

Washington Council of Salmon Recovery Regional Organizations Operating Principles

Regional organizations form the foundation of the statewide salmon recovery work. They prepare locally-based recovery plans, oversee, coordinate and monitor implementation, and track and report on accomplishments. The Council of Regions (COR) includes the directors of the seven recovery regional organizations established by statute or the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO)¹. It serves as a forum to consider and advance common interests that support sustaining and recovering salmon, steelhead and bull trout. COR strives to work together to:

- Build mutual understanding of issues;
- Respect the characteristics and local priorities unique to each region;
- Identify common issues and shared priorities for action;
- Identify opportunities to achieve efficiencies through sharing of resources and work products;
- Develop, coordinate and communicate shared implementation messages; and
- Serve as an independent advisory body to the GSRO, and Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB), and other agencies on statewide issues, policies and decisions affecting salmon recovery.

With the support and coordination of the GSRO, COR helps shape policy and decision-making. COR reports regularly to the Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB). Each region works closely with their lead entities to present a unified voice when engaging in statewide initiatives that support salmon recovery. While lead entities focus on habitat restoration and protection projects, COR's platform encompasses a broader approach to recovery, including actions that address hatchery, harvest, hydro, predation, ocean conditions and climate change. COR promotes an All-H, shared burden philosophy to restoring Washington's salmon populations to healthy, harvestable levels.

Membership

COR includes the directors of the seven regional organizations as voting members. The Washington Salmon Coalition (WSC) Coordinator and Northeast region Lead Entity Coordinator will represent their respective lead entities as non-voting members.

Operating Principles and Guidelines

We will focus our discussions on the issues associated with developing and implementing an effective statewide salmon recovery program. We will avoid debating issues beyond the scope of that effort.

¹ RCW 77.85.010(7)

We represent a broad range of interests, each having an interest in how our salmon and watersheds are used, restored and protected. We respect the legitimacy of each other's interests and concerns in our efforts to forge an effective and viable statewide salmon recovery program.

We commit to understanding each other's interests and concerns. There should be no hidden agendas. We will openly and candidly share our concerns and interests and engage in thoughtful dialogue. We will listen carefully, ask questions for clarification, and respect each other's right to disagree.

We will treat each other with respect and dignity. We commit not to negatively characterize each other's motivations, values, or positions in any internal or outside discussions that we may have.

We commit to search for opportunities and creative solutions. We will focus on problem solving, rather than just stating our positions and advocating for self-interest. We commit to work out our differences at the table, with the goal of maintaining an effective statewide salmon recovery program.

We agree that engaging in COR is a priority in terms of committing our time and resources. We agree that consistency in participation is critical and we commit to make every effort to participate in meetings. However, in recognition that events may arise that prevent attendance, each participant may name an alternate to attend meetings on his or her behalf. The participants shall be responsible for ensuring their alternate is informed.

We commit to striving for consensus. Consensus does not require that all members endorse or agree with the proposal or decision, but at a minimum all members accept the proposal or decision. In the absence of consensus, members may work together to represent majority and minority views, but members may not present such views as positions of COR.

Facilitation, Representation and Administration

Regularly scheduled meetings will be held on a monthly basis, with additional meetings occurring on an as-needed basis. Meeting agenda topics will be determined jointly by COR, in consultation with the GSRO Executive Coordinator.

Regions will be represented by regional directors. Regional directors will make every effort to participate in meetings. If a regional director is unable to participate in a meeting, they may designate an alternate authorized to speak on their behalf.

Meetings will be facilitated by the GSRO Executive Coordinator. In the absence the Executive Coordinator, meetings will be facilitated by the Chair (or Vice-Chair).

The Chair will serve as the spokesperson for COR to represent consensus recommendations and decisions. Routine reports to the SRFB on COR activities and updates will be provided by regional directors on a rotating basis.

Workgroup and committee assignments will be filled on an as-needed/voluntary basis. One or more alternates may also be identified.

Administrative support, including scheduling meetings, coordinating joint communications, and disseminating information as needed, will be provided by a regional organization staff member in consultation with the Executive Coordinator.

The Chair and Vice-Chair will be selected by the voting members on an annual basis during the January meeting, or as soon thereafter as practicable.

COR will coordinate with the GSRO Executive Coordinator to develop and maintain a work plan.