

May 26, 2015

CITY COUNCIL STUDY SESSION ITEM

SUBJECT:

Review of Water Resource Inventory Area 8 (WRIA 8 - Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed) - Interlocal Agreement and Memorandum of Understanding

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POLICY ISSUES

Bellevue has been participating in watershed efforts to support the recovery of Puget Sound Chinook salmon in the Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish watershed since the Sammamish and Lake Washington Forums merged in 2000. Bellevue entered into the most recent WRIA 8 Interlocal Agreement (ILA) in 2006, and the ILA terminates at the end of December, 2015. Council received a background briefing in February regarding the status of salmon recovery watershed efforts. Tonight's briefing is to review proposed changes to the WRIA 8 Interlocal Agreement (ILA) and Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) with King County. The WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council will be considering feedback and adopting a final ILA and MOU in July that will be sent to all jurisdictions for final adoption by the end of 2015.

DIRECTION NEEDED FROM COUNCIL

☐ Action
☒ Discussion
☒ Information

No formal direction is needed at this time. This item is an opportunity for Council to provide feedback on the terms of the ILA and MOU prior to action by the Salmon Recovery Council in July to adopt final versions for consideration by all participating jurisdictions. Councilmember John Stokes is Bellevue's representative at the Salmon Recovery Council. Final action on the documents adopted by the Salmon Recovery Council will be requested from the City Council before the end of 2015.

BACKGROUND/ANALYSIS

In February, Council received a briefing from Bellevue and WRIA 8 staff regarding the status of WRIA 8's activities and accomplishments in supporting salmon recovery in the watershed. The February 23, 2015 Council materials are attached as background for this item. (**Attachment A**)

In 2006, the Bellevue City Council voted to participate in a 10 year ILA to support recovery actions for Chinook salmon in WRIA 8 that were listed for protection under the federal Endangered Species Act

(ESA). The ILA provides an effective, long-standing forum for regional coordination and a governance structure to implement the WRIA 8 Chinook Recovery Plan.

Interlocal Agreement - Key Provisions

The basic structure of the new ILA is proposed to remain the same as the current ILA. A new version of the ILA with track changes is **Attachment B**. The following are key provisions and changes:

- Ten year term would run from January 1, 2016 through December 31, 2025.
- Members of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council include 26 cities and 2 counties (King and Snohomish), as well as various stakeholders such as environmental interest groups, businesses and state and federal agencies. (For a list of Salmon Recovery Members, see list included in the February 23 Council materials in Attachment A).
 - Only cities and counties are official parties to the ILA and have voting rights.
 - New proposed language would add the opportunity for other public agencies such as ports or tribes to become members. Such a proposed membership and the associated funding obligation would have to be reviewed and approved by the Salmon Recovery Council.
- Cost allocation methodology remains the same - individual member jurisdiction cost shares are determined on a proportional basis according to population, assessed value and area. The cost share value for each jurisdiction is recalculated every three years, unless there is a significant annexation that must be included.
- Additional background and context were included in the Preamble section, including language “to partner and coordinate” Chinook recovery efforts with other efforts such as protecting and restoring habitat for Lake Sammamish kokanee.

Memorandum of Understanding

The MOU is the document that establishes the relationship of the WRIA 8 Salmon Recovery Council with King County for provision of staff and services to support the work of the WRIA. A track changes version of the MOU is included as **Attachment C**. For the first time, the MOU includes budget principles, including a principle that cost increases should approximate inflation unless the Salmon Recovery Council votes to change staffing levels. Additionally, the Salmon Recovery Council and King County (as the service provider) can revisit the terms of the MOU every two years or more often if costs are proposed to increase more than inflation.

The total annual budget under the current ILA for 2015 is \$541,900 funded by 28 local governments based on population, assessed value, and size of jurisdiction. Bellevue’s portion is \$52,487.

For 2016, WRIA 8’s proposed budget is \$553,713. Bellevue’s portion is \$53,631, an increase of \$1,144. (See **Attachment D** for Cost Shares) If costs increase by inflation each year of the 10-year term, Bellevue’s costs are estimated to be:

	WRIA 8 Cost	Bellevue	Bellevue	Forecasted	
	Share Amount	Share	Calculated	Inflation Rate	Source
			Share		
2016	\$ 553,713	9.69%	\$ 53,631	2.18%	King Co.
2017	\$ 566,005	9.69%	\$ 54,822	2.22%	King Co.
2018	\$ 579,363	9.69%	\$ 56,115	2.36%	King Co.
2019	\$ 592,804	9.69%	\$ 57,417	2.32%	King Co.
2020	\$ 607,150	9.69%	\$ 58,807	2.42%	King Co.
2021	\$ 622,633	9.69%	\$ 60,306	2.55%	King Co.
2022	\$ 638,759	9.69%	\$ 61,868	2.59%	King Co.
2023	\$ 655,366	9.69%	\$ 63,477	2.60%	King Co.
2024	\$ 673,045	9.69%	\$ 65,189	2.70%	Forecast*
2025	\$ 691,638	9.69%	\$ 66,990	2.76%	Forecast*

* Forecasted using trend line of County's data 2016-2023.

