

PUGET SOUND SALMON RECOVERY COUNCIL

Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council Members

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Sauk-Suiattle Tribe

Skokomish Tribe

November 21, 2014

Sheida Sahandy, Executive Director
Puget Sound Partnership
326 East D Street
Tacoma, WA 98421

Dear Director Sahandy:

The Washington State Legislature recently charged the Puget Sound Partnership with developing recommendations to streamline and strengthen salmon and Puget Sound recovery. I am writing on behalf of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council, to express our united belief in and support for the lead entity structure in Puget Sound.

According to state law, the Puget Sound Partnership is the regional organization for Chinook and steelhead recovery in Puget Sound. The Partnership ~~has chosen to work~~ through the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council to develop overall direction for the strategies and actions designed to recover [these](#) salmon species. This regional structure relies upon the lead entities of Puget Sound, whose structures vary significantly, but all involve work with multiple stakeholders to advance salmon recovery initiatives.

The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council believes that the current system works. However, we also believe that it is important to recognize [through your recommendations to the Legislature](#) that lead entities in Puget Sound do far more than develop habitat restoration project lists as required in RCW 77.85. Puget Sound lead entities, their committees, and partners also do the following:

- [Coordinate and participate with co-managers on a regional and watershed scale when making decisions on priority habitat needs. Identify and manage habitat protection strategies, and integrate habitat actions with the co-managers' harvest and hatchery management actions.](#)
- [Support](#) ~~Implement~~, monitor, and adaptively manage comprehensive [watershed-based](#) chapters of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan.
- [Engage with the Puget Sound Partnership to implement salmon recovery strategies and actions.](#)

[Some Lead Entities also integrate habitat actions with the co-managers' harvest and hatchery management actions.](#) This full suite of strategies – habitat protection, habitat restoration, monitoring, research, adaptive management, [outreach and education](#), and integration with harvest and hatchery actions – is necessary for effective salmon recovery.

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Tulalip Tribe

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WA Dept. of Fish & Wildlife

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Green/Duwamish Watershed

Hood Canal Watershed

Island Watershed

Lake Washington/Cedar/
Sammamish Watershed

Nisqually Watershed

Nooksack Watershed

North Olympic Peninsula Lead
Entity

Puyallup/Chambers Watershed

San Juan Watershed

Skagit Watershed

Snohomish Watershed

South Sound Watershed

Stillaguamish Watershed

West Sound Watersheds

To manage [and contribute to](#) their recovery plans effectively, lead entities in Puget Sound work within their watersheds to make the following types of decisions:

- Recommendations to local, state, and federal jurisdictions to protect and improve habitat and water quality through changes in land use policies and improved compliance with existing regulations.
- Development of programs to foster behaviors that protect and restore salmon habitat.
- Review and approval of habitat acquisition and restoration projects.
- Integration of habitat strategies and actions with the co-managers' harvest and hatchery strategies and actions to identify a suite of actions that help achieve habitat, harvest, and hatchery goals simultaneously.
- Review and approval of monitoring and research recommendations, and integration of best available science into all ~~watershed~~ activities [in the watershed](#).
- [Creation and implementation of monitoring plans and adaptive management systems.](#)
- [Work with the Puget Sound Partnership and fellow Lead Entities through the Salmon Recovery Council forum to determine the priority local and regional actions necessary to positively affect recovery.](#)

Lead entities in Puget Sound also coordinate with many other groups, including [the local governments](#), Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups, Marine Resource Committees, Local Integrating Organizations, and others. The [coordination structure and forums](#) that ~~is-are~~ in place [encourages this coordination; any changes to the structure should further support that coordination provide capacity that otherwise is lacking for local jurisdictions and other groups to engage in effective salmon recovery planning and implementation.](#)

The lead entities in Puget Sound accomplish all of these tasks with extremely limited resources. We hope that your recommendations to the Legislature will include increasing the base funding amount ~~of \$60,000~~ for lead entities in Puget Sound [from \\$60,000 to \\$100,000 per year](#) to provide for full FTE funding for these critical positions ~~at \$100,000 per year~~. In addition, we hope that your recommendations will support mechanisms to create a long-term, sustainable funding source for salmon recovery in Puget Sound.

Thank you, as always, for your attention to the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council's recommendations. Please feel free to contact me at

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360-438-8687 with any questions about this or other Recovery Council work.

Regards,

David Troutt
Chair, Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council
Nisqually Indian Tribe

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