of a letter in response to Imperial Metals request for exploratory mining in the Skagit watershed.

#### **Upcoming Meetings**

- Technical Committee meetings: May 7 and June 4, 2019
- PDC meeting: June 20, 2019

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<sup>19</sup> <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/DocumentCenter/View/64339/Snohomish-County-PUD-Sultan-River-Salmon-and-Steelhead>