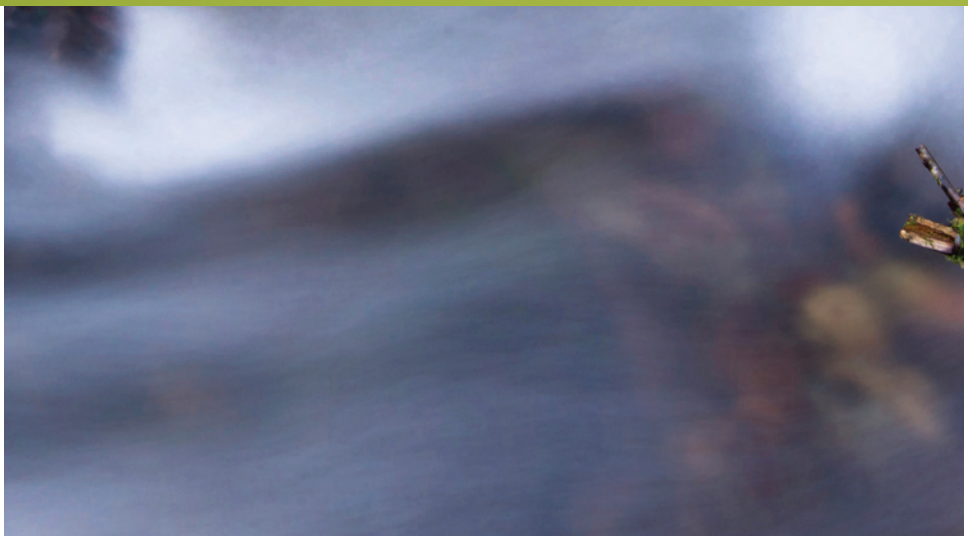
GOVERNOR'S SALMON RECOVERY OFFICE & COUNCIL OF REGIONS

MESSAGE FRAMEWORK | APRIL 2014



INTRODUCTION

While the message framework is designed primarily for the regional salmon recovery organizations, all members of the salmon recovery network can use it to introduce their stories or requests, highlight the supporting arguments that best make their case, and fill in with specifics unique to their watersheds or their organizations.

The Framework holds the supporting arguments that best make our case. And it helps ensure that we begin every communication with:

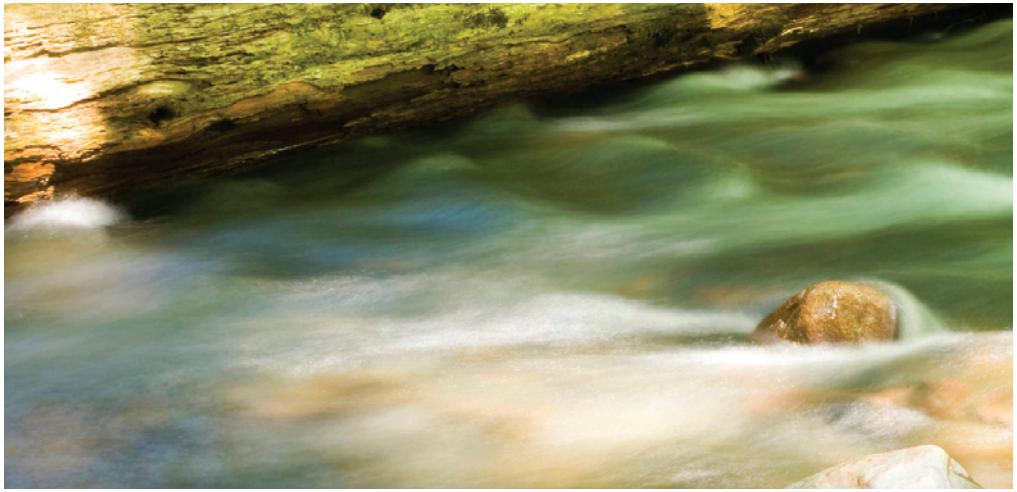
- the values we share
- our identity as Northwesterners
- our fealty to this place and to our communities
- how working together to ensure a future we want to live in connects us
- that this is why we are working to recover salmon

It names the multiple benefits that salmon recovery provides our communities, and it acknowledges that this is a lifetime commitment.

VALUES

What the organization values in the world that motivates and inspires its work.

- Clean water and air, a healthy Pacific Northwest we can all enjoy
- Our identity as residents of this unique place
- Our connection to one another
- Our commitment to strong and vibrant communities
- Safe and healthy food (salmon)
- Using our resources sustainably so they persist for the future generations
- The independence that allows us to chart our own future



VISION

How the world would be different if the organization achieved its mission.

Our rivers would be cleaner and less likely to flood; our forests would be healthier; we'd have more fish and wildlife, generally, with sustainable harvests of salmon. We could take our grandchildren fishing where we used to fish. Our natural systems would provide protection from the excesses of a changing climate. We could continue to live in a Pacific Northwest we recognize.

MISSION

A one-sentence, overarching description of the organization's purpose, what it does, and how. It's the big-picture summary, not a laundry list of activities.

