

**JEFFERSON COUNTY
BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS**

AGENDA REQUEST

TO: Board of County Commissioners

FROM: Mark McCauley, County Administrator

DATE: March 20, 2023

SUBJECT: Letters of Support: Federal Appropriation Requests Supporting Puget Sound Recovery

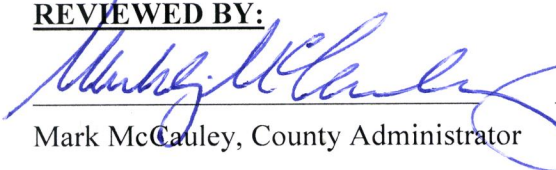
STATEMENT OF ISSUE: Laura Blackmore, Executive Director of the Puget Sound Partnership and Justin Parker, Executive Director of the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission are asking Jefferson County to support them in seeking federal appropriations to support various Puget Sound recovery efforts. They are requesting that we sign three letters seeking federal appropriations in support of a number of initiatives including, but not limited to, salmon recovery, local ecosystem recovery and biological threats and invasive species research.

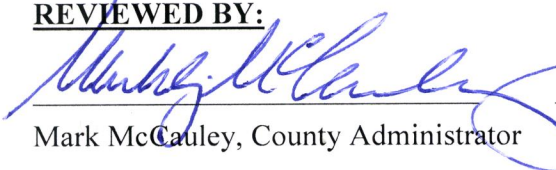
The three letters they are asking the County to sign are attached.

FISCAL IMPACT: This request has no fiscal impact.

RECOMMENDATION: That the Board of County Commissioners sign the three letters electronically using their online Google form.

REVIEWED BY:


Mark McCauley, County Administrator

 3/17/23
Date



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 > **Senate**



Updated 



Senate_InteriorEnvironment_FY24.pdf



Senate_CommerceJusticeScience_FY24.pdf



Senate_EnergyWaterDevelopment_FY24.pdf



March 31, 2023

TO: The Honorable Jeff Merkley
Chair, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Lisa Murkowski
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: **Priority appropriations for Puget Sound recovery**

Dear Chairman Merkley and Ranking Member Murkowski:

We, the undersigned, represent a broad coalition of partners from state agencies, local governments, tribes, ports, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations, who are working for a healthy Puget Sound. We thank you, most sincerely, for the much-needed investments you made in Puget Sound and salmon recovery through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. We are working with federal agencies to put that funding – alongside critical supplemental resources provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act – to good use upholding tribal treaty rights, addressing infrastructure impacts on our communities, and safeguarding critical ecosystem function for all. We look forward to sharing success stories with you in person in the coming months and years.

As Congress contemplates funding for FY24, we respectfully ask you to ensure that the final appropriations measure includes:

- **\$54 million for the Puget Sound Geographic Program (EPA).** Maintaining FY23 funding levels for this program will be essential to carrying out the large-scale, regional, federally approved recovery plan for Puget Sound. Extensive partner engagement lies at the foundation of the recovery plan, and the actions it includes are technically reviewed, ranked, and tracked for results by the Puget Sound Partnership. It also supports tribal participation in scientific research, resource recovery planning, and implementation and policy discussions on issues that affect tribal treaty rights.
- **\$50 million for the National Estuary Program (EPA).** We specifically recommend including at least \$1 million for each National Estuary Program plus \$7.5 million nationally for competitive grants and programs. This modest increase to reach the authorized funding level for this non-regulatory, locally driven program will support ecosystem recovery projects in 28 estuaries of national significance around the country, including Puget Sound.



- Robust funding for the prevention and management of European Green Crab – an invasive species that harms endangered species and adversely impacts marine resources for tribal and non-tribal communities – through the Department of Interior, including:
 - **\$300,000 for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service** for the Willapa National Wildlife Refuge and the Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge/Maritime National Wildlife Refuge Complex
 - **\$850,000 for the U.S. Geological Survey** for the Biological Threats and Invasive Species Research Program through its Western and Alaska Science Centers
 - **\$8 million for the Bureau of Indian Affairs** for the Northwest Region Invasives Species Program

These investments are urgent: Puget Sound is in serious decline. Scientists say that we can still recover Puget Sound, but only if we act boldly now. Moreover, the actions we take to recover Puget Sound will also create jobs in a wide variety of sectors, including food, hospitality, sustainable forestry, shellfish aquaculture, the maritime industry, international trade, tourism, and oil transportation safety and spill prevention. These economic impacts are significant: Every \$1 million spent on watershed restoration results in an about 17 new or sustained jobs, and as much as \$2.5 million in total economic activity. Investing in Puget Sound recovery will preserve this irreplaceable national treasure that is the hallmark of the Pacific Northwest and backbone of our coastal economy.