WRIA 8 Share Amount escalated by Inflationary factors and allocated to Bellevue based on 2016 cost share. Bellevue cost share assumed to remain unchanged over forecast period.

This funding provides support for 3.5 FTE and education and outreach expenses. Other actions and project implementation are provided by local governments and regional, state, and federal grant funds. The ILA funding provides staff (housed at King County) that support a variety of tasks, including:

- Coordinating the Salmon Recovery Council work plan and meetings,
- Providing links to salmon recovery at the regional, state, and federal levels,
- Providing technical support and coordination for scientific studies and monitoring,
- Administering policies,
- Encouraging advocacy for more sustainable funding for salmon recovery projects from the state and federal governments,
- Coordinating grants for the salmon recovery projects and program, and
- Coordinating and tracking implementation of the WRIA 8 Plan, including associated grants.

Follow-up from last Council meeting

At the February 23 briefing, Council requested more information regarding the health of the salmon populations in WRIA 8 (see **Attachment E** for more detailed information). There are two populations of Chinook in WRIA 8: the Cedar River population and the Sammamish population. Despite the proximity to the Cedar River, Chinook spawning in Bellevue streams are considered to be part of the Sammamish population. The Cedar River Chinook are predominantly wild fish, whereas the Sammamish population is influenced by the Issaquah Salmon Hatchery. The Cedar River population is at higher risk of extinction because they are wild spawning and have only the Cedar River as a spawning area. This limited distribution of spawning means that a single catastrophic event could affect the whole population. Because of this, the recovery plan places a higher priority on actions for the Cedar River.

WRIA 8 monitors two life history stages of Chinook in the Cedar River and in Bear Creek, adult spawning salmon (“escapement”) and juvenile salmon migrating out to marine waters. While adult salmon are most visible, the number of returning fish is affected by harvest, ocean conditions, and other

factors beyond local government control. The number of juvenile salmon that are produced from the spawning adults represent the quality of spawning and rearing habitat in local streams. Regional actions to improve Chinook habitat began during the planning process in 2000 and continued to be refined and implemented with the adoption of the recovery plan in 2006.

Cedar River Population

Cedar River adult spawning salmon returns have fluctuated, but are increasing. There has been a 73% increase in Cedar River Chinook abundance during the last 8 year period compared to the previous nine year period. In spite of the encouraging trend, the number of returning salmon have only met the 10 year recovery goal twice in the last eight years. The juvenile salmon have increased 205% in the last eight years. Juvenile salmon recovery goals have been met in five of the last 10 years. These monitoring results are encouraging that cumulative actions for habitat taken by the region and local governments may be improving survival of juvenile Chinook. However, more actions and monitoring are needed to prove that habitat improvements are truly the cause of the increased survival.

Sammamish Population

Adult returning Chinook in the Sammamish population have seen a 48% decline in the last eight year period, compared to the prior nine years. The 10 year recovery goal for returning adult Sammamish Chinook has only been met once in the last eight years. As with the Cedar population, though, juvenile Chinook numbers have been improving. Juvenile production goals have been met five of the last eight years. Similar to the Cedar River population, this may be the result of habitat actions taken by the region and local governments, but more monitoring is needed to conclusively demonstrate that habitat improvements are the cause of the increased survival.

Bellevue has monitored adult salmon in Kelsey, Coal, and the West Tributary annually since 2000. As with the Sammamish population in Bear/Cottage Creek, spawning Chinook returns have declined over the last eight years. Kelsey Creek was identified as a Tier 2 stream in the recovery plan because it had consistent annual Chinook returns. Historically, the number of Chinook in Kelsey Creek was highly variable, ranging from a few to over 200 spawning. However, no Chinook have returned to spawn in Kelsey Creek in five of the last eight years. There has been no monitoring of juvenile salmon in Bellevue, so the success of spawning is unknown.

NEXT STEPS

The Salmon Recovery Council will consider feedback on the proposed ILA and MOU and take action on final drafts for participating jurisdictions to consider in July. Final action from Council will be requested before the end of 2015.

ALTERNATIVES

N/A

RECOMMENDATION

N/A

ATTACHMENT(S)

Attachment A – February 23, 2015 Council materials

Attachment B – Draft WRIA 8 Interlocal Agreement
Attachment C – Draft WRIA 8/King County MOU
Attachment D – WRIA 8 Cost Share Table
Attachment E – Chinook Salmon Population Monitoring