

Briefing by the Shared Strategy on Puget Sound Salmon Recovery

The enabling legislation for the Puget Sound Partnership provides that beginning on January 1, 2008, the Leadership Council shall serve as the regional salmon recovery organization for Puget Sound salmon species, with the exception of Hood Canal summer chum. This work is currently performed through a regional collaboration between 15 watershed organizations and the Shared Strategy for Puget Sound, a nonprofit organization. Implementation of the plan is guided and monitored by the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council. At the end of this year, the regional salmon recovery responsibilities including support for the Salmon Recovery Council and the 15 watersheds groups will transfer to the Partnership.

The Shared Strategy briefing will provide a high level overview of (1) why the Puget Sound salmon recovery effort was formed around a collaborative process; (2) what the effort produced; and (3) why the work of implementing salmon recovery is important to continue. The speakers will also convey the nature and type of services that will be needed from the Puget Sound Partnership to ensure that recovery of our cherished salmon is accelerated and contributes to the success of the Action Agenda. The briefing will provide an opportunity for the Leadership Council to engage in a frank discussion with the Shared Strategy participants about what worked (and didn't work) in the process, what still needs to be completed and why people are still participating after many years of hard work.

The transition of the Shared Strategy's work to the Partnership creates several practical, administrative issues related to ongoing initiatives and projects. Some of the major initiatives that further the implementation of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan include a habitat protection initiative known as the San Juan Initiative pilot project, and several initiatives related to funding for implementation of the Plan. A brief summary of these items is set forth in the briefing packet at TAB 5. The Shared Strategy briefing will provide some context for these administrative issues related to the transition and will suggest that its staff work with the Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership to resolve these issues during the Fall of 2007.

Additional Materials included in this handout:

- Puget Sound Salmon Recovery – Past, Present and Future
- Who's Who in Shared Strategy
- Puget Sound Salmon Recovery 2012 Vision
- Summary of Near-Term Transition Issues

TAB 5

Puget Sound Salmon Recovery – Past, Present and Future

Shared Strategy for Puget Sound was conceived after the Endangered Species Act (ESA) listings in 1999 of Puget Sound chinook salmon, Hood Canal summer chum and bull trout. It grew out of a consensus among regional leaders, including Bill Ruckelshaus, Ron Sims, Jeff Koenings and Billy Frank, Jr., that a new approach was needed to build on salmon recovery efforts already underway in the watersheds.

This is unlike the way recovery plans have been developed in the past, where the federal government made natural resource decisions and prescribed local actions. The Shared Strategy organized under a belief that local stakeholders are in the best position to find lasting solutions for their communities to complex ecological, economic and cultural challenges. The National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, the federal agencies responsible for implementing the ESA, endorsed the Shared Strategy process and actively participated in it.

After several years of collaborative work across the region, the Shared Strategy, with participation in each of the 15 watersheds, produced the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan. It was adopted under federal law by NMFS in January, 2007. This Plan is unique in three ways: First, it has measurable goals for salmon in each watershed established by the tribes, Department of Fish and Wildlife and NMFS; second, it was based on local efforts within each watershed that prioritized actions and strategies to achieve the goals for their salmon populations. Third, the Plan is based on the best available science thanks to the expertise of many scientists at both the regional and watershed level. A copy of the Who's Who in Shared Strategy is included in your packet as part of this handout for your information. The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan can be reviewed at www.sharedsalmonstrategy.org.

Transition to Implementation of the Salmon Recovery Plan under the Puget Sound Partnership

With the initial planning completed, people across the region are now hard at work to implement the Salmon Plan, but more work remains. Programs need to be implemented, habitat restoration projects need to be constructed and the draft monitoring and adaptive management plan needs to be completed. In addition, more work will be needed to further refine the Plan's strategies over time.

In 2012, NOAA Fisheries will perform the first of many mandatory 5-year reviews of the region's progress on implementation of the Recovery Plan. By that time, the watersheds and the Puget Sound Recovery Council hopes to have achieved the implementation goals established in its 2012 Vision created in the Summer of 2007. The 2012 Vision is included in this briefing packet.

