



WEST SOUND
WATERSHEDS COUNCIL

West Sound Watersheds Council 2009 Three-Year Work Plan Update

Salmon recovery involves a complex set of actions and interactions that are both directed by the Recovery Plans and by the reality within each watershed. The three year work plan is one tool used to reflect those complex interactions.

The purpose of the work program update is four-fold: 1) to provide a forum for watershed groups, the Recovery Implementation Technical Team (RITT), and Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) staff to discuss the work, status, and needs of salmon recovery in each salmon recovery watershed chapter and regionally; 2) to have a tool that documents the work, status, and needs of salmon recovery per each salmon recovery watershed chapter for the next three years that can be rolled up into a regional statement of the funding and capacity needs, current status, and existing work underway; 3) to be a tool for identifying priority projects for current and future funding opportunities; and 4) to document changes in the implementation of each salmon recovery watershed chapter.

The components of the 3 Year Work Plan are a spreadsheet of priority projects and programs that can be started within three years (2009, 2010, 2011), and a narrative. The narrative describes the progress, changes, and status of recovery implementation and the work program since the previous year's update.

Spread sheet of Priority Projects and Programs

This spreadsheet is attached as an excel file. For more information about many of the projects, including photos, maps and project sponsor information, please see the Habitat Work Schedule site at:
<http://hws.ekosystem.us/SiteView.aspx?sid=210>

The spreadsheet summarizes the following information:

- ❖ Capital and non-capital activities/projects for habitat protection and restoration, harvest, and hatchery, as well as education and outreach, research, and monitoring activities;
- ❖ Project status;
- ❖ Project costs

The Puget Sound Partnership asked also for project information and how it relates to the *Salmon Recovery Plan*, which we did not provide, for the following reason: The West Sound Watersheds Lead Entity encompasses two chapters of the *Salmon Recovery Plan* (East Kitsap and South Sound), neither of which offered specific program or project details as a reference. However, the Puget Sound Partnership's Action Agenda, adopted in December 2008, does have specific priority actions identified for both the North Central and South Sound Action Areas. The projects and programs identified on the spreadsheet align very directly with the "priority action areas strategies" for both action areas.

Narrative (answers to watershed questions provided by the PSP)

1. What are the actions and/or suites of actions needed for the next three years to implement your salmon recovery chapter as part of the regional recovery effort?

The primary hypothesis that forms basis for the suites of actions proposed in this update is that the **nearshore habitat is the highest priority for investment** in this lead entity. Most of the projects and programs proposed in the next three years are targeted at protecting or restoring quality nearshore habitat.

Additionally, we have identified a need in both the South Sound and the North Central Action Areas to use existing assessments and models for the nearshore to prioritize geographic areas for restoration and/or protection.

2. What is the status of actions underway per your recovery plan chapter? Is this on pace with the goals of your recovery plan?

We did not have 10 year goals not identified specific actions in the *Salmon Recovery Plan*. We believe that the Action Agenda adopted in December 2008 identifies many goals that will serve us in future planning endeavors.

We have made significant strides with regard to the documentation of the restoration needs and other recovery actions through the Habitat Work Schedule (HWS). This tool has been adopted eagerly by most project sponsors, and most are getting comfortable with entering and maintaining information about projects.

3. What is the general status of implementation towards your habitat restoration, habitat protection, harvest management, and hatchery management goals?

Habitat Restoration:

We are slowly getting the highest priority nearshore projects sequenced and funded. The Nearshore Assessment for eastern Kitsap County was funded in 2004 and is almost finished, over 5 years later. We will be able to use this tool, along with other similar work in Pierce County and Bainbridge Island to prioritize projects.

In the meantime, it has been extremely difficult to fund the habitat restoration identified by the Puget Sound Partnership and others as high priority. Reasons for this are diverse, mostly funding related. One success story is that the Barker Creek Estuary Project on Dyes Inlet was recently completed and we are looking forward to documenting how that sub-estuary responds to the restoration (before and after photos are in HWS).

Habitat Protection:

Protection of existing habitat is focused on the Shoreline Management Plans updates and on engaging our citizen scientists through beach watchers and other monitoring efforts. We also are working more closely with our local land trusts (Bainbridge Island and Great Peninsula Conservancy) on conservation and restoration opportunities through easements and community based groups, which will help with political support for protection.

