



King County

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January 14, 2022

The Honorable Claudia Balducci
Chair, King County Council
Room 1200
C O U R T H O U S E

Dear Councilmember Balducci:

This letter transmits a proposed Ordinance that, if enacted, would ratify the Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 9 Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update. Ratification conveys the County's support for the 2021 update and commitment to working collaboratively with local, state, and federal partners and tribes to achieve sustainable, resilient, and harvestable populations of naturally spawning Chinook salmon in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound watershed, or WRIA 9.

The 2021 plan update is an addendum to the 2005 Salmon Habitat Plan. Its purpose is to strategically guide habitat protection and restoration investments for the next 10-15 years. The plan incorporates new best available science, revised habitat goals and recovery strategies, an updated capital project list, and a monitoring and adaptive management plan.

The 2005 WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan (Plan) was developed and subsequently ratified by local government partners in response to the 1999 listing of Puget Sound Chinook salmon under the federal Endangered Species Act. The Plan has served as the blueprint for salmon recovery efforts in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound watershed for the last 15 years. It is recognized as a local chapter of the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration-approved 2007 Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan. An interlocal agreement between 17 local governments funds implementation and adaptive management of the Plan to address a shared interest in and responsibility for long-term watershed planning and salmon recovery in the watershed.

The plan update was developed in collaboration with local, state, and federal partners and unanimously approved by the WRIA 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum which includes representatives from the 17 local governments, state resource agencies, nongovernmental organizations, and local business interests. Local government ratification is the final step in affirming the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update.

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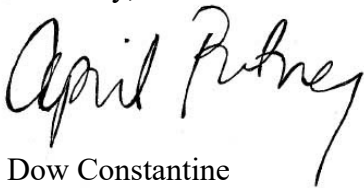
The proposed Ordinance embodies the King County Strategic Plan guiding principle of regional collaboration while advancing the healthy environment goal. Specifically, ratifying the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update reinforces the County's commitment to work collaboratively with a diverse set of local, state, federal and tribal partners to improve watershed health, strengthen ecological and community resiliency to climate change, and restore local salmon runs. Implementation will also help protect and expand forest cover consistent with the 2020 Strategic Climate Action Plan.

The proposed legislation does not, on its own, obligate the County to any additional policy or budgetary action. Plan implementation is supported through existing County programs and an existing interlocal agreement with 17 local governments for watershed coordination services that extends from 2016-2025.

Thank you for your consideration of this proposed Ordinance confirming the County's commitment to working collaboratively to restore Chinook salmon in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed.

If your staff have any questions, please contact Matt Goehring, WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Manager, Water and Land Resources Division, Department of Natural Resources and Parks, at 206-263-6826.

Sincerely,

 for

Dow Constantine
King County Executive

Enclosure

cc: King County Councilmembers
ATTN: Janine Weihe, Acting Chief of Staff
Melani Pedroza, Clerk of the Council
Shannon Braddock, Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Karan Gill, Deputy Chief of Staff, Office of the Executive
Mina Hashemi, Director, Council Relations, Office of the Executive
Dwight Dively, Director, Office of Performance, Strategy and Budget
Christie True, Director, Department of Natural Resources and Parks (DNRP)
Josh Baldi, Division Director, Water and Land Resources Division (WLRD), DNRP
Matt Goehring, WRIA 9 Salmon Recovery Manager, WLRD, DNRP