

Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum Guidelines

Updated November 2019

SNOHOMISH BASIN SALMON RECOVERY FORUM GOAL

“To protect and restore the ecological health of the Snohomish River Basin including biodiversity, hydrology and water quality to enhance the productivity and diversity of all wild salmon stocks to a level that will sustain fisheries and non-consumptive salmon-related cultural and ecological values.”

SCOPE OF AUTHORITY, ROLES, ACTIVITIES, AND GUIDING PRINCIPLES

Scope of Authority

The Forum is a voluntary, non-partisan coalition.

- Under the Salmon Recovery Act (77.85 RCW), the Forum is responsible for compiling a prioritized habitat project list that will direct resources towards the development of the highest priority projects (ranked project list for the Salmon Recovery Board).
- For issues other than the Salmon Recovery Act, the Forum has no legislative or administrative authority. The Forum can make recommendations to participating agencies and organizations. It cannot make decisions that bind participating agencies and organizations.

Roles

The Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum was formed in 1998, building on the success of the Snohomish Basin Work Group. Its initial focus was on salmon recovery planning. With the completion of the *Snohomish Basin Salmon Conservation Plan* (Conservation Plan), the roles of the Forum are now to:

- Promote implementation of the Conservation Plan by participating agencies, organizations, and interests.
- Monitor implementation and adaptively manage the Conservation Plan over time.
- Advocate for continued funding and identify new sources of funding to implement the Conservation Plan.
- Provide a forum for local governments and organizations to coordinate and communicate about watershed issues. This includes discussing differing viewpoints and identifying common ground about watershed topics, as well as providing policy guidance and basin-level context and strategies.
- Respond to Endangered Species Act listings at the local level.
- Serve as the Snohomish basin lead entity citizens committee.

- Actively engage with the Puget Sound Partnership and the Stillaguamish-Snohomish Local Integrating Organization to implement the Action Agenda for Puget Sound.

Activities

In fulfilling these roles, the Forum's current activities include:

- Working with regional partners, including the Puget Sound Partnership and Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council, to integrate local interests with broader regional salmon recovery activities. This includes outreach to and improving coordination with a wide range of interests and land users.
- Tracking implementation of the Conservation Plan, tracking effectiveness of the actions, and adjusting the plan over time as new information becomes available.
- Leveraging resources to help implement the Conservation Plan, including advocating for funding from local, state, regional, and federal levels.
- Recommending allocation of project funding, including prioritizing projects for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration funds and other funding sources.
- Supporting education that promotes stewardship, including providing information to the general public, as well as providing technical assistance to landowners and to individuals who work directly on lands of concern.
- Updating the *Snohomish Basin Salmon Conservation Plan* as needed or required.
- Working and coordinating with the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum.

Guiding Principles

The Forum's work is focused on salmon habitat restoration and protection, because this is where local agencies and organizations have the most authority and potential to influence salmon conservation and recovery. The Forum recognizes the importance of harvest and hatchery work and agrees that specific management actions for these issues are best addressed by the co-managers. Ultimately, to meet recovery goals it is necessary to successfully integrate habitat restoration, protection, harvest and hatchery programs.

In order to achieve its goals the Forum's work must include additional watershed management issues, such as: addressing water quantity and quality; monitoring basin functions and health; reviewing policies and actions that affect the Snohomish River Basin; submitting recommendations or comments to agencies and organizations; and implementing funding strategies.

The Forum recognizes the necessity of:

- Working cooperatively and develop a wide-range of public and private partnerships.

- Integrating scientific information with tribal, cultural, community, social, and economic values.
- Valuing the contribution of farming, fishing, forestry, recreation, and rural and urban communities, and acknowledging the rights of private property owners.
- Recognizing that all areas and communities of the basin are connected. They all contribute to the health of the basin and have an integral role to play in salmon recovery and the protection of water resources.
- Promoting and communicating preservation and restoration strategies that work with natural ecosystem processes.
- Using the highest quality scientific data available to inform decisions.

FORUM MEMBERSHIP

The Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum represents a diversity of local interests in the Snohomish River Basin. See attached list on page 11. The Forum was originally set up to meet the requirements of RCW 77.85 and RCW 90.82.060.