While we hold high hopes for the passage of a full FY24 appropriations package, in the event that a year-long continuing resolution becomes necessary, we urge you to maintain the overall FY23 enacted funding levels for those accounts (especially the State Clean Water Revolving Fund) from which Congressionally Directed Spending investments were directed.

Our shared recovery effort of federal, state, local, Tribal, and non-governmental partners is an example of broad-based, effective partnership and innovation, and has for many years received bipartisan support. For these collaborative efforts to succeed, we need full and on-going funding for ecosystem and salmon recovery programs.

The undersigned thank you again for your past support and respectfully request your support for these requests.

Signatures appear on following pages.



March 31, 2023

TO: The Honorable Jeanne Shaheen
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Jerry Moran
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: **Priority appropriations for Puget Sound recovery**

Dear Chairwoman Shaheen and Ranking Member Moran:

We, the undersigned, represent a broad coalition of partners from state agencies, local governments, tribes, ports, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations, who are working for a healthy Puget Sound. We thank you, most sincerely, for the much-needed investments you made in Puget Sound and salmon recovery through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. We are working with federal agencies to put that funding – alongside critical supplemental resources provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act – to good use upholding tribal treaty rights, addressing infrastructure impacts on our communities, and safeguarding critical ecosystem function for all. We look forward to sharing success stories with you in person in the coming months and years.

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- **\$70 million for the Pacific Coastal Salmon Recovery Fund (NOAA).** This modest increase in funding (the same amount we requested last year) would support a multi-state, multi-tribe program that has provided crucial support for salmon recovery efforts throughout the Pacific coast region.
- **\$43.5 million for the Department of Commerce (through NOAA-Salmon Management Activities) to fully implement the terms of the Pacific Salmon Treaty.** This modest increase in funding (the same amount we requested last year) is critical to meeting the provisions of the federal Endangered Species Act (ESA), upholding tribal fishing rights, and maintaining sustainable commercial and recreational fisheries.
- **\$91 million for the Pacific Salmon line item within NOAA's Protected Resources Science and Management program.** We specifically recommend that \$7 million of that amount be directed to implement federally-approved Hatchery and Genetic Management Plans (HGMP) and improve the timeliness and overall efficiency of the approval process. Separately, we also recommend that \$7



million of the overall amount be directed towards accelerating habitat consultations in NOAA's West Coast Region, including backfilling open positions to conduct that work.

- **\$5 million to the Coastal Aquatic Invasive Species Mitigation Grant Program administered by Commerce and the National Fish and Wildlife Foundation.** Robust funding for the prevention and management of European Green Crab is critical to address an invasive species that harms endangered species and adversely impacts marine resources for tribal and non-tribal communities. Those investments should also include the reestablishment of the Office of Invasive Species at NOAA headquarters.
- **\$10 million for the Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative (NOAA).** This funding (at the authorized level for this non-regulatory, locally driven program) will support Northwest Straits Marine Conservation Initiative's efforts to protect and restore the marine environment of northwest Washington by collaborating with counties to deliver coastal restoration, education, and monitoring projects.
- **\$10 million for the grant program to provide assistance to ports to reduce impacts to marine mammals (NOAA).** This funding (authorized in Sec. 11302 of the "James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023") would capitalize a grant program for ports to develop and implement measures that quantifiably reduce threats to marine mammals from vessel traffic, including shipping activities and port operations. Disturbance from noise and vessel traffic remains one of the key threats to the continued existence of our iconic Southern Resident orca whales.
- **\$200,000 to NOAA to support staffing the Puget Sound "Cetacean Desk" to reduce risks associated with vessel traffic to whales.** This funding will enable a pilot program (authorized in Sec. 11304 of the "James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023") within the Puget Sound Vessel Traffic Service that would monitor the presence and location of large cetaceans while they are in Puget Sound and improve coordination with the maritime industry to reduce the risk of vessel strikes and noise disturbances. A parallel program already exists in Canada; this would facilitate similar engagement with – and education of – vessel operators in the United States.

