



2024 Salmon Recovery Status Update

KING COUNTY COUNCIL
TRANSPORTATION, ECONOMY
AND ENVIRONMENT
COMMITTEE

JUNE 2024

2024 SALMON RECOVERY STATUS UPDATE

1

Presentation outline

- Regional recovery context
- Watershed based inter-local agreements
- On-the-ground restoration actions
- Science
- Looking ahead



Downey Farmstead Restoration

Regional salmon recovery context

- 1999 – Federal Endangered Species Act listing of Puget Sound Chinook Salmon as Threatened
- State coordination: “Shared Strategy for Puget Sound”, later the Puget Sound Partnership
- 2001 – Three inter-local watershed forums established in King County (“WRIA Forums”)
- 40+ governments as “pay to play” partners across three forums
- Kokanee recovery – similar, newer inter-local partnership to address Kokanee decline in Lake Sammamish

King County Role In Recovery

- Service provider and fiscal agent for the cost-shared inter-local watershed forums
- Implementer of actions
 - KC has significant land area and responsibility in each watershed
 - Programmatic, capital and regulatory responsibility
- Leader in regional science to inform recovery



WRIA: Water Resource Inventory Area





WRIA 7 Highlights:

- Councilmember Perry is King County representative
- Large area (~40% of King County)
- ILA Partners: Six local governments and two Tribes
- Recovery focus: floodplain reconnection, collaborating with farming community

Snoqualmie Watershed Forum – WRIA 7

Elissa Ostergaard, Salmon Recovery Manager

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WRIA 8 Highlights:

- Councilmember Dembowski is King County representative
- ILA Partners: King/Snohomish counties & 27 cities
- Most populated watershed, most leg districts
- Recovery focus: habitat restoration (floodplains, riparian areas, lake and marine shorelines), outreach and education, and monitoring/science
- Key priorities: predation, Ballard Locks fish passage, high water temperatures, artificial light at night

Salmon Recovery Council – WRIA 8

Jason Mulvihill-Kuntz, Salmon Recovery Manager

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Lake Sammamish Kokanee Highlights:

- **ILA Partners:** King County (Balducci), Snoqualmie Indian Tribe, Bellevue, Sammamish, Issaquah, and Redmond
- **Councilmembers Balducci and Perry** are represented at the Kokanee Work Group (multi-party coalition, large following)
- **Recovery focus:** conservation hatchery, passage barrier removal, creek restoration, outreach and education, and monitoring/science
- **Major issues:** limited access to funding, low abundance, low kokanee survival in the lake (need to reduce predation, artificial light at night, invasive aquatic veg, temp/O₂ squeeze)

Kokanee Recovery – Kokanee Work Group

Alison Agness, Salmon Recovery Manager

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WRIA 9 Highlights:

- **Councilmember Upthegrove** is Co-Chair of the Forum
- **ILA Partners:** King County & 16 cities
- **Key Fact:** Most urbanized watershed, yet regularly a top 3 producer of Chinook salmon in Puget Sound
- **Recovery Focus:** Floodplains, riparian, and estuary habitats
- **Key Priorities:** Howard Hanson Dam fish passage, floodplain management, high water temperatures,

