Puget Sound Partnership and Recovery Implementation Technical Team
2010 Three Year Work Program Review
Snohomish Watershed

Introduction

The 2010 Three-Year Work Program Update is the fifth year of implementation since the Recovery Plan was finalized in 2005. The Puget Sound Partnership, as the regional organization for salmon recovery, along with the Recovery Implementation Technical Team (RITT), as the NOAA-appointed regional technical team for salmon recovery, perform an assessment of the development and review of these work programs in order to be as effective as possible in the coming years.

These work programs are intended to provide a road map for implementation of the salmon recovery plans and to help establish a recovery trajectory for the first three years of implementation.

In April 2010, two of the fourteen watershed chapter areas submitted early three-year work program updates on accomplishments, status of actions, and proposed actions that built on the work programs since 2006. The remaining twelve watershed chapter areas submitted their three-year work program updates in May 2010, with one submitting in June 2010.

The feedback below is intended to assist the watershed recovery plan implementation team as it continues to address actions and implementation of their salmon recovery plan. The feedback is also used by the RITT, the Recovery Council Work Group, and the Puget Sound Partnership to inform the continued development and implementation of the regional work program. This includes advancing on issues such as adaptive management, all H integration, and capacity within the watershed teams. The feedback will also stimulate further discussion of recovery objectives to determine what the best investments are for salmon recovery over the next three years.

Guidance for the 2010 work program update reviews

Factors to be considered by the RITT in performing its technical review of the Update included:

1) *Consistency question*: Are the suites of actions and top priorities identified in the watershed's three-year work plan/program consistent with the hypotheses and strategies identified in the Recovery Plan (Volume I and II of the Recovery Plan, NOAA supplement)?
2) *Pace/Status question*: Is implementation of the salmon recovery plan on-track for achieving the 10-year goal(s)? If not, why and what are the key priorities to move forward?
3) *Sequence/Timing question*: Is the sequencing and timing of actions appropriate for the current stage of implementation?
4) *Next big challenge question*: Does the three-year work plan/program reflect any new challenges or adaptive management needs that have arisen over the past year?

Watersheds were also provided with the following four questions, answers to which the Recovery Council Work Group and the Partnership ecosystem recovery coordinators assessed in performing their policy review of the three-year work program:

1) *Consistency question*: Are the suites of actions and top priorities identified in the watershed's three-year work plan/program consistent with the needs identified in the Recovery Chapter (Volume I and II of the Recovery Plan, NOAA supplement)? Are the suites of actions and top priorities identified in the watershed's three-year work plan/program consistent with the Action Agenda?
2) *Pace/Status question*: Is implementation of salmon recovery on-track for achieving the 10-year goals?
3) *What is needed question:* What type of support is needed to help support this watershed in achieving its recovery chapter goals? Are there any changes needed in the suites of actions to achieve the watershed's recovery chapter goals?
4) *Next big challenge question*: Does the three-year work program reflect any new challenges or adaptive management needs that have arisen over the past year either within the watershed or across the region?

Review

The following review consists of four components: a regional technical review that identifies and discusses technical topics of regional concern; a watershed-specific technical review focusing on the specific above-mentioned technical questions and the work being done in the watershed as reflected by the three year work plan; a regional policy review that identifies and discusses policy topics of regional concern; and a watershed-specific policy review focusing on the specific above-mentioned policy questions and the work being done in the watershed as reflected by the three year work plan. These four components are the complete work plan review.

I. Puget Sound Recovery Implementation Technical Team Review

The RITT reviewed each of the fourteen individual watershed chapter's salmon recovery three-year work program updates in May and June 2010. The RITT evaluated each individual watershed according to the four questions provided above. In the review, the RITT identified a common set of regional review comments for technical feedback that are applicable to all fourteen watersheds, as well as watershed specific feedback using the four questions. The regional review, along with the watershed specific review comments, are included below.

Regional Technical Review: 2010 Three-Year Work Plans – Common Themes

In addressing the review questions at the watershed level, as outlined above, the RITT also noted general comments common to all watersheds within the region. Four of these region-wide themes are listed below.

1. H-Integration

The work plans continue to emphasize habitat restoration projects for understandable reasons. However, salmon recovery also requires habitat protection, and hatchery and harvest management actions. **H-integration** has been considered in a number of watersheds by assessing progress towards plan goals in all of the H's. New projects using EPA funds to specifically address habitat protection for some watersheds came about because an overview of progress in all H's showed that habitat protection had received less attention than the other H's. It is important for all watersheds to assess how the work in each H will affect and be affected by the other H's. For example, do exploitation rate ceilings in harvest management provide sufficient fish to take advantage of newly restored habitat; is progress in restoring one type of habitat negated by the loss of the same kind of habitat due to inadequate protection? These kinds of questions will be an important component of adaptive management. Therefore, it would be advantageous to address them in subsequent 3-year work plans.