In order to ensure that the leaders within the watersheds and region were clear about what needed to occur within next five years to accomplish these goals, they have identified the nature and type of services that they will need from the new Puget Sound Partnership. These include the following items:

1. Facilitate Recovery Council decision-making in a way that sustains the collaborative model upon which salmon recovery was built.
2. Increase the effectiveness and efficiency of actions to implement the plan.
3. Provide scientific, technical and policy support.
4. Increase funding and political support.
5. Identify and support strategic approaches for common issues (water quantity, etc).
6. Support and fund a Monitoring and Adaptive Management program.
7. Provide training and resources to expand the capacity for implementation at the watershed and regional scale.

The Shared Strategy briefing will provide some context for these support services that are needed from the Puget Sound Partnership to fully implement salmon recovery using the existing collaborative process at the regional and watershed scales. The Recovery Council suggests that its staff work with the Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership during the Fall of 2007 to create the necessary structure and resources to support the above services.

TAB 5

Chinook Salmon Recovery in the Next Five Years – A Story of Progress and Hope

**Developed by Shared Strategy Staff with watershed leads and the Puget
Sound Salmon Recovery Council**

August 24, 2007 Recovery Council Draft

Progress can be difficult to measure, especially when it arrives in small increments over a period of years. Yet taking a moment to look back, it is clear salmon recovery has improved dramatically.

Consider this: Five years ago, salmon recovery efforts in Puget Sound were mired in controversy and in-fighting. Competing concerns from agencies, businesses, tribes and environmental organizations seemed destined to lead to years of lawsuits, and little else. Puget Sound's iconic species ran the very real risk of extinction while people dug in to protect their positions.

When Bill Ruckelshaus first called together leaders from across Puget Sound for a two day meeting at Port Ludlow, the goal of developing a broadly supported recovery strategy seemed lofty, almost beyond reach.

Yet today, the *Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan* exists, developed by people across Puget Sound and adopted by the federal government. In five years a unifying strategy for Puget Sound – the roadmap for salmon recovery – has moved from an ideal to a reality, one step at a time.

Over the course of time, people learned to work together and move quickly to make significant policy decisions. New groups, businesses and individuals have joined the effort to bring Chinook back because they see successful salmon recovery conveys tangible benefits: clean drinking water, decreased risk of flood damage to human infrastructure, healthy forests and thriving businesses.

The Journey Ahead

While much has been accomplished, there is more work to do. Whereas yesterday's hurdle was lack of consensus, today we face an equally daunting challenge: accelerating the momentum and results.

In these days of war, traffic and crumbling infrastructure, increasing commitment for salmon recovery in Puget Sound will require more than a plodding focus on policy. We must be ambitious. We must see the future we want and communicate a specific and measurable vision that creates excitement for those doing the work and for the public.

To that end, we developed the following set of five-year goals, which taken together, represent a vision for the future. We already demonstrated we can make our lofty ideals a reality. Now we must do it again.

The Return of the Salmon Five Years from Now

In five years it will be too early to know if Chinook have turned the corner to recovery. The Chinook salmon emerging from their gravel birth places in 2007 will just be returning from the sea in 2012 to lay the eggs of the next generation. Yet immediate and significant actions we take today will manifest in the future. For example, five years from now the return of Nooksack and Stillaguamish Chinook to their namesake rivers will demonstrate people protected these populations hovering at the brink of extinction.

And there are many other timely opportunities for action. For example, we can shift the new treaty with Canada to focus on conservation, continue to refine harvest practices in Puget Sound and protect and restore habitat. These actions will result in more young salmon emerging from their eggs and finding more places to rest and feed than their parents did five years before.

Here is what we need to do over the next five years to support the salmon's journey to recovery and do it in a manner that supports our prosperity.

Protect existing ecosystem functions to provide habitat for salmon survival.