From RCW 77.85.050

“(b) The lead entity shall establish a committee that consists of representative interests of counties, cities, conservation districts, tribes, environmental groups, business interests, landowners, citizens, volunteer groups, regional fish enhancement groups, and other habitat interests. The purpose of the committee is to provide a citizen-based evaluation of the projects proposed to promote salmon habitat.”

From RCW 90.82.060 Initiation of watershed planning

“(2) Watershed planning under this chapter may be initiated for a WRIA only with the concurrence of: (a) All counties within the WRIA; (b) the largest city or town within the WRIA unless the WRIA does not contain a city or town; and (c) the water supply utility obtaining the largest quantity of water from the WRIA or, for a WRIA with lands within the Columbia Basin project, the water supply utility obtaining from the Columbia Basin project the largest quantity of water for the WRIA.”

The Forum has also worked to coordinate, communicate, and identify local common ground on broader, complex watershed issues related to local salmon recovery. Incorporating a diversity of interests is key for building long-term community support for salmon recovery. Forum members must be able to work cooperatively and consider differing points of view.

Definitions

- **Member:** An agency, tribe, special purpose district, non-governmental organization (NGO), interest group (e.g. recreational group), committee comprised of such groups (e.g., the Snoqualmie Watershed Forum), or individuals selected by the Forum to represent “at large” landowners and citizens.

- Representative: The person selected by the agency, tribe, special purpose district, NGO, or the Forum (only for “at large” landowners and citizens).
- Alternate: A substitute for and designated by the Forum representative.

Membership Guidelines

- If the Forum wishes to add or replace a member, the Forum will identify the interest that needs representation and will solicit nominations from several agencies, special purpose districts, interest groups, landowners, or citizens that could meet this need. The solicitation should request information about the agency’s or organization’s interests and experience in salmon recovery, its willingness to support the Forum’s goal, its ability to commit to participation and report back to their constituency, the experience of the organization and representative in working in a coalition, and the perspective that would be contributed to the Forum. Forum staff will process this information and work with the Forum Chair and vice Chair to develop a recommendation to the Forum. The Forum will select a new member or representative by consensus and the Chair will send a confirmation letter.
- Agencies, tribes, special purpose districts, interest groups, committees, and NGOs will select their own representatives. If these Forum members wish to replace a representative, the agency or organization should notify the Forum chair through Forum staff.
- Forum members who are “landowners and citizens” that are not attached to an agency, business, special district, or non-governmental organization must live or own land in the basin. These representatives will be agreed upon by the Forum.
- Forum members should live, work, or represent an organization that is active in the Snohomish River Basin.
- The number and type of members could change based on Forum needs, attendance records, and Forum consensus.
- If new members are added, there should be balance between King and Snohomish counties.
- Forum members should have demonstrated ability to present the perspective of an organization or constituency concerned with salmon conservation in the Snohomish River basin.
- Forum members should have proven successful experience working cooperatively in a coalition of diverse interests.
- Forum members should have a standing alternate that can fully participate in meetings, including making decisions. Citizen members will not have alternates.
- Forum members should represent their larger communities (i.e., an environmental group should be able to generally speak for other environmental interests). They should inform their group and groups with similar interests about the Forum’s activities.

- Forum members are encouraged to attend meetings regularly. The Forum also recognizes constraints on its members and their staff.
- If Forum members or their alternates cannot attend the meeting, they should notify Forum staff before the meeting. Three absences without notification may lead to replacement.
- If a Forum member is concerned that another member is not following the Forum guidelines, he or she should notify the Forum chair.

If the Forum's work becomes cost-shared, membership may need to be revisited.

FORUM MEMBER AGREEMENTS

Each Forum member should:

- Support the goal of the Forum;
- Represent the interests of their respective agency or organization, rather than their own personal interests;
- Voice their informed perspectives on the issues at hand;
- Keep their agencies and organizations informed about the activities of the Forum;
- Attend or have their alternate attend Forum meetings regularly;
- Review background materials provided in advance of meetings;
- Be respectful of, courteous to, and work cooperatively with other members;
- Recognize that working in a coalition of diverse interests can mean balancing competing objectives and compromising;
- Be receptive to other points of view and be willing to consider various options before recommending action; and
- Check facts so that assertions are supported by evidence. Information used to support viewpoints should be made available to the Forum.

