

CITY COUNCIL AGENDA TOPIC

Resolution authorizing execution of an interlocal agreement between the local governments participating in the Water Resource Inventory Area 8 (WRIA 8) Salmon Recovery Council, to provide a mechanism and governance structure for joint funding, planning, and implementation of priority Chinook salmon recovery projects and programs.

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**ACTION**

The proposed ILA provides a mechanism and governance structure for the continued and joint funding, planning, and implementation of priority Chinook salmon recovery projects and programs, replacing the previous ILA set to expire on December 31, 2025.

The proposed ILA was approved by the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council on January 16, 2025, and it must be ratified by all ILA partners to continue the WRIA 8 salmon recovery effort.

If adopted, the proposed ILA will be effective by January 1, 2026, or when at least nine jurisdictions representing at least 70% of the WRIA 8 population have signed the ILA. Once effective, the new ILA will be in effect through December 31, 2035.

RECOMMENDATION

Move to adopt Resolution No. 10511

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS*History of WRIA 8*

In 1999, Puget Sound Chinook salmon were listed as “threatened” under the Endangered Species Act (ESA). Local governments in the Puget Sound region were concerned the federal government might direct salmon recovery actions that were not appropriate for urban areas and could negatively impact the region’s economy. To address these concerns, local governments volunteered to develop a salmon recovery plan to retain control through local collective action to achieve efficient and appropriate identification of watershed health issues and implementation of salmon habitat protection and restoration actions.

Local governments and stakeholders in WRIA 8, with waters draining to Lake Washington and Lake Sammamish, stretching from the northwest corner of the watershed in Edmonds, east to Redmond and Sammamish and southeast including Issaquah, have jointly developed a plan to address habitat

protection and restoration for two populations, Cedar River Chinook and Sammamish Chinook. The Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed Chinook Salmon Conservation Plan (WRIA 8 Plan) was completed and approved by local government partners, including Bellevue, in 2005. Other watershed areas in the state also created plans based on this model. WRIA 8's plan was later compiled with those watershed plans around Puget Sound, resulting in the Puget Sound Action Plan. The Plan was adopted by the federal government as the official Puget Sound Chinook Salmon Recovery Plan under the ESA in January 2007.

Interlocal Agreement (ILA)

In 2006, the Bellevue City Council voted via Resolution 7454 to participate in a 10-year ILA to support salmon recovery actions based on the WRIA 8 Plan. This ILA was renewed and approved for another 10 years in 2016 via Resolution 8984.

Members of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council include 26 cities and two counties, as well as various stakeholders such as environmental interest groups, businesses and state and federal agencies. Only cities and counties are official parties with voting rights under the ILA. These local governments fund the actions and projects included in the Plan.

The total annual budget under the ILA for 2025 is \$976,286, of which \$760,366 is funded by partner cost shares. Dues are assessed based on population, assessed value, and size of jurisdiction. The cost share value for each jurisdiction is recalculated every three years, unless there is a significant annexation that would significantly impact the assessment calculation. Bellevue's proportional share of the budget is 9.90 percent and dues of \$75,283 in 2025.

The current WRIA 8 ILA between the 29 local government partners expires December 31, 2025. The proposed ILA provides a mechanism and governance structure for the continued and joint funding, planning, and implementation of priority salmon recovery projects and programs. The ILA needs to be renewed to continue the WRIA 8 salmon recovery effort.

WRIA 8 ILA partners worked with WRIA 8 staff to develop final draft language for a renewed ILA, which was approved by the Salmon Recovery Council on January 16, 2025. The WRIA 8 ILA renewal must now be ratified by all ILA partners. The renewed ILA will be effective by January 1, 2026, or when at least nine government partners representing at least 70 percent of the population of WRIA 8 have signed the ILA. The new ILA is intended to be effective January 1, 2026 through December 31, 2035. As a signatory to the current ILA, Bellevue must also act on the renewal in 2025. The ILA outlines WRIA 8's purpose, structure, and funding agreements (cost sharing).

Attachment C provides the January 16, 2025 Salmon Recovery Council agenda memo, which includes a summary of relevant changes between the current ILA (adopted under 8984) and the proposed ILA.

POLICY & FISCAL IMPACTS

Policy Impact

Participation in and continued support for WRIA 8 is consistent with Bellevue's adopted policies, including the Climate and Environment chapter of the Comprehensive Plan that directs Bellevue to "recognize the important role Bellevue plays in recovering salmon populations by acting on the goals of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council, the Puget Sound Partnership Action Agenda, the Washington Salmon Coalition, and other related groups and collaborative salmon recovery documents" (Policy CL-98),

Fiscal Impact

As a WRIA 8 partner, Bellevue provides annual contributions to support salmon recovery projects and programs. The total annual budget under the ILA for 2025 is \$976,286, of which \$760,366 is funded by partner cost shares. Dues are assessed based on population, assessed value, and size of jurisdiction. The cost share value for each jurisdiction is recalculated every three years, unless there is a significant annexation that would significantly impact the assessment calculation. Bellevue's proportional share of the budget is 9.90 percent and dues of \$75,283 in 2025.

OPTIONS

1. Adopt the Resolution authorizing execution of an interlocal agreement between the local governments participating in the Water Resource Inventory Area 8 (WRIA 8) Salmon Recovery Council, to provide a mechanism and governance structure for joint funding, planning, and implementation of priority Chinook salmon recovery projects and programs.
2. Do not adopt the Resolution and provide alternative direction to staff.

ATTACHMENTS

- A. WRIA 8 Interlocal Agreement
- B. WRIA 8 2024 Fact Sheet
- C. Salmon Recovery Council January 16, 2025 Meeting Packet
Proposed Resolution No. 10511

AVAILABLE IN COUNCIL LIBRARY

N/A