

July 26, 2022

Kathleen Pozarycki
Coordinator, Snohomish/Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization
Snohomish County Surface Water Management Division
3000 Rockefeller Ave, M/S 303
Everett, WA 98201

Dear Kathleen:

On behalf of the Leadership Council, I would like to express our appreciation to the Snohomish/Stillaguamish Local Integrating Organization for hosting the local forum discussion at the Leadership Council's June 8 meeting. You and your colleagues from the County, Salmon Enhancement Group, and Tulalip and Stillaguamish Tribes skillfully facilitated an engaging, interactive session highlighting barriers to salmon and Puget Sound recovery in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish watersheds. The Leadership Council is grateful for the opportunity to learn about and work with the Sno/Stilly LIO on the issues presented during the local forum.

The panel of local partners you assembled made a compelling case for the need to streamline administrative, application, and reporting burdens associated with state and federal ecosystem recovery grants. With the continued impacts of population growth and climate change, we must look for ways to speed the pace at which Puget Sound recovery projects are implemented. We also have an unprecedented opportunity right now to put transformational federal and state funding to work in service of priority projects that are otherwise sitting on the shelf.

We appreciated Morgan Ruff's interactive exercise to illuminate some of the major barriers – and potential solutions – within our current recovery funding system. We were also struck by the example of the multiple decades, grants, and permits it took to advance the Smith Island restoration project from start to finish. We are deeply appreciative of the work that you and all of our partners in recovery are advancing daily, weekly, and over the course of entire careers devoted to Puget Sound.

The Leadership Council and Partnership staff will continue to engage you, other local forum participants, sister agency partners, and others to make progress toward resolving the barriers you identified with grant applications, match, reporting, and administrative requirements. Since last month's meeting, Laura Blackmore and I have reached out to several state agency leaders to summarize some of the key points you made at the forum and to seek further discussion and coordination between the Partnership, the Leadership Council, and other agencies regarding how we can jointly make progress on these issues.

We understand that the Island Local Integrating Organization has also committed to continuing these discussions at its local forum with us in mid-September, and would welcome your involvement in planning for and follow-up to that meeting.

Thank you for raising these important issues with the Leadership Council. We hope to continue to collaborate to advance these solutions and invite you to return to the Council at a future meeting to follow up on the conversation.

Sincerely,



Dennis McLerran, Chair

Cc:

Dave Somers, Snohomish County Executive
David Simpson, Port of Everett Commission President
Gregg Farris, Snohomish/Stillaguamish LIO Co-Chair
Joan Lee, Snohomish/Stillaguamish LIO Co-Chair
Ryan Miller, Tulalip Tribes
Jason Griffith, Stillaguamish Tribe
Val Streeter, Tulalip Tribes
Lynda Lyshall, Snohomish Conservation District
Morgan Schneider-Ruff, Tulalip Tribes
Paul Cereghino, NOAA
Nick Norton, Recreation and Conservation Office
Laura Blackmore, Puget Sound Partnership
Larry Epstein, Puget Sound Partnership
Ahren Stroming, Puget Sound Partnership
Hannah Liss, Puget Sound Partnership
Tristan Contesse, Puget Sound Partnership
Members, Puget Sound Partnership Leadership Council