



Legislation Text

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Clerk 01/14/2022

AN ORDINANCE ratifying the Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update

Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed.

STATEMENT OF FACTS:

1. The 2021 Update to the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan, Attachment A, is an addendum to the 2005 WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan, and includes new science, revised habitat goals and recovery strategies, an updated capital project list and a monitoring and adaptive management plan.
2. Seventeen local governments in WRIA 9 have partnered through an interlocal agreement in 2001-2006, 2007-2015 and 2016-2025 to jointly fund development and implementation of the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update to address shared interest in and responsibility for long-term watershed planning and salmon recovery in the Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watershed.
3. In March 1999, the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries listed the Puget Sound Chinook salmon evolutionary significant unit, including the Green River Chinook salmon population, as a threatened species under the federal Endangered Species Act.
4. Local jurisdictions have authority over some habitat-based aspects of Chinook survival through land use and other policies and programs, and the state and tribes, who are the legal comanagers of the fishery resource, are responsible for addressing harvest and hatchery management.

5. The WRIA 9 partners recognize participating in the interlocal agreement and implementing priorities in the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan demonstrates their commitment to proactively work to address the Endangered Species Act listing of Chinook salmon.
6. Coordination and cooperation among federal, state and local agencies, tribes, businesses, nongovernmental organizations, landowners, community members and other interests are essential to implement and adaptively manage a salmon recovery plan.
7. The Puget Sound Partnership serves as the Puget Sound regional organization and lead agency for planning and implementing the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan, approved by National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries.
8. The WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan is one of fifteen watershed-based chapters of the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan.
9. King County supports cooperation at the WRIA level to set common priorities for actions among partners, efficient use of resources and investments and distribution of responsibility for actions and expenditures.
10. Habitat protection and restoration actions to increase Chinook salmon productivity trends are necessary throughout the watershed, in conjunction with other recovery efforts, to avoid extinction in the near term and restore WRIA 9 Chinook salmon to viability in the long term.
11. Salmon recovery is interrelated with flood risk reduction, water quality improvement, open-space protection, recreation, economic development and tribal treaty rights.
12. King County has a strong interest in achieving multibenefit outcomes for people and fish across the watershed.
13. The WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan recognizes that salmon recovery is a long-term effort and focuses on a ten-year implementation time horizon to allow for evaluation of progress and adaptation of goals and implementation strategies.

14. It is important to provide jurisdictions, the private sector and the public with certainty and predictability regarding the course of salmon recovery actions in WRIA 9.

15. If insufficient action is taken at the local and regional level, it is unlikely Chinook salmon populations in WRIA 9 will improve and it is possible the federal government could list Puget Sound Chinook salmon as an endangered species, thereby decreasing local land use flexibility.

16. The WRIA 9 partners previously took formal action to ratify the 2005 Salmon Habitat Plan.

BE IT ORDAINED BY THE COUNCIL OF KING COUNTY:

SECTION 1. King County hereby ratifies the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan 2021 Update, which is Attachment A to this ordinance. Ratification is intended to convey King County's support for the following:

A. Protecting and restoring habitat based on best available science with the intent to achieve sustainable, resilient and harvestable populations of naturally spawning Chinook salmon.

B. Pursuing a multibenefit approach to WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan implementation that integrates salmon recovery, flood hazard reduction, water quality improvements, open space and recreation and equity and social justice to improve outcomes for people and fish.

C. Utilizing the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan as a source of best available science to inform local government actions, including, but not limited to, land use, shoreline and transportation planning/permitting.

D. Utilizing capital project concepts, programmatic actions and policies outlined within the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan to inform local priorities for implementation and funding via grants, capital improvements, ordinances and other activities. Ratification does not obligate any partner to implement any specific actions or adhere to specific timelines for such actions.

E. Working collaboratively with local, state and federal partners and tribes to support and fund implementation of the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan, including monitoring and adaptive management to address scientific uncertainty, tracking and communicating progress, and refining strategies to ensure cost-effective investments.