

LIO STRATEGIC RECOVERY PLANNING: DEVELOPING LOCAL 5-YEAR ECOSYSTEM RECOVERY PLANS AND 2-YEAR IMPLEMENTATION PLANS WITH 2016 NEAR-TERM ACTIONS

Updated June 22, 2015

Purpose of the Project

EPA and the region have recognized the importance of developing longer-term, ecosystem recovery plans at the Local Integrating Organization (LIO) scale to ensure that funding is targeted at the highest priority local actions and recovery implementation is coordinated across local areas and the region. EPA is supporting development of LIO **5-year Ecosystem Recovery Plans** and associated **2-year Implementation Plans** over the next year and a half. The intent is that this focused strategic recovery planning effort will:

- Provide a roadmap for local ecosystem strategic efforts that focuses recovery planning and actions on the highest priority recovery needs;
- Build on and work in coordination with existing related recovery efforts (e.g. salmon recovery planning);
- Ensure consistency (in terminology, structure, and content) of local plans with the overall Action Agenda so that LIO priorities inform regional decision-making and sequencing of recovery actions;
- Result from a rigorous, defensible process that will identify the highest priority recovery strategies in each LIO area, and thereby help direct limited funding to where it will be most effective;
- Serve as a longer-term, more durable strategic framework from which local near-term actions (NTAs) can be developed;
- Provide accounting of existing work underway to improve the health of the LIO area and identify gaps where work is needed.

LIO Recovery Planning Process and 2015-2016 Work Plan

The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) has worked with EPA and LIO coordinators to develop the process and define the content of these local ecosystem recovery plans. Many details are still being developed but the overall timeline and key deliverables are understood (see Attachments 1 and 2). This document will be revised as additional detail on the LIO planning process is developed.

LIOS will each receive an additional \$170,000 on top of the annual \$75,000 LIO Capacity Grants – starting as soon as contracts are signed, on or after July 1 – to support the development of the 5-year ecosystem recovery plans and 2-year implementation plans. The Puget Sound Partnership (PSP) has worked with EPA and LIO coordinators to develop the process and define the content of these local plans. The first

phase of work will focus on developing the priority NTAs that fit under the 2016-2017 Strategic Initiative sub-strategies for 4-6 Vital Signs. LIOs will then build on the initial content to produce strategic, comprehensive, ecosystem recovery plans addressing all LIO priority outcomes and including all LIO priority strategies.

- June – September 2015: LIOs develop first elements of the ecosystem recovery plan focused on 4-6 Puget Sound Vital Signs
LIOs select 4-6 Puget Sound Vital Signs, identify priority pressures, document theories of change for existing LIO recovery approaches and their alignment with regional theories of change in prototype results chains, and describe priority areas of focus for 2016 NTA development to address 4-6 Vital Signs. For direct funding eligibility, LIOs should select Vital Signs that are strongly associated with the three Strategic Initiatives (habitat, shellfish, and stormwater).
 - These products will be reviewed by the Strategic Initiative Transition Teams (SITTs) (October-November 2015) for technical merit and for the potential of the areas of NTA focus to “move the needle” on the selected Vital Signs locally and regionally. SITTs will provide feedback on the plans and areas of focus to the LIOs as they develop 2016 NTAs.
- September – December 2015: LIOs develop a list of priority NTAs for inclusion in the 2016/2017 Action Agenda.
NTAs and associated theories of change comprise the 2-Year Implementation Plan. NTAs and the 2-Year Plan will be limited in scope to the updated sub-strategies under the three Strategic Initiatives. The SITTs will issue a solicitation in mid-September for 2016/2017 NTAs that address needs identified for the three Strategic Initiatives.
 - LIOs develop new or update existing NTAs that will advance Strategic Initiative sub-strategies focused on one or more Vital Signs and/or priority pressures. Highest priority NTAs are identified and proposed for inclusion in the 2016/2017 Action Agenda. Associated content for each NTA will include performance measures, NTA owner, desired outcomes, location, and cost.
 - LIOs map NTAs to prototype results chains to reflect LIO theories of change. If NTAs do not align with prototypes, LIOs may map NTAs to proposed new or revised results chains, but these NTAs will likely not be eligible for direct FFY 2016 funding. In 2016, any new results chains will undergo technical review and NTAs associated with these new or revised results chains would then be adopted by amendment into the 2016/17 Action Agenda and eligible for EPA direct funding (FFY17).
- January – February 2016: LIO NTAs are reviewed, revised and finalized
LIO and regional NTAs are reviewed by SITTs. LIOs work with SITTs and Action Agenda team to revise NTAs as needed for inclusion in the 2016/2017 Action Agenda
- March – September 2016: LIOs develop comprehensive 5-year Ecosystem Recovery Plan
Building on the first elements submitted in September 2015 and revised through February 2016, LIOs develop an ecosystem recovery plan addressing additional LIO

