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August 04, 2017

Jennifer Pouliotte
Environmental Planner
Puget Sound Partnership
326 East D Street
Tacoma, WA 98421-1804

Dear Ms.Pouliotte:

Thank you for the opportunity to comment on the Draft Solicitation for Near Term Actions for the 2018-2022 Implementation Plan of the Puget Sound Action Agenda. The South Central Action Area Caucus Group (South Central LIO) appreciates the Puget Sound Partnership's responsiveness to many of the concerns voiced by the Local Integrating Organizations (LIOs) from the most recent near term action (NTA) solicitation process. The 2018 solicitation reflects many of the recommendations made for a clearer, more streamlined process, and provides a greater role for LIOs in the NTA review process.

That said, the South Central LIO would like to outline a few concerns that could further improve this solicitation process.

- The LIO would like to have more clarification of the role that LIOs will play in the evaluation of NTAs. The current language that appears in *Step 7b. LIO review* on page 13 in the solicitation does not clearly state how LIO review will be incorporated into the final evaluation and prioritization by the Strategic Initiative Advisory Teams (SIATs). The South Central LIO appreciates that LIOs will have the opportunity to identify NTAs that align with or are inconsistent with their 5-year Ecosystem Recovery Plan and that this feedback will be considered by the SIATs. However, we would prefer that LIO recommendations be included explicitly in the SIAT prioritization criteria and ranking process, as local considerations are critical to implementation success. More involvement of LIOs in the prioritization process will lead to greater local engagement and commitment to the Action Agenda.
- The LIO supports the four-year update cycle because it will allow LIOs, NTA owners, Puget Sound Partnership staff, and others involved in Action Agenda development to spend more time on implementation rather than planning.

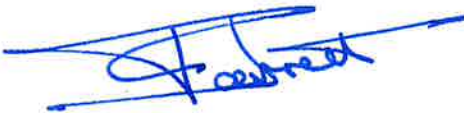
However, the South Central LIO recognizes that local context—as well as ecological, social, and political conditions—will evolve and shift, impacting the priority of existing NTAs and potentially necessitating new ones.

The LIO would like further clarification on how NTA changes over the course of the four-year Action Agenda cycle will be captured and incorporated to ensure that NTA information is kept current and relevant.

- The LIO urges the solicitation be carefully reviewed from the perspective of potential applicants, and clarified to the degree possible prior to being finalized. Potential applicants will seek clarity and detail. For example, the weighting of points is not shown, and there is insufficient clarity about how the budget will be analyzed. In addition, it is unclear how eligibility for ongoing programs will be evaluated; for example, if NTAs can be submitted for ongoing programs that are mandated but for which there is insufficient funding.

Thank you again for the opportunity to comment. If you have any questions, please contact Gretchen Muller, South Central LIO Coordinator, at 206-449-1115.

Sincerely,



Fred Jarrett
Chair, South Central Action Area Caucus Group

Cc: Janne Kaje, Regional Partnerships Unit Supervisor
Gretchen Muller, South Central LIO Coordinator