

Leadership Council Resolution 2011-08 Adopting a 2020 ecosystem recovery target for freshwater water quality

WHEREAS, RCW 90.71.310(1)(c) states that “The action agenda shall include near-term and long-term benchmarks designed to ensure continuous progress needed to reach the goals, objectives, and designated outcomes by 2020;” and

WHEREAS, RCW 90.71.280(3), “the [leadership] council shall confer with the [science] panel on incorporating ... benchmarks into the action agenda;” and

WHEREAS, the Partnership has applied the term “targets” to refer to long-term benchmarks designed to ensure progress to designated outcomes by 2020; and

WHEREAS, the science-policy workshop convened as part of the Science Panel meeting on December 14, 2010 recommended that the Partnership adopt ecosystem recovery targets to address the full breadth of the Partnership’s interests in a recovered ecosystem as part of the 2011 revisions to the action agenda; and

WHEREAS, freshwater water quality provides a key indication that “... waters in the region are safe for drinking, swimming, shellfish harvest and consumption, and other human uses and enjoyment, and are not harmful to the native marine mammals, fish, birds, and shellfish of the region” (RCW 90.71.300(1)(f)); and

WHEREAS, freshwater water quality provides a key indication that “freshwater, estuary, nearshore, marine, and upland habitats are protected, restored, and sustained” (RCW 90.71.300(d)); and

WHEREAS, freshwater water quality as measured by the Department of Ecology and other entities and summarized in the freshwater water quality index has been adopted as one of the Partnership’s Dashboard indicators of ecosystem condition; and

WHEREAS, technical experts from the Department of Ecology have presented analyses to the Partnership about potential ecosystem recovery targets for freshwater water quality; and

WHEREAS, the Science Panel provided a review of technical materials developed in support of target setting; and

WHEREAS, the Ecosystem Coordination Board has discussed potential ecosystem recovery targets, based on the background information presented in advance of their May 24 and 25, 2011 meeting; and

WHEREAS, the public and stakeholders were provided an opportunity to weigh in on the options provided; and

WHEREAS, a summary of information from these analysis, review, and engagement processes included in the meeting materials for the June 16 and 17, 2011 meeting of the Leadership Council provide sufficient background for adoption of ecosystem recovery targets consistent with the Partnership's guiding principles for target setting

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Partnership defines a functioning, resilient ecosystem to include:

Freshwater water quality that protects aquatic life and other uses of the state's waters

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Partnership's ecosystem recovery target for freshwater water quality shall be expressed as:

By 2020, at least 50 percent of all monitoring stations with suitable data have Freshwater Water Quality Index scores of 80 or higher

and

By 2020, achieve a decrease in the number of impaired waters (303(d) list) in Puget Sound freshwaters.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Partnership will work collaboratively with partners to develop a robust system of monitoring and indicators to describe the condition of the region's freshwater water quality

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that reevaluation of the target adopted by this resolution will be triggered at the direction of the Partnership's Science Panel based on their evaluation of scientific information about ecosystem conditions and pressures.

Resolution Moved By: Dan O'Neal

Resolution Seconded By: Diana Gale

Approved/Denied/Deferred (underline one)

DATE: June 16, 2011