



Board of County Commissioners
1820 Jefferson Street
PO Box 1220
Port Townsend, WA 98368

Kate Dean, District 1 Heidi Eisenhour, District 2 Greg Brotherton, District 3

December 18, 2023

National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration
National Marine Fisheries Service
1315 East-West Highway, 14th Floor
Silver Spring, MD 20910

Re: Letter of Support – Snow & Salmon Creek Watershed Planning

To Whom It May Concern:

We are offering support of the Hood Canal Coordinating Council (HCCC) grant proposal titled “Snow & Salmon Creek Watershed Planning.” Jefferson County strongly supports the proposed regionally important reach-scale project that will collectively help ensure and strengthen resilience to our communities, neighboring communities, and our ecosystem, while promoting the recovery of the Hood Canal and Eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca summer-run chum salmon.

Vulnerabilities identified in the Snow Creek and Salmon Creek watershed and estuary threaten the communities within and surrounding the watershed as well as all along the northern Olympic Peninsula as the highway corridor provides the primary access to these areas with no overland alternative in case of inundation or extreme marine storm event hazards.

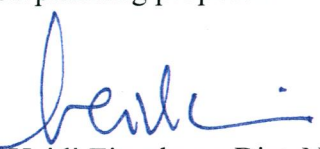
This proposal aims for a comprehensive reach-scale approach providing a vital boost towards reaching recovery targets for the Endangered Species Act listed Hood Canal and Eastern Strait of Juan de Fuca summer chum salmon. This project aims to modernize rural transportation infrastructure and significantly improve habitat connectivity and resiliency by moving forward planning and community engagement for preparation of Snow Creek and Salmon Creek strategy setting and implementation.

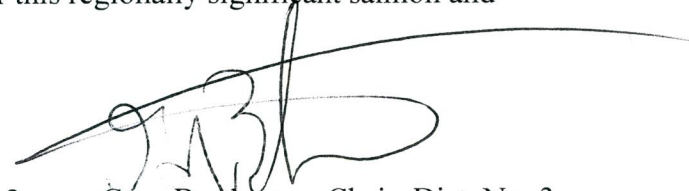
Local, State, Federal, and Tribal governments have greatly invested in summer chum recovery. With promising positive trends for Hood Canal summer chum, we have an opportunity to delist and recover the population. Delisting Hood Canal summer chum would be a nationally significant conservation achievement, providing a blueprint to others for how investments in habitat restoration and sustainable fisheries management can effectively recover salmon and steelhead stocks on the west coast.

Acting with urgency on this matter will support the collective efforts of HCCC, Tribes, and local jurisdictions to improve resiliency to adverse effects of extreme weather events and climate hazards. Thank you for your consideration of funding for this regionally significant salmon and ecosystem recovery restoration planning proposal.

Sincerely,


Kate Dean, Dist. No. 1


Heidi Eisenhour, Dist. No. 2


Greg Brotherton, Chair, Dist. No. 3