

Resolution 2014-02 Funding Alignment with Salmon Recovery

WHEREAS, the Action Agenda identifies a funding strategy that, in part, recognizes and supports the importance of using existing funding more strategically and efficiently to carry out Puget Sound recovery efforts; and

WHEREAS, voluntary programs have become increasingly relied upon to support the recovery and protection of Puget Sound; and

WHEREAS, funding for these programs should be aligned with the best available science so as to achieve water quality standards, protect and restore shellfish beds, implement salmon recovery, and when specified by a tribe, achieve ecosystem objectives consistent with Traditional Knowledge; and

WHEREAS, the Treaty Rights at Risk Initiative is a call to action, intended to galvanize and energize response by federal, state, local and tribal governments and policy makers to reverse the decline of salmon and their habitat; and

WHEREAS, the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) identified interim minimum riparian management recommendations applicable to agricultural lands for voluntary grant programs operating in western Washington; and

WHEREAS, the Action Agenda recognizes that the treaty rights of Puget Sound Tribes are at risk when salmon populations continue to decline and the decline of available salmon habitat is not reversed; and

WHEREAS, the Action Agenda recognizes that maintaining the vibrancy of agriculture is crucial to recovering Puget Sound; and

WHEREAS, the Action Agenda further recognizes that conversion of farm land to more intensive human uses is not only detrimental to individual farmers and to the regional farm economy, but is detrimental to the recovery of Puget Sound; and

WHEREAS, NMFS' interim minimum riparian management recommendations included a technical justification developed by NOAA's Northwest Fisheries Science Center, which must be accorded deference under federal law; and

WHEREAS, voluntary incentive programs focused on protecting and restoring Puget Sound habitat, aquatic resources, and rural working lands should be coordinated to work strategically and in conjunction with one another; and

WHEREAS, these programs should address and encourage the implementation of projects that meaningfully contribute to achieving water quality standards and protections for both salmon and shellfish; and

WHEREAS, Puget Sound recovery efforts should be using a multiple benefit approach that addresses outcomes for water quality, shellfish, and salmon recovery,

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED, that the Leadership Council recommends the alignment of voluntary incentive public programs and funding with NMFS interim riparian management recommendations. The Leadership Council also supports agencies, organizations, and private parties that are working with the support of the tribes in the affected watershed to try other approaches to implement riparian buffers that have a sound scientific basis and support the achievement of all water quality standards and support salmon and shellfish recovery; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Leadership Council supports and encourages increasing the value, availability, and types of incentives for agricultural landowners to voluntarily implement riparian buffers that achieve water quality standards and salmon and shellfish recovery objectives.

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that public outreach, technical assistance, and education efforts should also reflect these interim minimum recommendations for what is necessary to achieve water quality and protections for salmon and shellfish in riparian areas, estuaries, and other habitats critical to the perpetuation of these resources; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Leadership Council supports better data collection by those agencies administering voluntary incentive programs in order to ensure program(s) accountability for achieving progress towards salmon recovery goals, meeting water quality standards, and protecting and restoring shellfish beds; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Leadership Council encourages the agricultural community leaders and tribal leaders to work together to develop mutually agreeable solutions and PSP will assist, if requested, in convening such a discussion.

Resolution Moved By: Ron Sims

Resolution Seconded By: Stephanie Solien

Approved/Denied/Deferred (underline one)

DATE: July 9, 2014