DECISION-MAKING

When making decisions, the Forum will try to reach consensus. Different degrees of consensus are attached. If the Forum cannot reach consensus, the following back-up method will be used. Three groups (caucus') will be formed: 1) tribes; 2) local governments (including special purpose districts); and 3) non-governmental organizations, landowners and citizens. Approval within each group will require a super majority (two-thirds) vote. The three groups will then try to reach consensus.

- Decisions made during a member's absence will not be revisited, unless exceptional reasons are presented and the Forum agrees to revisit the issue.
- If a decision is to be made at a meeting and a Forum member or alternate cannot attend the meeting, the member can phone or email comments and concerns to Forum staff before the meeting. Staff will share these comments at the meeting.

- Absence from the meetings and failure to designate an alternate or communicate views signals concurrence with the consensus outcome.

Quorum

A simple majority constitutes a quorum. Final decisions or actions require a quorum. Discussion of issues and preliminary decisions can occur without a quorum.

Conflict of Interest

Forum members are expected to recuse themselves from reviewing any project proposals in which they have a direct involvement or interest. Forum members with real or potential conflicts shall disclose before the review of any project proposal.

Potential conflicts include:

- Having financial ties to the applicant
- Standing to benefit directly from the proposed project's completion
- Have contributed directly to the development of the proposal
- Having conducted private business or personal services with the organization
- Involvement with other organizations, with vendors, or any other associations that might produce a conflict of interest regarding a specific project proposal.

Prior knowledge of the proposal or prior contact with the applicant does not constitute a conflict of interest, as long as none of the above criteria apply to the Forum member.

If Forum members have any concerns or questions about whether their or another member's relationship with an applicant or proposal warrants recusal, they are required to disclose the situation to the other members at the meeting where a decision is to take place. The Forum will decide jointly whether the situation constitutes a conflict of interest, and if so, what steps are to be taken to address it.

Business that needs to occur between regular meetings

In some instances Forum decisions may need to be made in between Forum meetings. In such cases, Forum staff will discuss the decision request with the relevant committee and Forum chair and co-chair. Should the committee, chair or co-chair wish to respond, staff will work on a recommended decision through the committee(s) and pass this information along with pertinent background materials to Forum members and alternates via email. Failure to respond to the request signals concurrence with the consensus outcome.

FORUM CHAIR AND VICE-CHAIR

Responsibilities of the chair include leading meetings, giving members an opportunity to speak during meetings, assisting the Forum in reaching agreements, coordinating with Forum staff to set the meeting agenda and location, and providing administrative guidance to staff. The vice-chair will serve the Forum in the chair's absence.

- The chair should be an advocate for the Forum's goal.
- The chair or vice-chair may act between Forum meetings on unanticipated matters consistent with Forum policy.
- The chair and vice-chair are selected by the Forum based on the ability to conduct meetings, coordinate diverse interests and issues, and communicate with staff.

- The chair and vice-chair serve for one year and should be annually reaffirmed or changed by Forum consensus.
- The chair can direct Forum staff to follow the Forum’s policy direction, even if the chair is not a Snohomish County representative.

PUBLIC AND MEDIA CONTACTS

Only the chair or vice-chair can officially represent the Forum and Forum consensus opinions. Other members may represent the Forum only when specifically authorized to do so by the chairperson or Forum consensus.

- If Forum members other than the chair, vice-chair or authorized representative discuss Forum issues and concerns with the media or at a public meeting, they should state that they are representing the opinion of their agency, organization, or themselves, not those of the Forum.
- Forum members should avoid making public statements that pre-judge the Forum’s work while the Forum is in the process of studying, discussing, and evaluating issues.

GUEST SPEAKERS

The Forum may invite guest speakers to provide information and/or opinions of particular interest to the Forum and the Forum’s activities.

- Groups or individuals wishing to present project or research information should contact Forum staff. Staff will forward presentation requests to the chair and Policy Development Committee. The chair and Policy Development Committee will evaluate presentation proposals. Priorities for these presentations will be those that directly aid the Forum in fulfilling its current roles to prioritize salmon habitat projects and implement the Conservation Plan. Topics may include research and planning on salmon populations, habitat needs, harvest and hatchery issues, regional salmon conservation activities that directly pertain to the Forum’s actions and similar topics.
- General informational presentations about activities in the basin can be scheduled as time is available and as desired by the Forum.