A challenge that still has not been met in most watersheds is to coordinate actions in all H's to the same set of hypotheses and strategies that underlie the watershed's recovery plan chapter. For example, it should be clear how a hatchery program set up to supplement production addresses the limiting factors for that watershed in a fashion complimentary to the habitat restoration and protection work in the same watershed. It is important to keep in mind that actions in all H's are aimed at moving the populations towards recovered levels of the same set of VSP parameters. Therefore, it would be advantageous for the managers of all the H's to work with each other towards a common vision of how their actions, in combination, will achieve this recovery.
Six steps of H-integration were suggested at a Shared Strategy workshop in 2006 to help groups begin this process). Some watersheds are working through them in a systematic fashion. We continue to support these steps as useful guidance for assuring that all H's are part of each watershed's recovery plan implementation.

1. Identify the people needed to participate, covering all Hs. Bring them into the process.
2. Gain a common understanding of how the H's influence the salmon system.
3. Agree upon common goals for improving salmon.
4. Select a suite of complimentary actions covering the Hs that address the goals (these should then be placed in the work plans).
5. Document implementation of actions and expected outcomes (in work plans).
6. Monitor, report, and adjust (adaptive management!).

2. Adaptive Management

One of the biggest challenges that the RITT has consistently identified for implementing the Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan is the development of realistic, useful, and applicable **adaptive management plans** at the watershed level. The Recovery Plan identified these as the key tool for addressing the scientific uncertainties inherent in the plan, yet developing this tool remains a challenge in 2010. To help identify needs, to provide a consistent template for planning and prioritizing monitoring, to develop a

process for refining short-term objectives and 10-year goals, and to increase the technical capacity of the watersheds to complete these plans, the RITT began working with three watersheds – San Juan Islands, Skagit, and Hood Canal - using the Open Standards conservation planning approach with the intent of expanding the work sequentially to other watersheds. As this work began, however, watersheds that did not want to wait for the RITT asked that it develop a template that they could use to prepare for RITT involvement. The template will be completed by July 1, 2010. The RITT will continue to work with watersheds on developing adaptive management plans using this template under a revised time table. Although RITT support will be available to each watershed, the process of building the adaptive management and monitoring plans will still demand time, commitment, and resources from the watershed leads, planners and implementers of actions associated with the Recovery Plan.

3. Climate Change

Climate change is expected to affect the fundamental aquatic and terrestrial processes that control the quality and quantity of habitats for Pacific salmon. This change is the subject of global and regional research, modeling, and planning. For the RITT, Puget Sound Partnership, watershed groups, and other salmon recovery entities, climate change is likely to become a core issue when considering the types and designs of restoration efforts. Specific watershed-scale planning guidance regarding the effect of climate change on salmon and their habitats will require additional study. However, empirical data clearly demonstrate rising air temperatures in the Pacific Northwest during the 20th century, and regional climate models predict that this trend will continue. Resulting changes can be expected in watershed hydrology (magnitude and timing of peak and base flows), stream and ocean temperatures, ocean currents and coastal circulation, salinity gradients, sea level, and biological diversity. Salmon production is intimately linked with many of these variables.

As ecosystem processes and functions respond to climate change, adaptive strategies will need to be developed to mitigate and compensate in the implementation of salmon recovery efforts. The Puget Sound Chinook Recovery Plan and accompanying NOAA Supplement both indicate that climate change impacts on salmon need to be considered in evaluating recovery. The NOAA Supplement also identifies climate change as one of several "specific technical and policy issues for regional adaptive management and monitoring." To this end, the RITT will work with watershed groups, Puget Sound Partnership, and other stakeholders to develop of adaptive management plans that address climate change.

