

Leadership Council Resolution 2011-17 Adopting a 2020 ecosystem recovery target for orcas

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, the viability of southern resident killer whales (orcas) provides a key indication of “healthy and sustaining populations of native species in Puget Sound, including a robust food web” (RCW 90.71.300(d)); and

WHEREAS, orca abundance as measured by the annual census of the southern resident killer whale population by the Center for Whale Research has been adopted as one of the Partnership’s Dashboard indicators of ecosystem condition; and

WHEREAS, Partnership staff have presented analyses about potential ecosystem recovery targets for orcas; 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:

A viable population of southern resident killer whales.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Partnership's 2020 recovery target for orcas shall be expressed as:

By 2020, achieve an end of year census of southern resident killer whales of 95 individuals, which would represent a 1.0% annual average growth rate from 2010 to 2020.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Partnership will work collaboratively with the steering committee of the coordinated ecosystem monitoring and assessment program to develop a robust system of monitoring and indicators of killer whale recovery and reduction in threats to recovery.

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: Diana Gale

Resolution Seconded By: Dan O'Neal

Approved/Denied/Deferred (underline one)

DATE: June 17, 2011