



TO: Elizabeth A. Pauli, City Manager
FROM: Jesse Narog, Assistant Division Manager - Tacoma Water
Jackie Flowers, Director - Tacoma Public Utilities
COPY: Government Performance and Finance Committee
SUBJECT: WRIA 9 Interlocal Agreement; Council 9/21/21
DATE: August 30, 2021

SUMMARY AND PURPOSE:

A resolution ratifying the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed, Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 9 Salmon Habitat Plan Update, Making Our Watershed Fit for a King, dated February 2021 (Salmon Habitat Plan). The resolution is intended to convey support for collaborative protection and restoration of salmon habitat through implementation of the Salmon Habitat Plan, with the intent to achieve sustainable, resilient, and harvestable populations of naturally spawning Chinook salmon. The Salmon Habitat Plan utilizes best available science to inform local government actions, prioritize projects and policies.

BACKGROUND:

This Department's Recommendation is Based On:

The City of Tacoma and 16 other local governments are members to an Inter Local Agreement (ILA) for the Green River, Duwamish River, and Central Puget Sound Watersheds, referred to as the WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum; whose purpose is the protection and restoration of salmon habitat within the WRIA. The ILA was established in 2001 and has been renewed twice since that time, most recently through Board and City Council action in 2015.

Tacoma Water represents the City on the WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum and together, with the other members, shares in the operating costs of the Forum and has invested \$8.4 million in restoration efforts within the WRIA since 2001.

The WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum endeavors to work through consensus and is now seeking ratification of the WRIA 9 Plan 2021 Update by all ILA members.

The Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update provides a science-based framework for identifying, prioritizing and implementing salmon recovery actions through the WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum for the next 10 years.

To-date the City of Tacoma, through Tacoma Water has provided \$416k to the ILA from 2001 to 2021 and has committed another \$100k through 2025. Additionally, staff participate in the WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum and technical committees representing Tacoma's interests and lending their abilities as subject matter experts in the Forum's work.



RELEVANT HISTORY OF ACTION BY PUBLIC UTILITY BOARD (PUB) AND CITY COUNCIL (CC):

- 2002 WRIA 9 Interlocal Agreement signed by City of Tacoma (PUB resolution U-9714, CC Resolution 35505)
- 2005 WRIA 9 Interlocal Agreement extended by City of Tacoma (PUB Resolution U-9714, CC Resolution 36711)
- 2005 Salmon Habitat Plan 'Making Our Watershed Fit For A King' (PUB Resolution U-10020)
- 2007 WRIA 9 Interlocal Agreement renewed by City of Tacoma (PUB Resolution U-10086, CC Resolution 37052)
- 2015 WRIA 9 Interlocal Agreement (2016-2025) renewed by City of Tacoma (PUB Resolution U-10800, CC Resolution 39268)

COMMUNITY ENGAGEMENT/ CUSTOMER RESEARCH:

The Salmon Habitat Plan effects all peoples within the Green/Duwamish Watershed with respect to economic health, flood management, recreational opportunity and the health and abundance of salmon populations.

The Salmon Habitat Plan went through numerous watershed wide workshops attended by government entities that represent stakeholders within the Green/Duwamish Watershed. Five subbasin workshops were also held including an Upper Green workshop which was attended by Federal, State and non-profits representatives. Additionally, the document was open to public comment in 2020. Though specific habitat projects go through local outreach processes, the Salmon Habitat Plan discusses engagement in this way:

Salmon recovery efforts within the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound watershed overlap with numerous communities experiencing deeply entrenched social, economic, and environmental inequities. Race and place influence opportunity and quality of life. People of color, immigrants, and low-income residents experience inequities in access to key determinants of equity – including access to parks and natural resources. Although best available science drives project identification and prioritization, equity and social justice (ESJ) issues should be carefully considered. Applying an ESJ lens to habitat projects can help ensure salmon recovery efforts align with ESJ initiatives and do not inadvertently reinforce existing inequities. Integrating residents and community-based organizations into project design can help build community support and achieve multi-benefit outcomes that advance equity in the watershed.



ALTERNATIVES:

Presumably, your recommendation is not the only potential course of action; please discuss other alternatives or actions that City Council or staff could take. Please use table below.

Alternative(s)	Positive Impact(s)	Negative Impact(s)
1. Do nothing.	Reduced administrative labor costs	Potentially the sole member of the Interlocal Agreement not to ratify the Plan.
2. City Council could draft a Memorandum of Support for the Plan	Reduced administrative labor costs	Further delay in endorsement of the Plan.

EVALUATION AND FOLLOW UP:

Success for this endeavor is viewed as passage of a resolution which represents the City of Tacoma’s support for the Salmon Habitat Plan and the work the WRIA 9 Ecosystem Forum is pursuing.

STAFF/SPONSOR RECOMMENDATION:

Staff recommend passage of the resolution supporting the Salmon Habitat Plan.

FISCAL IMPACT:

Expenditures have been already been authorized through previous resolutions. This requested action is for ratification and support of the Salmon Habitat Plan only.

What Funding is being used to support the expense?

N/A

Are the expenditures and revenues planned and budgeted in this biennium’s current budget?

YES

Are there financial costs or other impacts of not implementing the legislation?

YES

Will the legislation have an ongoing/recurring fiscal impact?

No

Will the legislation change the City’s FTE/personnel counts?

No



City of Tacoma

City Council Action Memorandum

ATTACHMENTS:

- Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update