The following online references synthesize various agencies' efforts at understanding the potential impacts of climate change on natural resources in Washington State:

- University of Washington Climate Impacts Group. 2009. The Washington climate change impacts assessment: Evaluating Washington's future in a changing climate. http://cses.washington.edu/cig/res/ia/waccia.shtml

- University of Washington Climate Impacts Group. 2010. Hydrologic climate change scenarios for the Pacific Northwest Columbia River basin and coastal drainages. http://www.hydro.washington.edu/2860/

- Lawler, J.J. and M. Mathias. 2007. Climate change and the future of biodiversity in Washington. Report prepared for the Washington Biodiversity Council. http://www.biodiversity.wa.gov/documents/WA-Climate-BiodiversityReport.pdf

- National Wildlife Federation. 2009. Setting the stage: Ideas for safeguarding Washington's fish and wildlife in an era of climate change. http://wdfw.wa.gov/wlm/cwcs/nwf_climatechange09.pdf

For a comprehensive listing of resources regarding climate change impacts, preparation, and adaptation, see the Washington Department of Ecology website: http://www.ecy.wa.gov/climatechange/ipa_resources.htm.

4. Protection of Ecosystem Functions

An important element of recovering salmon in Puget Sound is the protection of existing habitat. Adequate protection of salmon habitat in Puget Sound continues to be an issue in all watersheds and continued degradation is noted throughout the area. While habitat restoration is relatively easy to implement by watersheds, given funding, protection of existing habitat is reliant on local regulations and their enforcement. Many regional policy drivers impact salmon habitat, including the Shoreline Management Act, Growth Management Act, National Marine Fisheries Service's Biological Opinion on the Federal Emergency Management Agency's implementation of the National Flood Insurance Program, and the Army Corps of Engineers' revised levee vegetation management policy. These regulations address many of society's concerns about the environment, but not necessarily salmon recovery first and foremost. Stakeholders in salmon recovery (e.g., the watershed groups, PSP, and RITT) need to develop ways to provide the technical input for integrating, to a greater extent, actions that promote salmon recovery into these local and regional decisions and regulations affecting salmon habitat.

Watershed Specific Technical Review: Snohomish Watershed

1) *Consistency question: Are the suites of actions and top priorities identified in the watershed's three year work plan/program consistent with the hypotheses and strategies identified in the Recovery Plan (Volume I and II of the Recovery Plan, NOAA supplement)?*

   Yes. The sequencing of actions and allocation of actions among sectors is essentially the same as in previous years and still matches the strategies derived from the hypotheses underlying the recovery plan for the Snohomish watershed. Within the area of habitat restoration, effort, as measured by the surrogate of funding levels, is allocated according to the original breakout supported by the analysis that underlay the original recovery plan. The current three-year plan reflects some changes in thinking based on what has been learned since 2005, but the basics of the underlying plan have not changed, and the 2010 three-year work plan update matches that.

   One major gap acknowledged in previous three-year plan narratives is that, although the original plan assumed that currently functioning habitat in the basin would be protected, that probably has not been the case. Recently the EPA awarded a Puget Sound Watershed Management Assistance grant to Snohomish Basin partners (Snohomish County, Tulalip Tribes, and King County) to advance habitat protection. This 4-year grant will enable the watershed group to develop a protection strategy to address the challenges of development and climate change. At the end of a three-year grant period, the watershed characterization and reach-scale process analysis will have been conducted within protection priority sub-basins. This groundwork will facilitate subsequent work covered by the grant, developing a strategic, actionable habitat protection plan and implementing early action plan elements. The Snohomish Basin is also working to establish cumulative effectiveness elements in the basin-wide monitoring plan. This monitoring will provide a systematic evaluation of habitat change, capturing both habitat improvements and degradation, throughout the basin. This project was well designed to fit within the overall structure of the recovery chapter, and, if successful, it will lead towards a habitat protection plan that is well coordinated with strategies in the other Hs.

2) *Pace/Status question: Is implementation of the salmon recovery plan on-track for achieving the 10-year goal(s)? If not, why and what are the key priorities to move forward?*

   The 2010 three-year work plan update includes 5 pages of tables assessing progress towards targets in habitat protection, habitat restoration, hatchery management, harvest management, and h-integration. These tables provide an easy way to visually assess progress in all aspects of the plan. This assessment shows that the status of habitat protection is difficult to ascertain due to lack of basin-wide comprehensive monitoring of habitat loss, although several major programs to accomplish some of this do exist. Habitat restoration is on track in only 4 of 14 categories, and the current three-year work plan is either insufficient to get the watershed back on track, or it is impossible to assess this. Hatchery operations are on track to meet plan goals in three of six areas listed, and specific actions to get back on track in all areas are listed although there is no assessment of whether the current plan is adequate to do this. The work plan is on track to meet goals in two of five harvest management areas listed. The others are important work items that

are not currently funded, so the current plan is insufficient to meet those needs. The H-integration table is new and currently not completed. This table definitely needs more thought and work and it is not worth summarizing the results shown until the table is completed, but this is an excellent start to address the H-integration topic.

