

GOVERNOR'S SALMON RECOVERY OFFICE & COUNCIL OF REGIONS COMMUNICATIONS PLANNING

SUMMARY OF FINDINGS AND RECOMMENDATIONS AT A GLANCE | MARCH 2014

TO RECOVER SALMON SPECIES AND THEIR HABITAT, A SUCCESSFUL COMMUNICATIONS PLAN WOULD HELP ENSURE:

- More Washingtonians understand why salmon recovery is a priority
- Elected officials and others continue to fund salmon recovery, as a priority
- Volunteers remain enthusiastic, committed, reliable
- Private landowners embrace and execute salmon habitat recovery, and know full benefits
- Salmon professionals speak with one voice toward commonly understood goals
- Relationships with American Indian tribes would be positive and mutually supporting

WHAT NEEDS TO BE IN PLACE TO ACCOMPLISH THE ABOVE?

- Washingtonians make the link between salmon recovery and our quality of life
- Washingtonians understand the connection between salmon and our Northwest identity
- Washingtonians know their salmon recovery region, watershed, and priorities
- Washingtonians believe it's possible to protect, recover, and restore wild salmon to our waters
- Elected decision makers feel accountable to thousands working toward salmon recovery
- Salmon recovery remains grounded in local and regionally-led efforts by citizens
- County and other local governments consider salmon in growth management and shoreline master plans and

elsewhere and know where to get information

- Federal agencies fulfill obligations to manage federal lands and implement federal laws to protect and recover salmon
- State and tribal co-manager decisions on harvest and hatcheries are understood in connection with habitat recovery actions to help recover wild salmon
- State agencies want to integrate their activities with regional salmon recovery organizations
- GSRO has closer working relationship with tribal governments and staff
- Tribal governments and staff continue to work closely with regional organizations, lead entities

WHAT COMMUNICATIONS EFFORTS BY GSRO, RCO, REGIONAL, AND LEAD ENTITIES ARE CURRENTLY IN PLACE?

- Most region messaging is about progress on implementation of ESA recovery plans, is technical, and describes the "what" but not the "why" or the "so-what"; emphasizes stats without baselines or context
- Media and public are confused by lack of context, story (where we are compared to where we've been, where we're going); limited public education or outreach
- Relationship between GSRO, RCO, Council of Regions, and lead entities is hard to discern from multiple websites, "brands," organizational structure; does not convey a network
- GSRO website good clearing house; RCO has made best attempt at sharing logo, look & feel; State of the Salmon website much improved by standardized reporting and user-friendly graphics

- Communications from regions varies; outreach a requirement but ill-defined; varied look and feel
- Capacity to implement external communications/outreach is low
- Washington Salmon Coalition taking first steps; materials need messaging work; education efforts would benefit from coordination and shared effort from regions, GSRO, WDFW, and perhaps RFEs and others
- Native American Tribes are seldom mentioned in GSRO, regions, and lead entities messaging or materials
- Legislature and others are hearing dozens of different messages rather than evidence of dozens of supporters of same effort
- No visible attempt to explain or contextualize competing or just siloed salmon-related messages

RECOMMENDATIONS

- Empower regional organizations and lead entities to lead us through this phase of salmon recovery (Washington Way; forum for All-H integration; tribal membership and support)
- Update local partners on regional salmon recovery status
- Connect the dots for people; ID multiple benefits of salmon recovery for our communities
- Remind audiences of how we connect around salmon; how salmon in our streams is essential to our identity as Northwesterners
- Recruit messengers who are not salmon professionals and help them tell their stories
- Identify ways for communities to connect and share positive experiences related to salmon
- Prioritize and speak to need as Council of Regions
- Improve internal and inter-agency/entity communications
- Support lead entities as critical outreach engines
- Maintain, stabilize, and increase federal sources of funding while developing alternatives
- Partner to educate the public on basics of conservation biology

- Develop region-specific messages in context of new shared statewide message framework
- Target collateral materials to specific audiences

PRIORITY AUDIENCES

TIER ONE

- The seven regional salmon recovery organizations (with tribal and county representatives)
- Lead Entities (Washington Salmon Coalition)
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- GSRO/RCO
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups
- Governor's natural resources policy staff

TIER TWO

- Washington legislative leaders relevant to salmon recovery
- Washington and Congressional delegation
- WA Department of Ecology; DNR; and other state agencies impacting salmon recovery
- Fishing and other recreational organizations
- Local media

TIER THREE

- Private Landowners
- Federal agencies, primarily NOAA, USFS, USFWS, EPA, and Army COE
- Potential partners
- Civic and community groups, e.g., Rotary, faith, veterans, school

GSRO & COUNCIL OF REGIONS COMMUNICATIONS WORKING GROUP

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