FORUM COMMITTEES

Two committees support the Forum. Other committees or work groups may be formed to address implementation, adaptive management, and Forum or committee needs.

Snohomish Basin Salmonid Recovery Technical Committee

The Snohomish Basin Salmonid Recovery Technical Committee is comprised of scientists from state and federal agencies, Tribes, local governments, and non-governmental group with interest and expertise in salmon recovery. The Technical Committee members make in-kind contributions of time and resources on a voluntary basis. The mission of the Technical Committee is to provide scientific support for

protection and enhancement of the abundance, productivity, diversity, and spatial structure of all salmonid populations in the Snohomish River Basin.

The roles of the committee include: provide technical support to the Forum on implementation and adaptive management; scope and coordinate a research and monitoring strategy for the *Snohomish Basin Salmon Conservation Plan*; share information about current research related to salmonid habitat, harvest, and hatchery management; evaluate and provide recommendations to the Forum on project lists, project scope changes and project proposals for grant processes, including the Salmon Recovery Funding Board/Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration grant round and the Floodplains by Design grant round; and review and provide technical comment related to harvest, hatchery, land use, water quality, and water quantity management.

The Snohomish Basin Salmon Recovery Forum can request that the Technical Committee carry out research, evaluations or summaries of technical information. The Technical Committee will make a determination of whether the Forum's request falls within their current scope of work, and respond back to the Forum via the Technical Committee Co-Chairs or Forum staff.

Forum Policy Development Committee

The Policy Development Committee is comprised primarily of planning and policy experts who are Forum staff or Forum members with unique expertise or perspective (i.e., environment, agriculture, Master Builders, water association). The Forum chair and/or Vice-chair and Technical Committee Co-chairs are also members of the committee. Technical Committee members are encouraged to attend meetings to provide coordination and scientific input as needed. The role of the Policy Development Committee is to identify, develop, and analyze policy options and implications, as well as to make policy recommendations to the Forum. This committee can assist the Forum in the following activities: evaluating data gathered on the socio-economic aspects of Conservation Plan implementation and monitoring; helping to develop and recommend adaptive management adjustment options for Forum consideration; developing and evaluating a plan implementation schedule; providing guidance on funding, public outreach and involvement; provide input on Forum meeting content; and other relevant policy topics identified by the Forum.

The Technical Committee and Policy Development Committee may engage in joint meetings as needed to discuss the technical implications of policy options.

Requests for information from the committees should come through the Forum, rather than individual members. This will allow the Forum to prioritize its requests and for the committees to evaluate the requests against their existing work programs. The committees' chairs/co-chairs will respond to the Forum.

FORUM STAFF

As the fiscal agents for the lead entity contract, Snohomish County and the Tulalip Tribes provide primary staff support to implement the lead entity scope of work, including

providing staff support for the Forum and committees. Forum staff responsibilities include setting the agenda with the Policy Development Committee and chairperson, preparing presentations and handouts, preparing meeting summaries and related mailings, maintaining agendas, sign in sheets and meeting summaries and organizing meeting logistics.

- Forum staff works with the Technical Committee and Forum to prioritize habitat projects for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.
- Forum staff develop scopes of work and spending plans for other funding sources that become available.
- Forum staff coordinate the development and approval of the biennial Four Year Work Plan and project forecast list.
- Forum staff administer the Salmon Recovery Portal for the basin.
- Forum staff serve as the primary compilers and editors of Forum documents and publications.

CONTACT INFORMATION AND MAILING LISTS

Snohomish County staff maintains contact information for Forum members and alternates. For the Forum, staff will keep a list of agencies, organizations, and individuals with an interest in Forum business (“interested parties” list) and key staff from agencies or organizations who should receive the same meeting materials as the members and alternates (Forum Partners). Staff also maintain lists of “interested parties” of the Technical Committee and Policy Development Committee.

- Forum member and alternate contact information can be shared with other Forum members and public agencies as requested.
- The “interested parties” contact information will be used by staff for emailing or mailing official Forum or committee information such as meeting agendas, summaries, and publication information. This contact information is not available to Forum members for personal use or independent mailings as the information is given explicitly for Forum business.

