



WEST SOUND
WATERSHEDS COUNCIL

West Sound Watersheds Council 2013 Three-Year Work Plan Update

Salmon recovery involves a complex set of actions and interactions that are both directed by the Recovery Plans and by the reality within each watershed. The three year work plan is one tool used to reflect those complex interactions.

The components of the 3 Year Work Plan are a spreadsheet of priority projects and programs that can be started within three years (2012, 2013, 2014), and a narrative. The narrative describes the progress, changes, and status of recovery implementation and the work program since the 2011 update.

Spreadsheet of Priority Projects and Programs

This spreadsheet is attached as an excel file. The color coding is as follows:

White: no change from 2012

Yellow: new project added in 2013

Green: active project (funded)

Blue: completed

Orange: new information or updates to existing projects.

For more information about many of the projects, including photos, maps and project sponsor information, please see the Habitat Work Schedule site at: <http://hws.ekosystem.us>

Narrative

I. Context

1. Provide a brief overview of the characteristics of your Chinook Salmon Recovery area.
 - The West Sound Lead Watersheds lead entity (West Central & South Sound) includes all of the Great Peninsula except the nearshore and streams on the Hood Canal side, and the associated islands (Bainbridge, Blake, Fox, McNeil, Ketron, Herron and Raft). The watersheds are located in the eastern & southern portions of Kitsap County, west Pierce County, and a small part of eastern Mason County.
 - The lead entity has 360 miles of saltwater shoreline.
 - The West Sound Watersheds include over 120 salmonid bearing streams, draining to Admiralty Inlet, to the Central Basin and to the South

Sound. Headwaters for all streams are low elevation ground water sources with associated wetland complexes. Many of these headwaters flow in multiple directions, meaning the streams that flow to different basins of the Sound are connected at the source.

- Geographic area = 394 square miles
- The major inlets and waterways found in the West Sound are, from north to south: Miller Bay, Liberty Bay, Dyes Inlet, Port Orchard Passage, Sinclair Inlet, Rich Passage Colvos Passage, Gig Harbor, the Tacoma Narrows, Carr Inlet, and Case Inlet (shared with WRIA 14). There are no large rivers or their estuaries, but many small estuaries at stream mouths that are a high priority for protection and restoration.
- No independent Chinook populations originate from West Sound Watersheds, but steelhead have been observed in over 25 streams and their tributaries. Chinook populations from north, central and south Puget Sound watersheds, as well as Hood Canal summer chum, have been documented migrating and feeding along the West Sound's nearshore.

2. Describe the process for developing your 3YWP narrative and project/activity list. The lead entity coordinator asks for input from the West Sound Watersheds committees and then fills out the narrative and the spreadsheet. There are no harvest and hatchery managers involved in the 3 YWP.

II. Background/Planning/Logic of the Recovery Chapter (1-2 pages):

1. What are the recovery goals for your watershed for Chinook salmon?
 - The lead entity has hypotheses related to nearshore health and Chinook recovery, many of which are detailed in Chapter 15, "the regional nearshore chapter", of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan (PSSRP).
 - The lead entity tracks quantitative information on the number and types of projects completed for habitat restoration and protection. There is an on-going effort to monitor qualitatively aspects of nearshore restoration projects using volunteers.
2. Include information on both population goals (VSP parameters) and habitat goals. There are no specific VSP parameter or habitat goals.
3. What is the current strategy to accomplish the recovery goals and what assumption(s) is this strategy based on?

The strategy is to protect and improve estuary, nearshore, intertidal and subtidal habitat. The assumption is based on knowledge regarding nearshore utilization by Puget Sound Chinook.
4. What new knowledge or information has changed your strategy, assumptions or hypotheses since your recovery chapter was written?

New technical information and planning documents have been developed since the recovery chapters were written, but have not been incorporated into current planning documents. This will be a part of the M& AM process.

Many of the assumptions about habitat protection include the local jurisdictions having the capacity to not only draft effective regulations, but to monitor and enforce them. This assumption that regulations will protect intact habitat has not been validated, not only at the local level. NOAA concurs with federal USACOE permits to armor and alter shorelines regularly, and WDFW does not deny Hydraulic Permits to do the same. Local governments use variances, “reasonable use exemptions” and buffer reductions regularly when issuing land development or construction permits.

The cities and Kitsap County have no resources for monitoring “No Net Loss” as required in their SMP’s, and it is not a budget priority given these small jurisdictions’ limited financial resources. Additionally, the funders of shoreline restoration have not allowed any monitoring expenses when they fund the work. This lack of science to support the restoration and protection of shorelines has been a problem that clouds the conversation with property owners and politicians.

5. How is the sequencing and timing of actions or projects done in such a way as to implement the strategy as effectively as possible?
The implementation of shoreline restoration projects has been opportunistic for the most part to date. The M & AM process should assist with the identification of more strategic actions.

III. Plan and Gaps (2-3 pages):

6. What are the obstacles or barriers for implementing monitoring and adaptive management?
The primary obstacles are the lack of funding for M&AM, including monitoring of restoration projects, and an ineffective regulatory environment (regulations such as SMP’s are a large part of the recovery plans.)
7. Where could you use support for development of your M&AM plans?
This question is difficult to answer without repeating answers to previous questions. We need funding for dedicated staff to do this work at the lead entity level; fiscal support for the 5 cities and Kitsap County to participate in salmon & steelhead recovery planning; and participation in the lead entity by WDFW and the RITT.
8. Considering all actions affecting salmon recovery in the watershed, is the Chinook salmon resource likely to be closer to, or further from, the recovery goals ten years from now as it is today?
Further from recovery goals.