priority Vital Signs, ecosystem elements and pressures. Specific expectations for the ecosystem recovery plan are still under development but they will likely include the following: desired ecosystem outcomes and pressure-reduction outcomes are defined, priority Action Agenda sub-strategies are identified and associated theories of change are developed, key uncertainties and assessment or monitoring needs are identified, and an adaptive management process is defined.

Coordination with Other Regional Efforts

LIO planning over the next year and a half will occur concurrently with a number of other Puget Sound planning efforts. We will work to coordinate the efforts so that 1) LIOs have timely, comprehensive access to regional decisions and products as they are developed, 2) LIO members are able to participate in regional planning and decision-making processes, and 3) LIO priorities and products inform and are incorporated in regional planning and decision-making.

The \$170,000 supplemental funding provided to each LIO (June 2015 - Sept 2016) is eligible to be used to support LIO participation in a number of these efforts.

Strategic Initiatives, 2016/2017 Action Agenda Development, and Relationship to LIO Planning

The 2016/2017 Action Agenda will be organized around the three Puget Sound Strategic Initiatives: *Protect and Restore Habitat, Prevent Pollution from Urban Stormwater Runoff, and Restore and Re-open Shellfish Beds*. To support development of 2016/2017 Action Agenda content focused on these three initiatives, teams of local and regional experts and practitioners have worked to identify the sub-strategies most directly associated with advancing these initiatives over the next two years (see Appendix 3). LIO members have participated in these groups.

- LIOs (and other partners) will be asked to focus on development of NTAs associated with the sub-strategies under the three Strategic Initiatives
- The 2016/2017 Action Agenda will not include NTAs outside the scope of the Strategic Initiatives
- Direct NEP implementation funding eligibility for 2016/2017 will be limited to NTAs that will advance the Strategic Initiatives

Implementation Strategies and Relationship to LIO Planning

PSP and partners are currently developing a set of pilot Implementation Strategies to test the approach as a framework for developing, prioritizing, assessing, adapting, and coordinating Puget Sound recovery efforts. Implementation Strategies are 5-year strategic plans describing how we will achieve the 2020 ecosystem recovery targets associated with each of the Vital Signs. In format, content, and development process, they will be equivalent to LIO 5-year ecosystem recovery plans. Also similar to the LIO planning project, Implementation Strategies will be used to develop 2-year implementation plans including the highest priority sub-strategies and NTAs to advance the target over two years, key uncertainties and research needs, outreach needs and monitoring needs. In the future, they will be used to develop content for the biennial Action Agenda updates.

Implementation Strategies are already under development for 2020 targets associated with estuary and shellfish Vital Signs. Draft estuary and shellfish strategies will be reviewed in June-July and will be used to identify priority areas of focus for the 2016/2017 Action Agenda for these two Vital Signs. Work on the Chinook Vital Sign will begin this summer and will build on work completed through the Chinook Monitoring and Adaptive Management Project.

LIO members have been participating in work groups convened by PSP to develop and review draft content and will continue to contribute to their development and improvement over time.

- Technical and program staff with regional, local and tribal experience will participate in the Strategic Initiative Transition Teams (SITTs) that will identify priority areas of focus for estuaries and shellfish based on the draft Implementation Strategies (Aug-Sept 2015).
- Recommended areas of focus for estuaries and shellfish will be included in the 2016/2017 Action Agenda NTA solicitation (Sept 2015).
- LIO theories of change and priority areas of focus developed as part of the 2-year work plan and 5-year ecosystem recovery plan process will inform development and revision of future Implementation Strategies. LIOs will also be able to contribute to Implementation Strategies through their participation in the Ecosystem Coordination Board and the tribal review process.

Related Materials available on Box

1. 2015 EPA Funding Timeline
2. LIO Planning Timeline
3. Sub-strategies Related to Strategic Initiatives –June 10, 2015 DRAFT for public review

For more information about LIO recovery planning:

http://www.psp.wa.gov/2016_AA_LIO_planning.php *content coming soon*

<https://pspwa.box.com/LIO-Recovery-Planning>

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