MEETING LOGISTICS

The Forum meets quarterly for 3 hours, typically from 9:00 a.m. to 12 noon on the first Thursday of the month (March, June, September and December).

- Additional meetings may be needed if key decisions are needed (such as for prioritization of the project list for the Salmon Recovery Funding Board).
- Requests for agenda time should be sent to Forum staff at least three weeks prior to a meeting. The Policy and Development Committee will approve the final agenda that will be sent to members one week before the meeting. Meeting summaries will serve as the official record of Forum decisions and activities.
- Meetings are open to the public and include time for public comment.

- Meeting agendas, handouts, and summaries will be emailed to all Forum members, alternates, and a key staff member if requested. Meeting agendas and summaries will be emailed to agencies, organizations, or individuals that request to be on an “interested parties” list, as well as posted on the Snohomish County website.
- The Forum will revert to a bi-monthly meeting schedule if there is sufficient business and interest among members.

REVISIONS TO MEMBER GUIDELINES

- The guidelines should be considered the Snohomish Basin lead entity bylaws and should be reviewed annually.
- The guidelines can be revised at a regular meeting. Proposals for revision should be presented to the Policy Development Committee and chair for consideration prior to the meeting.

SNOHOMISH BASIN SALMON RECOVERY FORUM MEMBERS

Tribes

Tulalip Tribes

Counties

King County

Snohomish County

Cities

City of Carnation

City of Duvall

City of Everett

City of Gold Bar

City of Lake Stevens

City of Marysville

City of Monroe

City of Mukilteo

City of North Bend

City of Snohomish

City of Snoqualmie

City of Sultan

Town of Granite Falls

Town of Index

Citizens

Tulalip Tribal Member

King County resident

Snohomish County resident

Utilities and Special Purpose Districts

City of Seattle

Port of Everett

Cross Valley Water District

East King County Regional Water
Authority

Snohomish County PUD

King Conservation District

Snohomish Conservation District

Coordinated Diking Council

Interest Groups and Committees

The Boeing Company

Master Builders Association

Sound Salmon Solutions

Pilchuck Audubon Society

Forterra

Snohomish County Sportsmen's
Association

King County Agriculture (2 members)

Snohomish County Agriculture (2
members)

Recreation group or interest

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum

State Agencies

Washington Department of Fish &
Wildlife

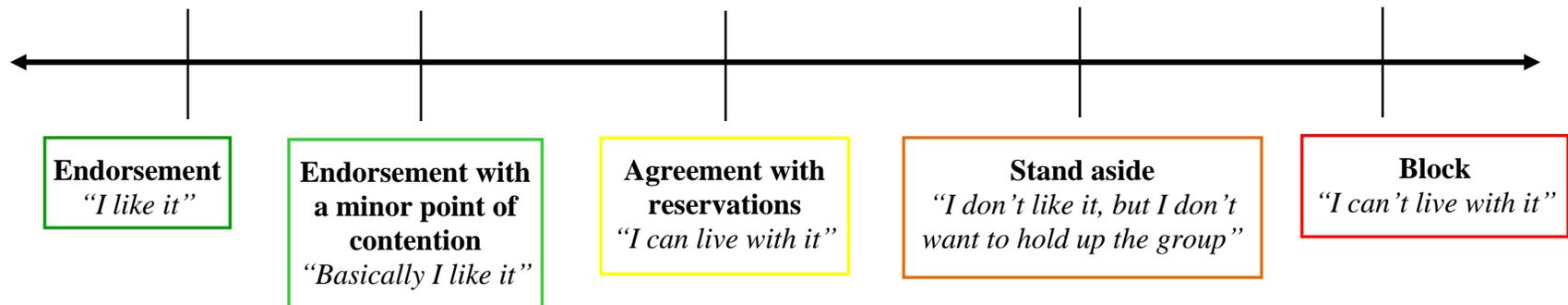
Washington Department of Ecology

Federal Agencies

U.S. Forest Service

SNOHOMISH BASIN SALMON RECOVERY FORUM

CONSENSUS CONTINUUM



Adapted from the Facilitator's Guide to Participatory Decision-Making, Kaner, with Lind, Toldi, Fisk, and Berger (1996)