

WRIA 8 H-Integration subcommittee recommendations for Step 4 – complementary actions to achieve the objectives described in Step 3.¹

The H-Integration subcommittee acknowledges that the ultimate goal of the H-Integration process is to recover healthy, self-sustaining, harvestable salmon runs. The following recommendations describe in general terms our complementary actions to achieve recovery of the Cedar and Sammamish Chinook salmon populations in WRIA 8. Specific actions are contained in the (habitat) recovery and harvest management plans approved by NOAA; hatchery actions will be detailed in a forthcoming Issaquah hatchery work plan.

Habitat:

1. Continue to implement the prioritized habitat protection and restoration recommendations in the WRIA 8 Chinook Conservation Plan, which were developed to improve VSP parameters of natural origin Chinook in the Cedar and Sammamish watersheds. The subcommittee acknowledges that it is uncertain whether the timing and intensity of actions outlined in the WRIA 8 Chinook Conservation Plan are sufficient for recovery, partly due to funding constraints. WRIA 8 and the co-managers will continue to monitor plan implementation and population trends, and will suggest appropriate actions if near-term targets are not reached. Beginning in 2010, WRIA 8 will work with the Recovery Implementation Technical Team to implement a robust adaptive management program to address these uncertainties.
2. Continue to add high-benefit habitat projects to the project list as funding and sponsorship allows. Follow Technical Committee recommendations from WRIA 8 Technical Memorandum 2007-01 when adding projects, while responding to new information as appropriate.
3. Programmatic and land-use factors were identified in the WRIA 8 Plan as central to the success or failure of Chinook recovery. The WRIA 8 Implementation Committee should continue to assist in programmatic implementation leadership and effectiveness analysis.

Harvest:

1. Predicate any directed terminal fisheries for Lake Washington Chinook on in-season abundance estimates that project that the Cedar escapement will exceed the goal of 1,680² spawners on the Cedar River. Total Lake Washington Chinook abundance associated with 1,680 spawners on the Cedar River is high enough to project spawning ground abundance in the Sammamish sub-basin at or above the recent average of 1,083 for the combined Bear and Issaquah Creeks (AUC live count

¹ The actions described in this document are the consensus of the WRIA 8 H-Integration sub-committee. There were differing opinions among the sub-committee on the necessity of additional actions to decrease the proportion of hatchery-origin spawners (pHOS) on the spawning grounds. These perspectives will be summarized elsewhere.

² Escapement numbers for Cedar and Sammamish populations are set by the co-managers. Numbers are presently under review.

index).³ Spawning ground escapement consists of all fish spawning naturally including marked and unmarked fish.

2. Increase mark-selective and area-selective harvest where appropriate and feasible (to be determined by co-managers), including but not limited to harvest of hatchery surplus in Lake Sammamish.

Hatchery:

1. Implement the HSRG recommendations, as updated by the current WDFW hatchery reform initiative, for the Issaquah hatchery as an integrated hatchery. Complete and implement an Issaquah hatchery work plan.
2. Continue to monitor the proportion of marked and unmarked fish on the spawning grounds.
3. Continue to increase the incorporation of natural origin broodstock into the hatchery stock as they become available and work to decrease the proportion of hatchery-origin spawners (pHOS) on the spawning grounds while maintaining overall abundance.⁴ Decrease pHOS by taking the following actions:
 - a. Implement improved fish passage at the Issaquah Hatchery water supply intake dam to make more habitat available in Issaquah Creek for naturally spawning Chinook.
 - b. Habitat managers will continue to implement habitat protection and restoration projects, with net gains in habitat capacity and productivity intended to increase the proportion of natural-origin Chinook spawners (thereby decreasing pHOS).

³ This projection is based on the observed relationship between Cedar River escapement and total basin returns. The Cedar River escapement is typically a small fraction of all Chinook entering the Locks (average 9.12%, range 3% to 12%, years 2000-07). A high escapement to the Cedar River is typically associated with a high total Lake Washington return, with a vast majority returning to the Sammamish subbasin.

⁴ See footnote 1.