Although this section of the three-year work plan does not paint a perfect picture of a recovery plan being implemented exactly as expected, it is an excellent tool for assessing current progress as well as showing where new resources could most productively be directed, should they become available.

3) *Sequence/Timing question: Is the sequencing and timing of actions appropriate for the current stage of implementation?*

Sequencing and timing is appropriate and per the plan, understanding that many actions are falling behind the pace envisioned in the original plan, as is well documented in this three-year work plan update. A key step in adaptive management will be to evaluate and coordinate the relationship among habitat restoration, habitat protection, harvest management, and hatchery management. The watershed group has made great strides this year in attempting to include all relevant actions in all 4 Hs as a first step in making this assessment. The positive response in Chinook escapement from the late 1990s through the mid-2000s, apparently in response to harvest rate reductions, suggests that additional spawners are being provided to the system to take advantage of improvements in habitat quality or quantity that might result from recovery efforts. The recent decline in escapements may be due to poor ocean conditions, or it may indicate that habitat improvements are not keeping pace with habitat degradation in the basin. It would be worthwhile to investigate this question.

4) *Next big challenge question: Does the three-year work plan/program reflect any new challenges or adaptive management needs that have arisen over the past year?*

The 2010 three-year work plan update lists several challenges that will be important to address in order for the Snohomish Watershed recovery plan to be able to move forward. It will be necessary to address the issue of public support for salmon restoration, particularly as it applies to restoration projects on agricultural lands, in order to reach the recovery plan's ten year recovery goals. The same applies to the issue of the conflicts between boater and safety large wood placement. It will be very important for the RITT and the watershed group to make it clear how salmon recovery will be affected if restoration of habitat on agricultural lands and placement of large wood is impeded.

The three-year work plan update also points out that more work on H-integration is required for this three year work plan to be successful in moving the Snohomish Chinook populations towards their recovery goals. The Snohomish watershed has made good progress towards H-integration as evidenced by the active participation of harvest and hatchery managers in watershed deliberations, the completion of an all-H technical analysis in 2008, and inclusion of hatchery and harvest management activities in this three-year work plan update. The tables summarizing progress to date do a good job of covering the main areas of habitat protection, and the recently funded EPA watershed grant promises to integrate habitat protection efforts

throughout the watershed with this salmon recovery plan. Among other products, this project should move towards the goal of combining an assessment of habitats lost to compare with the assessments of habitats restored used to track the progress of restoration projects.

The above items and others will be part of the development of the watershed-specific monitoring and adaptive management plan that the Snohomish watershed group is completing this year. After the RITT completes the template for adaptive management programs for all Puget Sound watersheds, we expect to review the Snohomish adaptive management plan and will recommend modifications, if any are warranted, based on this review.

General comments and observations

1. The narrative states, and the RITT agrees, that salmon recovery in the Snohomish watershed is on the right trajectory, but not moving as fast as envisioned in the 2005 plan. Identified gaps in H-integration and habitat protection are being addressed as well as possible with the limited resources available. Despite this we see that good progress is being made. We are concerned that it will not be possible to achieve the recovery goals for the basin unless the conflicts between agriculture and restoration and recreational boat use and large wood placement are addressed.

2. The narrative recognizes that assessment of potential gains from habitat restoration projects must be offset by assessment of losses from continual habitat degradation. The watershed identifies that the issue of using restoration projects as mitigation for other actions that degrade or remove habitat has not been fully considered in reviewing the recovery plan. This point is well taken. It will not be possible to assess progress towards recovery without a comprehensive assessment of both gains and losses of key habitats. The recent EPA funded Snohomish watershed project that focuses on habitat protection will contribute to putting this picture together.

3. The watershed makes a strong case for the need for additional technical support for understanding ecosystem processes and analyzing project data and project management support. We support this.

4. The narrative emphasizes the need to preserve institutional knowledge of the salmon resource and the factors that affect it. If the effort to do this isn't done, knowledge will be lost as people retire or move on. Development of the adaptive management plan should centralize the information for salmon recovery and limiting factors into a living document that can be used to assess and preserve knowledge.

II. Policy Review Comments

The Recovery Council Work Group, an interdisciplinary policy team made up of lead policy staff in federal, state, local agencies, as well as a lead policy staff representative from the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission, evaluated each of the fourteen watershed work plans. In addressing their review questions, outlined above, the interdisciplinary team noted both general comments common to all watersheds within the region, as well as significant

advancements and issues needing advancement that are watershed specific and need special attention. The general and watershed specific comments follow below.

