

WRIA 9 Implementation Technical Committee Charter

Last Updated October 5, 2022

1. Background

The WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum (Forum) authorized the creation of an Implementation Technical Committee (ITC) in 2007 to track and adaptively manage 2005 Salmon Habitat Plan (Plan) implementation. Inherent in Endangered Species Act 4(f) coverage of the Plan is the requirement that Plan goals and actions can be achieved and that “objective, measurable criteria” which, when met, would result in delisting. An Implementation Plan with monitoring and adaptive management guidance for WRIA 9 was developed by the WRIA 9 Adaptive Management Work Group and adopted by the Forum in January 2007. The ITC updated the monitoring and adaptive management guidance for the Plan in 2013, reviewed and commented on project proposals, participated in field reviews of proposed projects, and wrote a Status and Trends report in 2012. The ITC convened the Revegetation Working Group to develop a revegetation strategy for WRIA 9 in 2015, recommended updates to the Salmon Habitat Plan in 2016, and reviewed technical white papers on fish use and productivity, water quality, and climate change in 2017. Most recently, the ITC updated the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed Salmon Habitat Plan and the WRIA 9 Monitoring and Adaptive Management Plan. Plan updates were approved by the Forum in February 2021.

2. Objectives

The overall purpose of the WRIA 9 ITC is to advise on continued implementation of the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan, in its current and/or future forms, using principles of adaptive management. To accomplish these tasks, the ITC must continually synthesize scientific information and use it to guide the implementation of the Plan as well as future Plan updates. To this end, the ITC will recommend and oversee the collection and interpretation of physical and biological data related to salmon recovery in WRIA 9 and provide recommendations to project and program sponsors and the Forum regarding improvements to proposed projects and/or modifications to incorporate into future projects or other recovery actions.

WRIA 9 ITC objectives include:

Plan Monitoring and Adaptive Management

1. Update the Plan every 10 years, or as needed, to meet the requirements of the ESA as stipulated by NOAA and/or the Puget Sound Partnership
2. Develop a WRIA 9 Status and Trends report every five years:
 - a. Oversee data management and analysis; interpret existing data
 - b. Evaluate the effects of management actions;
 - c. Recommend changes if certain thresholds are (or are not) reached;
 - d. Identify data gaps and data to be collected
3. Draft monitoring, adaptive management, and research objectives, protocols, and plans and submit for approval to the WRIA 9 Forum
4. Advise and support WRIA 9 staff coordination with the Puget Sound Partnership and other watershed monitoring efforts to advance efforts to monitor viable salmonid population (VSP) and environmental indicators, as well as to gain information from project monitoring in other watersheds

5. Identify Plan and monitoring needs and make recommendations to the Forum for Plan amendments, Plan updates, monitoring, and funding
6. Develop periodic state-of-the-science updates and adaptive management recommendations to the WRIA 9 Forum
7. Seek out and promote partnerships for monitoring and adaptive management
8. Review Capital Improvement Project list development and prioritization

Project Review and Implementation

9. Review and advise on WRIA 9 Cooperative Watershed Management grant program annual requests for proposals (RFPs)
10. Serve as local technical experts on WRIA 9 grant review teams as needed to evaluate Salmon Recovery Funding Board, Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund, and Cooperative Watershed Management proposals
11. Review annual proposed WRIA 9 funding package and provide recommendations to the WRIA 9 Forum
12. Provide technical expertise and recommendations on project designs, monitoring, and research studies to project sponsors requesting ITC review/support and to WRIA 9 staff or Forum requesting ITC engagement in projects
13. Advise and support WRIA 9 project implementation tracking

3. Products

- Annual funding package recommendation to the WRIA 9 Forum
- 5-year WRIA 9 Status and Trends reports
- State-of-the-science updates to the WRIA 9 Forum as needed
- Adaptive management recommendations to the WRIA 9 Forum as needed

4. Time Commitment

The ITC shall meet each month for two or three hours. ITC members may need to review or develop materials between meetings, and/or participate in subcommittees. One day-long meeting may be held each year as needed, and field meetings to tour and review project sites may also be scheduled as needed. Email and phone conferences will be used where practicable.

5. Chair

The ITC will be chaired by a member of the WRIA 9 Watershed Coordination Services team, or as agreed upon by the group. The ITC Chair may also appoint a technical co-chair from within the ITC. The chair and technical co-chair will be responsible for setting agendas, scheduling meetings, facilitating meetings, inviting guest speakers, maintaining meeting notes, briefing the WRIA 9 Forum, and disseminating information to ITC members.

6. Membership

WRIA 9 staff will, at a minimum, invite representatives from WRIA 9 Watershed Coordination Services, staff from Forum member organizations, and other partners working on watershed recovery efforts, including state and federal natural resource agencies, the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, and non-governmental organizations. The term of membership shall be unlimited.

7. Decision-making

The ITC will strive to reach consensus on recommendations and decisions. When this is not possible, provisions for the expression of minority opinions will be made so that decision makers and the public are informed of the diversity of views.