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March 31, 2023

TO: The Honorable Dianne Feinstein
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable John Kennedy
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies
Senate Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: **Priority appropriations for Puget Sound recovery**

Dear Chairwoman Feinstein and Ranking Member Kennedy:

We, the undersigned, represent a broad coalition of partners from state agencies, local governments, tribes, ports, businesses, and nongovernmental organizations, who are working for a healthy Puget Sound. We thank you, most sincerely, for the much-needed investments you made in Puget Sound and salmon recovery through the Consolidated Appropriations Act, 2023. We are working with federal agencies to put that funding – alongside critical supplemental resources provided in the Infrastructure Investment and Jobs Act and Inflation Reduction Act – to good use upholding tribal treaty rights, addressing infrastructure impacts on our communities, and safeguarding critical ecosystem function for all. We look forward to sharing success stories with you in person in the coming months and years.

As Congress contemplates funding for FY24, we respectfully ask you to ensure that the final appropriations measure includes:

- **\$75 million to initiate the construction phase of the Duckabush Estuary Restoration Project through the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers' (USACE) Aquatic Ecosystem Restoration Business Line – Construction General (CG) Account.** This investment – together with recent directives to USACE in Sec. 8371 of the James M. Inhofe National Defense Authorization Act for Fiscal Year 2023 – will build on over two decades of state and federal collaboration to improve the health of nearshore habitats in Puget Sound and their ability to support shorebirds, shellfish, salmon, orca, and people. The State of Washington is committed to this enduring partnership and has secured over \$45M for non-federal sponsor's obligation towards the construction phase of this project.
- **\$25 million for non-routine operations and maintenance projects to repair and upgrade the Hiram M. Chittenden Locks (USACE).** Funding in the USACE FY24 Work Plan is needed to support construction of several priority projects at the more than 100-year-old Locks, including saltwater drain intake system and exclusion structure, emergency small lock closure, emergency generator



connections and electrical system rehabilitation, and saltwater barrier replacement. Annually, the Locks support approximately 40,000 vessel transits, making them the busiest lock in the country. The Locks provide critical transportation, economic, public safety, and environmental functions. They maintain the water level of Lake Washington and Lake Union, supporting the Interstate-90 and State Route-520 floating bridges and water and sewer systems serving Mercer Island, and approximately 75 miles of developed commercial, municipal, and residential shoreline. The Locks also serve as a vital link for salmon migrating through the Lake Washington Ship Canal, which is important for federal Endangered Species Act and tribal trust responsibilities.

- **\$670 million dollars to complete constructions of downstream fish passage at Howard Hanson Dam (USACE).** We thank you for allocating \$220 million and enacting new authorization language last year. Additional funding (from currently available or future appropriations) is needed by fiscal year 2025 to complete the project within the timeframe of the Biological Opinion. Completing downstream fish passage would open approximately 100 miles of new habitat for ESA-listed salmon, support the recovery of ESA-listed Southern Resident orca whales, and represents one of the largest salmon production opportunities in Puget Sound.

These investments are urgent: Puget Sound is in serious decline. Scientists say that we can still recover Puget Sound, but only if we act boldly now. Moreover, the actions we take to recover Puget Sound will also create jobs in a wide variety of sectors, including food, hospitality, sustainable forestry, shellfish aquaculture, the maritime industry, international trade, tourism, and oil transportation safety and spill prevention. These economic impacts are significant: Every \$1 million spent on watershed restoration results in an about 17 new or sustained jobs, and as much as \$2.5 million in total economic activity. Investing in Puget Sound recovery will preserve this irreplaceable national treasure that is the hallmark of the Pacific Northwest and backbone of our coastal economy.

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March 31, 2023

TO: The Honorable Chuck Fleischmann
Chair, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Marcy Kaptur
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Energy and Water Development, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

RE: **Priority appropriations for Puget Sound recovery**

Dear Chairman Fleischmann and Ranking Member Kaptur:

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March 31, 2023

TO: The Honorable Mike Simpson
Chair, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

The Honorable Chellie Pingree
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Interior, Environment, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20515

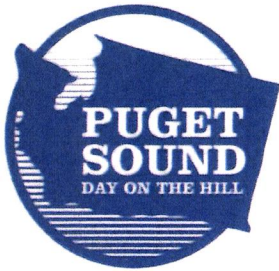
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TO: The Honorable Hal Rogers
Chair, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

The Honorable Matt Cartwright
Ranking Member, Subcommittee on Commerce, Justice, Science, and Related Agencies
House Committee on Appropriations
Washington, D.C. 20510

RE: **Priority appropriations for Puget Sound recovery**

Dear Chairman Rodgers and Ranking Member Cartwright:

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