Regional Policy Review: 2010 Three-Year Work Plan – Common Themes

The region wants to call attention to the significant amount of work and effort that each of the watershed groups put into updating the three year work plan narratives and spreadsheets. Each year, the watershed groups build off of the previous year's reviews and information, incorporating this into the update. The watershed groups continue to demonstrate an increasing amount of sophistication in implementing the recovery plan, advancing strategically important projects by doing long-term planning, sequencing work, and ultimately prioritizing where funding is focused.

We look forward to continuing to work with watersheds to identify and facilitate high priority projects to move forward and to refine the process and three year work plans.

Adaptive Management and Monitoring

Advancing monitoring and adaptive management remains a high priority both regionally and at the watershed scale. The majority of watersheds continue to indicate that this is a significant, 'next big challenge' in their areas. The NOAA Supplement has identified this gap in the Recovery Plan as a critical weakness. As part of the approval process, NOAA indicated that developing this plan was a requirement.

A coordinated monitoring and adaptive management framework that supports refinement at both the regional and watershed scales is critical to understand the pace and effectiveness of recovery actions. This framework and the resulting programs need to support an integrated approach to recovery implementation tracking, incorporate uncertainties around climate change, and develop or refine recovery plan goals where needed.

The region continues to be committed to supporting watersheds in advancing their efforts to develop and implement a monitoring and adaptive management plan in a way that acknowledges the interaction across habitat, harvest, hatchery, and hydropower management decisions. At the regional scale, several actions have been initiated to advance adaptive management, including:

1. RITT guidance on monitoring and adaptive management
2. RITT/PSP template for monitoring and adaptive management that builds a framework within which each watershed that can connect their monitoring information to other watersheds and the ESU.
3. RITT/PSP coordinated approach to support the development/advancement of monitoring and adaptive management programs in each watershed chapter area.

Significant resources are and will continue to be needed to support involvement in the development of these programs across the Puget Sound and then in the implementation of the programs via focused monitoring funds. Resources need to include having involvement from all sectors of salmon recovery working together: hatchery, harvest, habitat protection, habitat restoration, and hydropower.

Protecting Ecosystem Functions

Preserving options and addressing threats are critical components of recovery implementation both at the local and regional scale. Recovering salmon in Puget Sound requires effective regulatory protection of existing habitat, along with acquisition, incentives, and education and outreach programs around existing land uses. The protection of habitat through these and other approaches remains a high priority.

At this time, there are several opportunities to strengthen the nexus between habitat protection, salmon recovery, and different regulatory mechanisms.

- *Shoreline Master Programs and Critical Area Ordinances*: Local jurisdictions across the Puget Sound are working to update their shoreline master programs, through the Shoreline Management Act, and their critical areas ordinances, through the Growth Management Act. These two regulatory programs are critically important to our collective ability to protect and manage habitat since they address the management of riverine and marine shorelines, streams, wetlands, water recharge zones, and other ecologically important habitats for salmon. There is a strong need to incorporate existing information from the salmon recovery plan and implementation efforts into these regulatory updates in order to strengthen the relationship between land use management and the needs of salmon. Although the watershed groups are not the empowered entity for leading the effort to incorporate information from the salmon plan into the regulatory update, it is the responsibility of everyone involved to support local jurisdictions in adopting the regulations necessary to preserve recovery options for the future. This includes making information accessible as well as understandable within a regulatory context.
- *FEMA's National Flood Insurance Program (NFIP):* NOAA recently issued a Biological Opinion on FEMA's NFIP, concluding that the program jeopardizes and adversely modifies designated critical habitat for salmon recovery. Since this decision in 2009, there has been a significant amount of concern and conversation about how to respond. Local jurisdictions, along with FEMA, NOAA, PSP, and others, are working to identify a clear path forward for protecting floodplains in terms of ecosystem recovery and human health and well-being. Implementation of an agreed-upon approach to limit the impacts of development in the floodplain will require additional resources at the local and state level and need to be tracked as part of understanding the status of salmon recovery efforts.
- *Army Corps of Engineers Levee Vegetation Management Policy*: A significant amount of riparian habitat sits on top of levees within the floodplains and deltas of the Puget Sound. The Corps' policy requires the removal of vegetation over two inches in diameter. This new levee vegetation management policy removes significant amounts of vegetation, which provide salmon habitat in already degraded riparian areas. A regional response to this policy is underway and important to continue to support in order to reduce the negative impact for salmon recovery. Numerous entities, including state agencies, local governments, non-profits, tribes, and the Puget Sound Partnership, sent a letter to the Corps urging that this policy be changed to allow for retention of more trees on levees.