Harvest and Hatchery Management:

We have no identified harvest or hatchery activities associated with the *Salmon Recovery Plan*, however we are starting to link habitat restoration projects with volunteers doing salmon spawning surveys (Bainbridge) and small scale hatchery supplementation to compliment small stream restoration (Bainbridge and Manchester).

4. What are the top implementation priorities in your recovery plan in terms of specific actions or theme/suites of actions? How are these top priorities being sequenced in the next three years? What do you need to be successful in implementing these priorities?

Most of the projects and programs proposed in the next three years are targeted at protecting or restoring quality nearshore habitat. One specific and recurring theme for our priorities is: How do we utilize the nearshore assessment information data sets for prioritizing future projects? We do know that this is a consistent theme in other nearshore focused watersheds, and hope to work more broadly than this geographic area on this topic.

In the meantime, there are a few identified high priority projects moving forward. Here are two examples:

Chico Creek: The largest restoration planned in our watershed is opening the mouth of Chico Creek in Dyes Inlet. Chico Creek has the largest runs of salmon in the West Sound, with steelhead, chum, coho, cutthroat and occasional stray Chinook. Washington State DOT (WSDOT) built Highway 3 in the early 1960's, primarily as a link between the Naval Shipyard in Bremerton and the Bangor Submarine Base on northern Hood Canal, as directly as possible. To that end, they filled the salt marshes and the estuary, and put the creek in 2-8 foot wide, approximately 500 foot long culverts and channel. The culvert under Hwy. 3, and at the County's Kitty Hawk Road, just downstream, are partial fish barriers with one of the state's highest "Priority Index" for fish passage.

WSDOT, WDFW, the Suquamish Tribe, Kitsap County, and others are working together to remove Kitty Hawk Drive, almost 10,000 cubic yards of fill, and to construct a 200 foot bridge over Chico. The survey work has been done, and other steps are being sequenced and discussed with project partners. This builds on investments in habitat restoration just upstream at a private golf course, other culvert remediations in the watershed, and alternative futures analysis that helped to protect the headwaters of the various tributaries of Chico Creek.

Carpenter Creek: This is a straight forward project that was identified and funded in 2002 by the SRFB and the US Army Corps of Engineers, near Kingston, in Central Puget Sound. The Washington Dept. of Fisheries installed an 8 foot tide gate at this location as a satellite "fish farm" in the late 1950's. There was, and still is, a fairly pristine 26 acre shallow estuary at this site, obvious habitat for juvenile migrating salmonids. The fish farm didn't prove to be workable, and the tide gate has remained in place, restricting tidal flow and stranding salmon and other species inside the culvert for almost 50 years. The plans are to replace the culvert with a 90 foot.

A local group, Stillwaters Environmental Center, got funding and training to conduct pre-project monitoring at the Carpenter Creek Estuary. This monthly monitoring has been conducted by volunteers for going on 6 years. The data generated by the monitoring will prove invaluable when this project is constructed, for testing our hypotheses for this type of restoration, ecosystem restoration and salmon recovery.

At this time, we are awaiting word from NOAA Fisheries Economic Stimulus funding as to whether or not this will be constructed in 2009/2010. Other funding sources are not confirmed.

Other top implementation priorities include:

- A suite of nearshore restoration projects on Bainbridge Island associated with Eagle Harbor Natural Resource Trustees settlement for the Wykoff site at the mouth of Eagle Harbor
- Development of working models to utilize nearshore assessment and fish assessment data for protection and restoration actions
- Restoration of the estuary at the head of Gig Harbor
- Analysis of cumulative effects of shoreline armoring or piers and docks in specific locations (Miller Bay, Liberty Bay, Dyes Inlet)
- Formation of a formal organization for salmon/ecosystem recovery in the West Sound

What we need to accomplish these goals is consistent funding for coordination of actions, and technical support for local jurisdictions.

5. Do these top priorities reflect a change in any way from the previous

three-year work program? Have there been any significant changes in the strategy or approach for salmon recovery in your watershed? If so, how & why?

There have not been any significant changes.

6. What is the status or trends of habitat and salmon populations in your watershed?

We continue to struggle with land use issues, similar to other developing areas of Puget Sound, but do not have any information on the status and trends of our salmon populations.

7. Are there new challenges associated with implementing salmon recovery actions that need additional support? If so, what are they?

There are no new challenges. Salmon recovery in our West Sound watersheds is synonymous with protection and restoration of our lowland streams and nearshore.