Washington's regional salmon recovery organizations coordinate the work of thousands of volunteers and professionals implementing recovery and sustainability plans to restore salmon to our landscape.

PRIORITY AUDIENCES

Priority audiences are those groups or individuals with the authority, responsibility and capacity to make decisions that will directly benefit or hinder progress toward key objectives. Targeting outreach, relationship-building, education, and messaging to these audiences is the most effective use of limited resources. Tier One audiences with time and attention become key messengers.

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

KEY MESSAGES

SALMON BIND US TO THIS REGION AND TO ONE ANOTHER

Salmon are a symbol of resilience, strength, and survival in the dramatic and changing landscape we share.

For millennia, the annual return of salmon has been revered and celebrated by Native American tribes.

By treaty alone, we are honor-bound to restore salmon to abundance and support sustainable fisheries. In turn, we are helping to ensure a future we all want to live in.

Today, thousands of people gather to witness the salmon's homecoming in rivers across our state.

RESTORING SALMON EASES A STRESSED PACIFIC NORTHWEST

For 100 years, we put salmon at risk: we blocked fish passage with dams, overdrew water from streams and rivers, let runoff carry pollutants into our shorelines, and managed our forests primarily for harvest.

We also managed salmon harvest and hatchery production in ways that kept salmon populations depressed.

The good news is that by correcting the mistakes of our past, we can better prepare ourselves for a whole new set of challenges in our future. Waters and forests, shorelines and riverbanks healthy enough to support salmon also help our communities be more resilient in the face of,

- Fluctuating temperatures
- Shrinking snowpack
- Wetter springs and winters
- Drier summers and falls
- Flood & forest fire risk
- Dead zones in our estuaries (low dissolved oxygen)
- Acidification of our oceans (absorbing excess carbon from the atmosphere)

INVESTMENTS IN SALMON RECOVERY PROVIDE MULTIPLE BENEFITS

Clean and reliably available water is essential for safe drinking, sustaining our farms and gardens, and swimming and boating.

Free flowing rivers provide fish passage and great rafting.

Reconnecting streams to their flood plains lessens flood risks for our communities.

Healthy forests absorb carbon and improve the air; they provide shade, cooler temperatures, and refuge for wildlife. Healthy forests hold water—essential for areas with shrinking snow pack. They provide economic opportunity for rural communities, and recreation for hikers, packers, hunters, and foragers.

Unarmored shorelines filter pollution, support shellfish, shelter salmon, and aid all species challenged by rising sea levels.

Tourism, hospitality, and recreational fishing feed our economy; all are driven by a healthy Pacific Northwest and salmon safe to eat.

WE ARE SHAPING OUR OWN FUTURES: SALMON RECOVERY IS LOCALLY DESIGNED AND LED

When salmon got listed, Washington got organized.

Seven regional salmon recovery organizations coordinate the work of hundreds of volunteers and professionals in each watershed to implement locally crafted recovery and sustainability plans.

The regional salmon recovery organizations ensure projects recommended for funding will help implement their plans; they monitor, evaluate, and report on progress to the Governor and the Legislature.

Project funding allocations are decided in public; the process is transparent and accountable.

RESTORING SALMON IS WORKING, BUT THERE IS MUCH MORE TO DO

With the implementation of strong recovery plans, we've lessened the threats to our economy and livelihoods that we feared a federal ESA listing would provoke.

Our goal is ambitious: natural systems that can support healthy, sustainably harvestable salmon populations.