Additionally, there are non-regulatory mechanisms that are timely. This includes:

- *Education and Outreach:* Many of the watersheds identified education and outreach programs as an element of their work plans. Working with the public to advance a comprehensive understanding and individual actions associated with recovery is critically important. Advancing programs across the watersheds and that are mutually supportive within the watersheds will help strengthen the effort.
- *Nearshore Technical Assistance*: protection of the nearshore remains a high priority for salmon recovery across the Puget Sound. There are emerging tools and resources available, including technical work from the General Investigation for the Puget Sound nearshore, the monitoring and adaptive management template, and watershed-based prioritization approaches for nearshore. Continuing to advance the thinking around fish utilization and critical nearshore habitats will support a refined approach to protection and balancing different uses along the nearshore.

Focus on salmon recovery

Salmon recovery implementers continue to be pulled in many directions by other mandates. The Puget Sound Partnership and the Policy Work Group recognize that implementation of salmon recovery actions remains a high priority. Maintaining a focus on the priorities in the salmon recovery plan, as described in each watershed chapter plan, will be increasingly challenging, and will require a continued investment of time, resources and support.

Funding

Establishing consistent, reliable funding for capital and non-capital projects to implement the recovery plan chapters continues to be a challenge. It is critically important to fund implementation of the plan, at an adequate level, in order to keep the momentum and focus on recovery. Lack of capacity across member organizations of watershed groups remains a significant limiting factor for advancing recovery objectives. The advancement of H-integration and adaptive management objectives, in particular, call for continued funding to support ongoing coordination and participation.

Balancing Land Uses

The Puget Sound Partnership funded a report, *Obstacles to Implementing Important Capital Project for Salmon Recovery* (Blackmore Consulting, 08/27/09), to identify obstacles for implementing habitat restoration for salmon recovery around the Puget Sound. The report identified the following key obstacles that continue to be a challenge and require significant regional and local resources:

- Balancing working lands, primarily agriculture and working forests, with salmon recovery. This is especially important in the estuaries where both working agriculture and salmon restoration is located.
- Supporting a decision-making approach that incorporates salmon recovery needs, based on the plan, into decisions at the federal, state, and local scale. This is often difficult due to variable politics and community support but ultimately has a significant impact on our collective ability to complete capital projects on pace to achieve recovery goals

Watershed Specific Policy Review: Snohomish

Significant Advancements

- As mentioned in the 2009 review, the Snohomish work plan continues to advance a thoughtful and technically rigorous recovery plan and reflects the priorities of the plan. This comprehensive and thorough 3-year work plan update clearly demonstrates the progress made as well as the challenges to salmon recovery in the watershed. This work plan can certainly be used as a model to other Puget Sound watersheds.
- The 2010 three-year work plan update continues to advance the thinking around H-integration within the watershed. This work takes a concerted effort by the watershed to keep numerous parties at the table and should be noted as a significant advancement, especially during a time when capacity within the watershed is stretched thin. The region looks forward to this continued work as it advances and begins to address questions related to "sequencing projects" as is referenced in the work plan.
- The 2010 three-year work plan update clearly describes refinements to the project list such as those projects that have been strategically removed and/or added based on comments received in 2009 from the Snohomish Forum and the region. This work describes a clear commitment from the basin to continue to advance project prioritization and sequencing and further refines the watersheds strategy over the three-year period.
- The successful grant application to the EPA offers opportunity to advance a more robust habitat protection strategy at the watershed and reach scales. Results from this grant will be important in ensuring successful implementation of the strategies of the salmon recovery plan.

Issues Needing Advancement

- Capacity: Retaining capacity for the salmon recovery program within the Lead Entity continues to be a significant challenge. Additional information on the need and opportunities would help refine the request. Continuing to address capacity needs in order to advance on implementation of the salmon recovery plan is keenly important. This is especially true as recovery becomes more complex and as salmon recovery is needed to be seen in a broader societal perspective.
- Salmon Recovery and Agriculture: Continue to advance partnerships and the collaborative approach between agriculture and salmon recovery groups to reach common goals and strategies as were initiated and described during the planning phase for the salmon recovery plan. The work to Potential tools and approaches are available in the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan Volume 1 (page 411-419).