



STATE OF WASHINGTON

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**TO:** SRFB Members and Designees  
**FROM:** Laura Johnson, Director   
**PREPARED BY:** Susan Zemek, Communications Manager  
**SUBJECT:** Communications Management Report  
**NOTEBOOK ITEM #2d**

### Communications Plan for Announcement of Grant Awards

The Salmon Recovery Funding Board's (SRFB) approval of the sixth round of grants was announced through a news release sent out by Governor Christine Gregoire's office (but written by SRFB staff) and through a series of e-mails and written communication with hundreds of stakeholders.

We had three goals:

1. Ensure that all SRFB partners knew which grants had been awarded and that there were materials available to help them publicize the grants.
2. Generate as much media coverage as possible so the public would be informed of what was happening in their communities, what the overall salmon recovery efforts have been, and what's coming in the future.
3. Reach out to local elected officials, legislators, and the congressional delegation so they could see how they were connected to the salmon recovery effort.

The results have been mixed. On the positive side, we saw a member of the Congressional delegation use the news release to promote his work in securing funding for the salmon grants. Using the SRFB news release as a base, Representative Brian Baird issued a news release announcing the grants and it was printed in several local newspapers. On the negative side, the news release received the lowest coverage in the past three years. Staff believes this was due mostly to the timing of the news release (Friday after 5 p.m., before the Monday release of the Governor's budget). In



all, we received just under 319,000 impressions,\* compared to more than 1 million impressions for the release on the previous grant round (January 2006). This grant round's media coverage is closer to the coverage garnered in December 2004 at 443,000 impressions. Because the news release is written similarly each year, the timing of the release plays a larger role. The SRFB may wish to consider rescheduling its funding meeting to early January in future years.

### **Salmon Habitat Conference**

For the first time, the SRFB will host a conference for project sponsors. Titled "Building Better Projects," the salmon habitat conference was set for April 26 in Tacoma. An estimated 380 people were to attend. Conference workshops covered topics in habitat restoration, acquisition, fish passage and screening, and nearshore and estuary issues. Guest speakers included SRFB Chair Bill Ruckelshaus, Pete Bission from the U.S. Forest Service's Pacific Northwest Research Station talking about restoration efforts and their effectiveness, and Jennifer O'Neal from Tetra Tech talking about the SRFB's latest monitoring data. More details will be presented at the SRFB meeting.

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\* Impressions represent the circulation for the publication and therefore the number of people who could have read the article. They do not include TV and radio broadcasts or Web site postings.