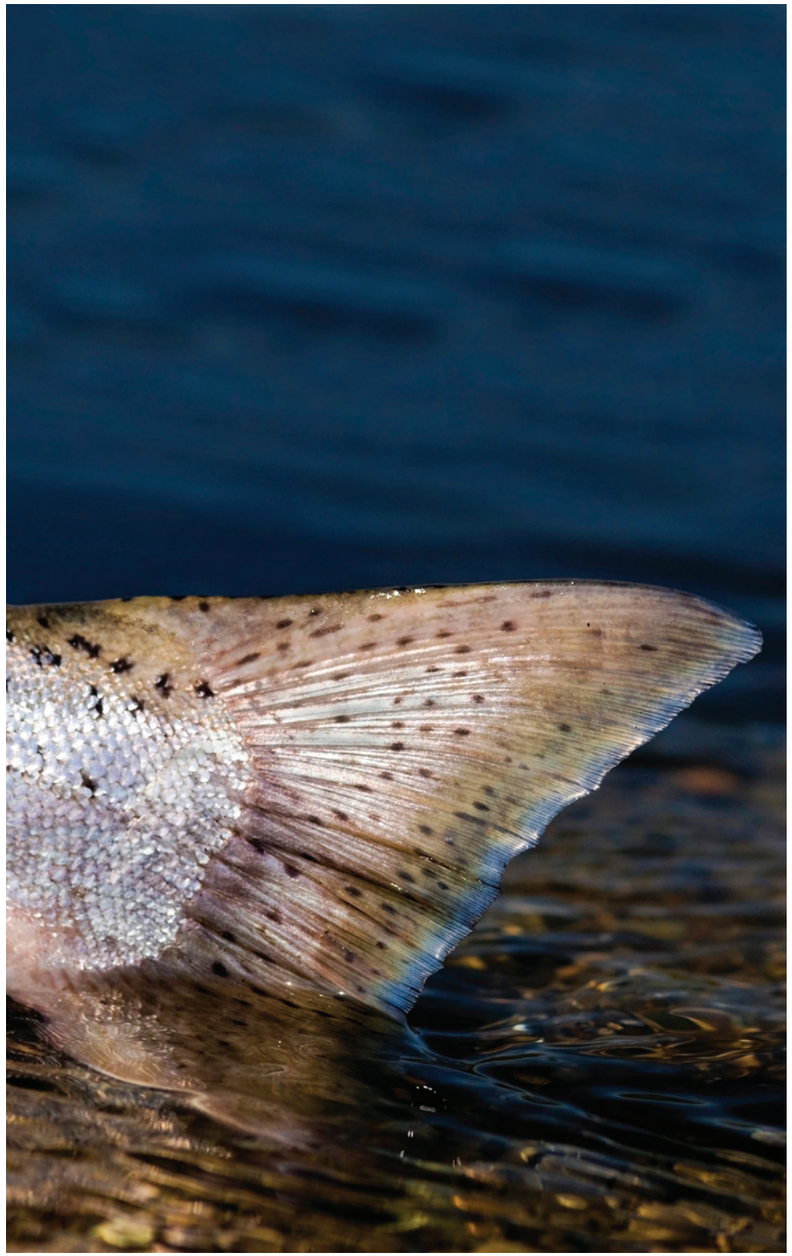
We've recovered a lot of habitat, and returns have increased, but we're still only at a fraction of what we had 100 years ago.

Restoring habitat must be met with equal commitment to protect the best of the rest.

Integrating hatchery and harvest reforms with habitat recovery is essential: WDFW funding must be restored.

It took a human lifetime to bring salmon to the brink of extinction; it will take at least that long to bring them back.

This is a lifetime commitment.



WHERE DOES MY ORGANIZATION'S MESSAGING FIT IN?

You can tailor the messaging in this booklet to show how the work of your organization relates to the larger statewide salmon recovery effort and to frame up specific messages unique to your region. To demonstrate unity and the size of the network, try to stay true to the primary (bolded) messages and tailor or add to second- and third-level messages. To help you think about how your work and messages connect to the larger effort, you might ask:

- Which of our shared values most guide the thinking of my organization or audience?
- What does my organization contribute uniquely to the salmon recovery network?
- What specific results will my organization's work lead to?
- How are we doing that work?
- What can others do to support it?

ELEVATOR STATEMENT

An elevator statement is a concise and compelling statement about an organization, initiative, or cause, which you would verbally use as a lead in to a conversation. You can revise this elevator statement to feel comfortable in your own words and reflect your organization's work.

When Washington's salmon populations were listed as endangered in the late 1990s, we decided to write our own regionally-specific recovery and sustainability plans. Seven regional salmon recovery organizations now coordinate the work of thousands of people working across our state to restore our rivers, streams, forests, and shorelines. What's good for salmon is good for us all. Investing in this work now helps ensure we'll maintain what we love about the Pacific Northwest into the future.

EXAMPLE NARRATIVE

Salmon are a symbol of what connects us.

Salmon bind together the unique features of our landscape and our communities: the salmon's migration brings the ocean to our mountains and high deserts.

Salmon inspire us: they persist across a dynamic and sometimes cataclysmic geography of landslides, earthquakes, roaring rivers, skyscraper trees; they cross busy ports and highways, heavily populated cities and suburban backyards, and hundreds of miles of farmland.

We need and want our shorelines, rivers, and forests to be as healthy as salmon need them to be.

Our communities are made stronger and our lives enriched by the multiple returns from our investments in salmon recovery: cleaner air and water, less flooding, stronger river banks, fewer forest fires, more refuge from hotter temperatures, healthier shellfish farms, more fishing, better hiking, continued tourism, and salmon safe to eat.

And so we have come together by the thousands across Washington in an unprecedented network of regional recovery organizations coordinating the efforts of volunteers, private landowners, farmers and fishers, scientists and restaurateurs, working with Native American tribes and state and federal agency staff to protect and restore what's good for all of us.

It's working because we are committed to making decisions that allow our natural world to function for the greatest number of shared benefits.

This is a lifetime commitment. We are changing how we live today so that we will all have the Washington we love in the future.

SALMON CONNECT US: We're working together to restore wild salmon and retain the Pacific Northwest we love.

Salmon are a symbol of the abundance and vitality of the Pacific Northwest. Saving them means we must respect and restore our natural environment to a condition that can support them—and us. Thousands of people across Washington are working together through regional recovery organizations to restore our rivers, streams, forests, and shorelines. We are building the future we want to live in.

Produced by Pyramid Communications