

Southern Resident Killer Whale Executive Order Immediate Action Report June 14, 2018

Executive Order Task
Identify the highest priority areas and watersheds for Southern Resident prey in order to focus or adjust, as needed, restoration, protection, incentives, hatcheries, harvest levels, and passage policies and programs.

Completion Date	July 31, 2018		
Lead Agency	Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW)		
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Supporting Agencies, if applicable	Governor's Salmon Recovery Office (GSRO) Puget Sound Partnership (PSP)		

Outcomes/Progress Narrative
<p>WDFW and NOAA have developed criteria in order to determine Chinook stocks that are likely to be most beneficial to Southern Residents. These criteria take into account the best available information on whale diet at different times and places, fisheries data about chinook stocks that overlap with whale distribution, and prioritizing stocks that if boosted may aid the Southern Residents at a critical time of year.</p> <p>The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation (NFWF) held a workshop June 12-13 2018, where the focus was to bring together a small group of agency, academic, non-profit and other scientists and managers to provide feedback and validation on the priorities criteria. The review of initial priorities included evaluation of the considerations used to identify priorities (i.e., percent of diet, overlap in distributions, seasonal importance, growth potential of stock, etc.) and modeled the outputs of which stocks would rise to be priorities based on criteria selected. NOAA and WDFW have further refined the criteria based upon input from the workshop.</p> <p>At the same time, in May and June 2018 the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, Puget Sound Partnership and the Salmon Recovery Council convened conversations around how best to move the needle on Chinook recovery, including how Southern Resident recovery efforts connect to their work. These recovery groups have recognized that their actions could be more effective and the goal is to advance a conversation around prioritizing watersheds for habitat and other recovery actions with new and existing funding resources.</p>

WDFW, GSRO and PSP will ensure that these regional conversations about the role and priority of watersheds for Chinook recovery get integrated into the SRKW Prey Working Group discussions and outcomes. In late June, WDFW and GSRO are introducing the outcomes of the prioritization work SRKW Prey Working Group to evaluate the criteria and/or priorities developed by NOAA/WDFW and at the NFWF workshop in order to build in regional specifics to potential actions forwarded to the Task Force. The Working Group will refine the actions and provide a variety of considerations such as social, economic or policy criteria that may further prioritize the individual actions for various areas/stocks identified.

To assist with communication and public awareness, WDFW, with partners, is leading the development of a simple online storymap that will better visually display killer whale distribution throughout the year as well as their diet in those places and times.

As more information becomes available and the above discussions mature, the storymap may evolve as a place to access this information. The idea is that this storymap may in the longer term of the Task Force work, assist with the visual representation of SRKW priority actions, and can also aid in telling the story around Chinook recovery priorities.