With continued human population growth projected around Puget Sound, ecosystem protection is a significant challenge. Specifically,

- Our protection programs must use the best available science and have the funds and strategic support needed to increase their effectiveness and fairness in protecting both the environment and property rights.
- Governments and private groups need to use regulation, incentives and education in concert to foster engagement and recognize, stewardship and pride among landowners, farmers and foresters.
- Development must occur in a manner that protects ecosystem functions, such as directing growth into existing urban growth areas and using low impact techniques.

Restore salmon habitat for more salmon and to enhance resources of human importance like clean drinking water.

With projects already identified and prioritized, we can restore the health of Puget Sound by funding efforts to do the following:

- Restore over 1,000 acres of estuarine areas, the nurseries of the Sound.
- Repair 2,000 acres of major river floodplains to function naturally and reduce flood damage.
- Permanently protect 5,000 acres of pristine habitat.
- Rehabilitate 130 miles of river and streams by planting riparian areas and placing structures in the water to create refuge and nourishment for young salmon and returning adults.
- Open access for salmon for the first time in decades to over 30 more miles of rivers and streams.

- Improve the quality of watersheds for clean water by decommissioning nearly 1,000 miles of logging roads.
- Return 20 miles of marine shoreline to a natural state for salmon and other species that use the nearshore.

Integrate management of habitat, harvest and hatcheries at the watershed level, as well as across Puget Sound, to bring back the salmon. By 2012 we must have:

- Habitat, harvest and hatchery actions and results well coordinated to protect populations, speed recovery and provide harvest.
- The effects of fishing, habitat and hatcheries measured and applied to decisions on how each is integrated to recover salmon.

Triple funding to fuel momentum for salmon and people. This is one of the responsibilities of the Recovery Council, watershed participants and the Partnership. Together, they will have to be strategically and politically astute, bringing their full commitment and voice to salmon recovery and the human values and interests recovery supports. This powerful combination needs to inspire funders, elected officials, citizens and even ourselves to triple funding over current levels. The funds will need to be allocated in a manner that achieves critical results for fish while enhancing the cohesion and effectiveness of the regional effort.

Engage the people of Puget Sound with many opportunities to participate in measuring the health of the salmon and their environment. This measurement of near-term results will, collectively, tell us about the well-being of Puget Sound as a whole and if our actions are producing the future we want. Using this information, local and regional salmon managers, stakeholders and citizens can gather each year, first in small groups and then across the region. They can refine and recommit to the vision and goals, share information and stories about what is and isn't working, and clarify where additional work and focus is needed. This meaningful involvement coupled with a well-timed and coordinated public outreach campaign across the Sound will contribute to increasing public awareness, involvement and support.

Build diverse leadership in each watershed as the basic building block for success. This means each watershed has the people necessary to successfully implement the salmon recovery plan. Across Puget Sound farmers, foresters, commercial and recreational fishers, business leaders, developers, community members, federal, state and local agencies and tribal government staff and elected officials bring their leadership to salmon recovery because of its relevance and importance to their work and their lives. People working on transportation and land use must seek the counsel of these leaders as they advance difficult issues to ensure their programs and actions support salmon and local communities. Artists and cultural leaders engage to celebrate success, galvanize learning, recognize difficulties and losses, and inspire participants and citizens to believe salmon recovery is possible.

Caring for the people doing the work is critical to promoting a sustainable effort for the long-term and creating an environment that draws others to participate. One

measure of success in 2012 will be that many of the same people continue to work on salmon recovery and find increasingly their work is a source of rejuvenation and inspiration. To achieve this there must be an investment in the people implementing salmon recovery that will, in turn, dramatically increase the sophistication of our overall actions and results. New people welcomed to the effort will be impressed by the palpable camaraderie, commitment and pride. Salmon recovery will be a place to be if you want to know your work matters and is a source of inspiration and fulfillment across the region.

TAB 5

SUMMARY OF NEAR-TERM TRANSITION ISSUES

The legislation creating the Partnership provides for a timely and thoughtful transition of the regional salmon responsibilities from the Shared Strategy to the Partnership by the end of this year. How the salmon functions are staffed by the Partnership need to be considered in concert with the overall organization of the new agency. The Shared Strategy staff and the Partnership Executive Director have had initial discussions that will continue. The Executive Director will bring issues to the Leadership Council as appropriate. There are two immediate issues that will need a decision in September by the Council. They are briefly described below. The Shared Strategy staff will work with the Executive Director as he develops a recommendation to the Leadership Council for how to proceed at their September meeting.

