

Topic: Addressing Gaps and Barriers-For Discussion

Background: As part of the Plan development, a list of process and product gaps were identified to both provide qualifications to some of the issues with the Plan as well as identify where process and implementation of ecosystem recovery work could be improved. To respond to recent questions about the overlap between LIO planning efforts and Salmon Recovery Lead Entity (LE) efforts, columns were added to the LIO Plan gaps table (Table 6 of our Plan) to reflect salmon recovery gaps identified in the Snohomish and Stillaguamish Monitoring and Adaptive Management (M&AM) work and the LE 2014 Three-year Work Plan (3YWP) tables. The adaptive management section of our plan states that the LIO Executive Committee (EC) will review a subset of local gaps annually to determine progress and next steps.

For Discussion:

Criteria for Addressing Gaps and Barriers

- There are several gaps and barriers that are outside the purview of the LIO EC and/or require other inputs outside the LIO to address. Below is draft criteria for the issues we may be able to make progress on now.
 - o Eliminate Regional Needs: needs that require coordination with and input from parties outside the LIO
 - o Eliminate Ongoing Assessment Needs: local needs that can be met through ongoing assessment of LIO progress
 - o Select Overlapping Needs: local gaps and barriers important to both the LIO and LEs

Overlapping Gaps and Barriers

- The gaps identified by both the LIO and LEs are outlined in three general categories below.
- They are:
 - o Monitoring Gaps
 - o Regional Gaps
 - o Local Gaps
- Based on the criteria above, the monitoring gaps and the majority of regional gaps have been removed from the briefing memo.
- A subset of local needs the EC may be able to determine progress and next steps is provided below. Recommendations for how to address the gap or barrier are provided for the overlapping gaps/barriers.

Additional Detail and Recommendations

- **Regional¹ Vision and Leadership:** Participants noted concern that the regional vision on how products would be used was neither well developed nor oriented toward the longer term (beyond the next funding cycle). Recent planning has involved a significant amount of effort, but there is considerable uncertainty about next steps and the actual impact of the planning efforts. This was a disincentive for engagement on behalf of organizations and elected officials because there was skepticism that the products would meaningfully affect funding or local priorities. As such, there is less local motivation to orient actions toward the regional recovery goals.
 - Recommendations: LIO and LE members should continue to communicate needs for regional support and the relevancy (or irrelevancy) of products that locals are being asked to develop for the region. When possible, local elected officials and other local leaders should push for regional leaders to articulate how processes at the local level will lead to improved implementation of recovery actions. The September 2016 visit by EPA’s Peter Murchie and PSP’s Sheida Sahandy to the LIO’s Executive Committee resulted in a productive conversation on these topics. The LIO should consider similar annual meetings to encourage ongoing accountability. The LIO could also consider inviting SIAT representatives to a meeting for additional communication about regional vision and coordination with local efforts.

¹ Issues related to the “planning approach” and “regional commitment to funding” have been removed because they require other inputs outside the LIO and are being addressed by ongoing assessments/actions.

- **LIO Organization:** The LIO has had continued concerns that pairing the Stillaguamish and Snohomish basins is inappropriate, given the differing cultures, vision, and characteristics of the two large watersheds. The Salmon Recovery LE efforts are divided by basin, and participants have noted that there may be opportunity to split the LIO into two separate entities and simply add stormwater and water quality strategies onto the widely supported salmon recovery plans.
 - **Recommendations:** 2) LIO leaders and staff are currently working to better understand the overlap between LIO strategies and each Chinook recovery plan. Ongoing situation analysis and coordination discussions are expected to lead to an informed decision by the Snohomish and Stillaguamish basin groups in the coming year. Refer to briefing document regarding subcommittee work.

- **Regulatory Enforcement:** Both groups suggested that enforcement was an issue with numerous political implications and roadblocks, and could result in less resource protection than desired and the inability to generate public support for projects. Additionally, local funding gaps contribute to problems with staffing capacity for sustainable long-term enforcement.
 - **Recommendations:** 1) The LIO has suggested that regional advocacy for behavior change could help influence the social and cultural changes that could result in better enforcement capabilities. In some meetings, the potential for a new kind of regional enforcement was also brainstormed, though such a mechanism is not currently available. Staff and partners from the LIO and LEs could voice support for a state or federal mandate that would help local policies, regulations, and enforcement to achieve adequate levels of protection.

LIO Specific Gaps and Barriers (not applicable to and/or not specifically identified by the LEs)

- The additional gaps and barriers noted by the Implementation Committee are provided on a separate slide outside the briefing document. Those where the LIO EC may be able to determine next steps are copied below.
 - **Regulatory Lag**
 - Although it is important to evaluate approaches to focus future development away from hydrologically important areas, effectiveness of current plans and ordinances is unknown. This is partially due to the lag between old permits (10-year vesting) and new regulations.
 - **Data Gaps:**
 - Expand understanding of water quality and development planning.
 - Expand understanding of summer flow and development withdrawals.
 - **Investment in Public Engagement**
 - Necessary social change not happening due to limited funding and resources for outreach.
 - **Local Funding and Capacity for Enforcement**
 - Local funding is lacking to provide dedicated staffing capacity for sustainable long-term enforcement of permit violations.