

Summary Sheet

Meeting dates: December 14, 2018

Agenda item: Priority Habitats and Species – Briefing

Presenter(s): Terra Rentz, Ecosystem Services Division Manager

Background summary:

Staff will provide a briefing on the Priority Habitats and Species Program, how it related to the agency as a whole, and delivers on the agency's mission and goals. Staff will also provide an update on the status of the new management guidelines for riparian ecosystems.

Staff recommendation:

Briefing only, no policy issues being considered.

Policy issue(s) and expected outcome:

None, briefing only.

Fiscal impacts of agency implementation:

None, briefing only.

Public involvement process used and what you learned:

Regarding the management guidelines for riparian ecosystems:

Vol. 1: Science Synthesis and Management Implications – Underwent extensive scientific peer review by the Washington State Academy of Science (WSAS). WSAS found that the final document met the standards for a synthesis of current science across the range of topics.

Vol. 2: Management Recommendations – Underwent a voluntary 90-day public comment period from May-August 2018. This processes was predicated by extensive stakeholder outreach and review, including tribal partners (NWIFC), state (WDFW, ECY, DNR, DOC, RCO, SCC, and PSP) and federal (EPA) agencies. Additional outreach occurred with the Voluntary Stewardship Program Technical Panel, WA State Association of Counties, Association of Washington Cities, County Commissioners, and County Planning Directors.

Public and stakeholder responses ranged broadly. We received over 700 specific and 80 general comments from 50 commenters representing 40 different entities. Overall, we learned that there are several opportunities to be clearer and less ambiguous in the document; that managing riparian areas as critical fish and wildlife habitat areas versus as buffers for streams and shorelines is different than current practices and requires additional explanation; and that providing guidance on restoration is critical for achieving agency conservation outcomes.

Action requested and/or proposed next steps:

None.

Draft motion language:

N/A

Post decision communications plan:

N/A