A. Habitat Protection – the San Juan Initiative.

At the beginning of this year, the Shared Strategy for Puget Sound and San Juan County launched a 2-year pilot project known as the San Juan Initiative to address the most important policy and scientific issue in the recovery plan, protection of existing habitat functions. The San Juan Initiative is designed to evaluate and improve the protection of ecological functions in a manner that also protects human interests such as water quality, human health, private property rights and public safety. Over the two-year project, scientists, community leaders and government officials will evaluate how successful volunteer, incentive, regulatory and education programs are in securing the vitality of the region's natural resources for future generations and developing ecosystem-based recommendations to address their findings. Led by a broad constituency of volunteer community leaders and regional resource managers, the project is designed to serve as a model approach to evaluating the effectiveness of habitat protection programs across Puget Sound. This project will need to be managed and provided support through its completion in December, 2008. In addition, the project's grant funding may require that this project be housed within a nonprofit organization.

B. Increasing Funding for Implementation of the Salmon Recovery Plan.

The Salmon Recovery Council has four initiatives currently underway to secure additional funding for the purpose of increasing the region's efforts to implement the Plan: (1) funding an increase in lead entity grants to expand local watershed capacity to accomplish the work; (2) funding a sustained legislative lobbying and grassroots outreach effort to achieve the overall funding necessary to implement the Plan; and (3) funding the first increment of the regional monitoring and adaptive management plan. Each item will be briefly described in turn.

1. Expanding Local Watershed Capacity through an Increase in Lead Entity Grants.

There is an urgent need to increase the overall capacity of watershed groups to handle all of the support tasks necessary to implement recovery projects and programs, and to

continue convening the local stakeholders who created each watershed's recovery strategies and now need to implement them. In July, 2007, the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council agreed to proceed with support for an increase in Lead Entity grants in the 2008 Supplemental Budget. These funds are provided through grants provided by the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). The Recovery Council believes that it is important to the success of such a request for the Partnership to express support for it.

2. Grassroots Outreach and Lobbying Effort to Expand Overall Salmon Recovery Funding Consistent with Overall Needs for Puget Sound Restoration. In order to meet the ten year goals established in the Recovery Plan current funding for salmon recovery will need to triple by 2012. Increases are needed in advance of 2012 to build momentum and results in the meantime. The Recovery Council wants to work in concert with the Partnership to address the overall funding needs for the Sound. However, sees the need in the near-term to advocate for funding the next steps in the Salmon Plan as the Partnership develops the long-term funding strategy. Achieving the near-term funding needs, requires an organized, grassroots outreach effort and full-time professional lobbying presence. In July 2007, the Recovery Council authorized the hiring of a lobbyist and grassroots organizing staff to work on behalf of the Council to increase state funding for the Recovery Plan. Funding is currently being sought from Tribes, counties, cities and other private stakeholders for this work. These consulting contract(s) will need to be managed over time. This work may be appropriately housed in or managed through a nonprofit organization.

3. Monitoring and Adaptive Management of the Salmon Recovery Plan – funding the first increment of monitoring. Monitoring and adaptive management of the Recovery Plan is critical to its success. Plan strategies must be implemented and tested over time to ensure that they are effective. The drafting of the final adaptive management plan is currently underway and will be completed before the end of this year. Implementation of monitoring across the region was determined by NOAA to be a key need for the success of the Recovery Plan. The Recovery Council is presently intending to seek funding for the first increment of monitoring through the 2008 Supplemental Budget process and in the next biennium. During the transition to the Partnership, any work that remains to be done to finalize the Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan will need to be managed. Funding will need to be sought for the various types of monitoring prescribed in the Plan. Finally, staff support will need to be provided to ensure that data collected is analyzed, reported and that decision-makers at the regional and watershed level are adapting their strategies