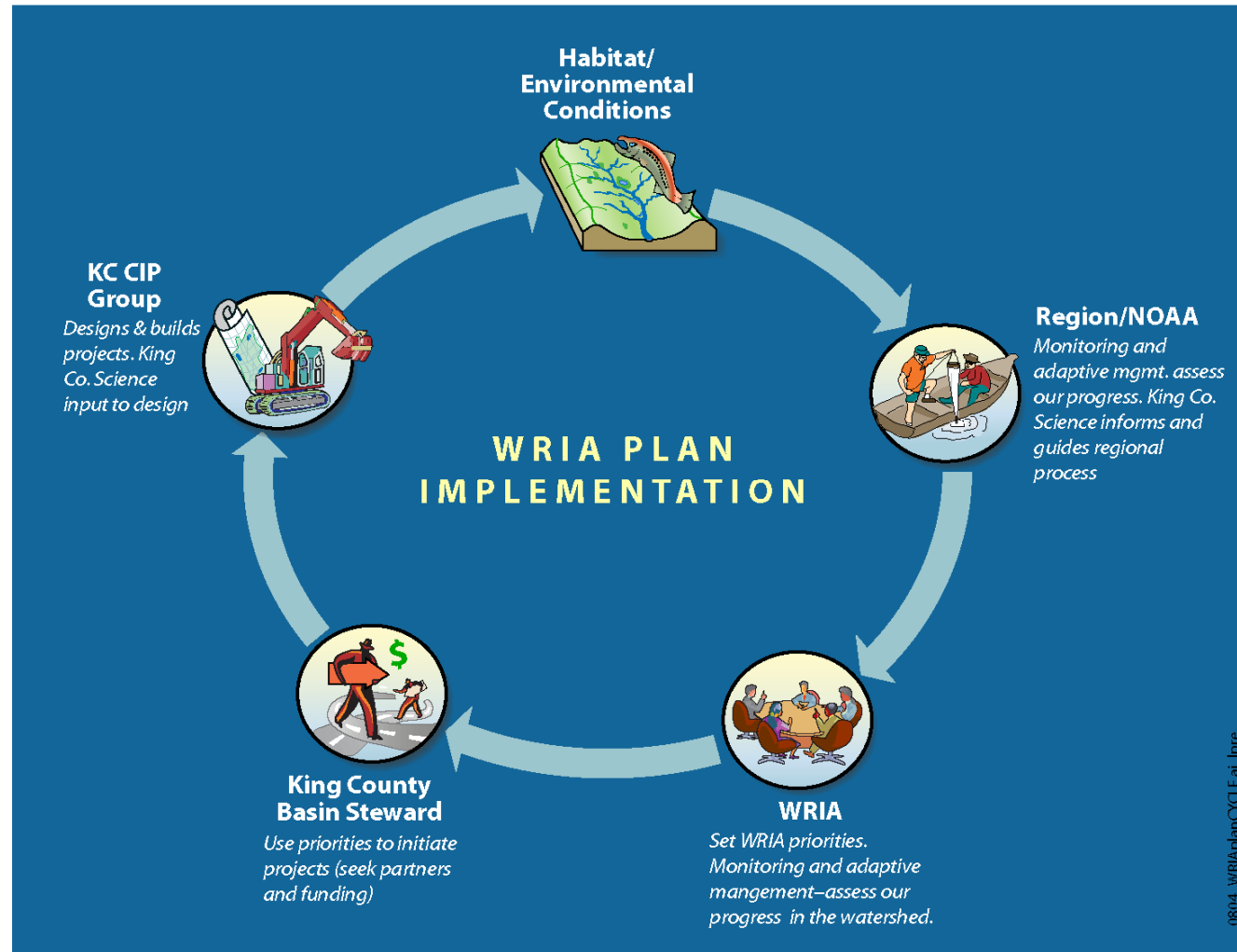
Watershed Ecosystem Forum – WRIA 9

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How it all fits together

- Strategy
- Action (and funding)
- Monitor
- Adapt



Floodplain reconnection



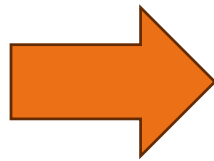
Fall City Floodplain Restoration

Instream & riparian restoration



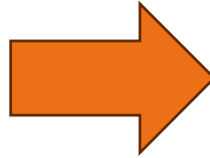
Issaquah Creek

Fish passage



Derby Creek

Marine bulkhead removal



Outreach & Education



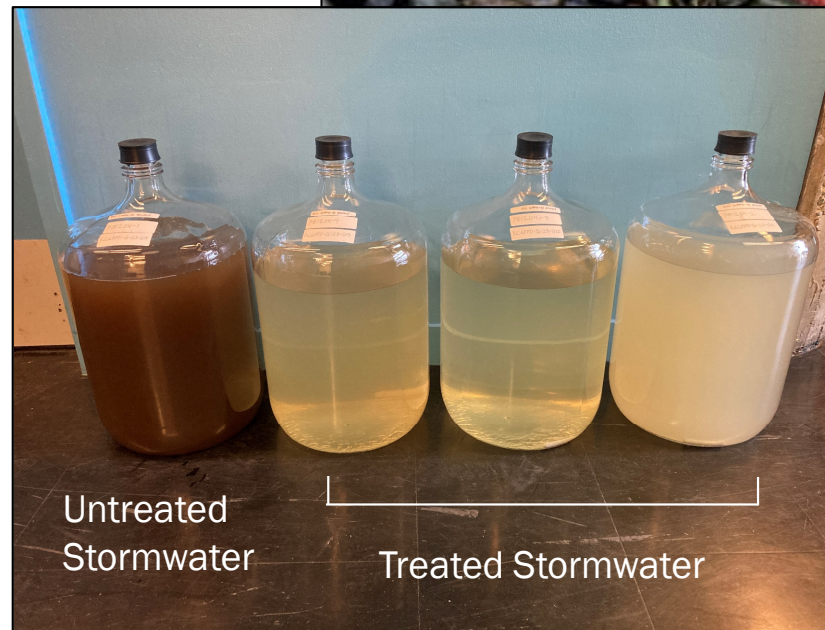
Science & Salmon Recovery

- King County conducts targeted scientific research to guide county actions/policy
- Help identify and prioritize investments
- Ensure resources are allocated as effectively as possible



Toxic Tire Chemical 6PPD-Q

- 6PPD-Q Strategic and Action Plans
- Early Actions:
 - Scope of the problem
 - Changing policy
 - Treatment options
 - Implementation plans



2024 SALMON RECOVERY STATUS UPDATE

17

Lower Green River Chinook Research

- Guiding Chinook recovery in urbanized environment
- Tributary study
- Tracking study- first of its kind
- Achievements:
 - Chinook use of urban areas
 - Restoration success
 - Identify key locations for future restoration and fish passage projects



Snoqualmie River Diet Study

- First of its kind in Puget Sound
- Innovative cage technique
- Understand how restoration influences what fish eat and how they grow
- Understand habitat *quality* rather than *quantity*



Looking ahead – major drivers

- ❖ Climate change effects (high temperature, low flow, flooding)
- ❖ Ballard Locks and ship canal issues
- ❖ Howard Hanson Dam fish passage
- ❖ Stormwater and salmon recovery integration
- ❖ 25th anniversary of WRIA Interlocal Agreements in 2025!

QUESTIONS?

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