

## WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Manager Report

October 18, 2017

### This is salmon central season in the Green/Duwamish

- The Muckleshoot Indian Tribe conducted a 12-hour Chinook fishery this year in the Duwamish, the only fishery they have had in seven years.
- At this midway point of the annual spawning cycle of Chinook salmon in the Green River, roughly 1,350 Chinook salmon redds have been counted.
- Expect to hit Chinook escapement of 5,800 (total-hatchery and wild on the spawning grounds). The number of wild versus hatchery Chinook will be determined later this year.
- Coho salmon have not been seen in the river as of this date.
- The pink salmon run is very small compared to previous years—so far about 30,000.
- The Army Corps of Engineers is increasing more than typical the amount of water releases from the reservoir behind Howard Hanson Dam to enhance salmon spawning. There is more stored water in the reservoir than typical for this time of year. The goal is to release 600 cubic feet per second for as long as possible.
- The predicted weather pattern is either for a La Nina or neutral year. Either way, there will likely be flooding conditions this winter.

### Salmon SEEson Feedback: Video of spawning Chinook Salmon in Newaukum Creek!

People are seeing fish returning to our watersheds, too! Josh Latterell, King County Ecologist, took the following recent underwater video of Chinook salmon spawning in Lower Newaukum Creek [here](#). The spawning Chinook footage follows a short slide show of the progression of habitat formation over the past 9 years since the Lower Newaukum restoration project.

### WRIA Teams Moving Office Location--Delayed

The WRIA 9 team, along with the teams for WRIs 8 and the Snoqualmie, did not move office locations in August as previously reported. The new projected date to complete the move is early November. All of us remain on the 6<sup>th</sup> floor of the King Street Center. I've requested that the Water and Land Resources Division take this opportunity to provide greater visibility and recognition of the WRIs in the building, from the parking garage to the office location. For example, clear identification of the salmon recovery groups in directory listings and signage.

### WRIA 9 2017 Budget Third Quarter Report

Overall, actual expenditures by the end of September this year were 72% (percent of actual expenditure vs budget), which is expected at the end of the third quarter. Regarding the WRIA 9 2017 work plan, the Salmon Habitat Plan Update is on track for completing by the end of 2018. The Implementation Technical Committee (ITC) is completing technical white papers by the end of this year, with the possible need to continue synthesizing the effects of contamination on juvenile salmon survival. Matt Goehring, WRIA 9 Planning and Technical Coordinator, has been handed the baton from Abby Hook (the consultant who we retained on an interim basis to help keep the Plan Update moving along) to facilitate completion of the technical products to support the Plan Update and support the work of the

Implementation Technical Committee. See the State Capital Budget section below for information on how our State partners are working to secure funding for continuing operational support to WRIA 9.

### **State Capital Budget—Not Adopted; RCO requests funding to support watersheds**

In absence of a State capital budget for the next biennium, there is no funding available to support operations of the State’s Lead Entities (such as WRIA 9) and Regional Recovery Organizations (such as the Puget Sound Partnership) past December 31 this year. To address this funding gap, the State Recreation and Conservation Office has asked, from the State’s General Fund, for “transitional” funding to continue supporting operations of WRIA 9 and other Lead Entities and Regional Organizations through June next year. The specific request is: *We are requesting additional general fund state dollars and general fund federal authority in the 2018 supplemental operating budget to provide continuity to the regions and lead entities through June 30, 2018, with the idea that there will be a capital budget in place by that time to carry the funding through the remainder of the biennium [emphasis added].*

### **Climate Change Presentation to Chamber of Commerce**

On September 28<sup>st</sup>, Kollin Higgins gave a presentation on the impacts of climate change on the watershed and salmon recovery at a meeting of the Southcenter Chamber of Commerce, with a focus on the impacts most relevant to South King County.

### **Desimone Oxbow Acquisition**

The Desimone Trust is negotiating a lease of the Duwamish River property known as the Desimone Oxbow with Trammel Crow, a major national developer to develop the property. Boeing has been renting the property for a recreation facility for decades, but they are not renewing the lease when it expires at the end of this year; the tennis/recreation facility is being torn down. On October 5<sup>th</sup>, I convened a meeting among King County and Tukwila staff with the Trustees of the Desimone Trust, the Trust’s investment banker and real estate broker, and Trammel Crow to identify options and paths forward for restoring habitat in tandem with developing the property which is located in the Duwamish Transition Zone, one of the most critical areas to restore habitat in the watershed. The outcome of the meeting was positive, forging a partnership among the Trust, Trammel Crow, King County, Tukwila, and WRIA 9 to work together on restoration scenarios, including methods for valuing the habitat restoration component of overall property development.

### **Chinook Implementation Strategy and the Puget Sound Action Agenda**

The Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Council (PSSRC) adopted final “Bold Actions” to include in the Chinook Implementation Strategy of the Puget Sound Action Agenda. The intent of the Bold Actions, proposed by Tribes, is to accelerate the recovery of salmon. The Bold Actions include actions that could significantly affect land use and permitting processes and their authorities, including calling for an evaluation of land use policies and their effectiveness in protecting habitat critical to salmon and salmon recovery. Staff will cross walk the Bold Actions with the update of the Salmon Habitat Plan to determine opportunities to address the Bold Actions as part of the Salmon Habitat Plan Update or other ways to help the WRIA 9 cities and the county of how to use and possibly respond to them.