



**Seattle  
Public  
Utilities  
Seattle City Light**

January 29, 2019

Ingrid Jones  
Streamflow Restoration Lead – WRIA 7  
Water Resources Program – Northwest Regional Office  
Washington State Department of Ecology

Dear Ingrid and WRIA 7 WREC Members:

This letter expresses the City of Seattle's (Seattle Public Utilities and Seattle City Light) interest in becoming an Ex Officio Member of the WRIA 7 Watershed Restoration and Enhancement Committee (WREC). As a large land owner in the basin, major water supplier, and active vested stakeholder in the WRIA 7, Seattle believes its history in the basin, perspective and resources will support this community-based planning effort.

The City of Seattle owns and operates the Tolt Reservoir and Dam, located 16 miles upstream from the City of Carnation on the South Fork Tolt River. The reservoir stores 57,900 acre-ft of water to supply approximately 35% of the drinking water for 1.4 million people in the metropolitan Seattle area. The South Fork Tolt Dam is also managed to provide beneficial flows for fish and other instream resources in the South Fork Tolt River downstream of the dam. In addition, water temperature during the summer and early fall are managed to meet water quality standards by releasing water from multiple intakes at different depths in the reservoir.

The City of Seattle purchased its water rights to the Tolt River from the Mountain Water Company in 1936. Logging by the Weyerhaeuser Company in the reservoir area began around 1946 and continued until 1957. The South Fork Tolt Dam was constructed in 1963 and Seattle began diverting municipal-supply water from the South Fork Tolt River in 1964 as part of the City's freshwater supply system. Since 1995, the supply has also supported a hydro-electric facility and is managed under a Federal Energy and Regulatory Commission (FERC) license that was finalized in 1989. Under the license long-term provisions for flows, and measures on behalf of the protection, mitigation and restoration of the South Fork Tolt River anadromous fish resources were established.

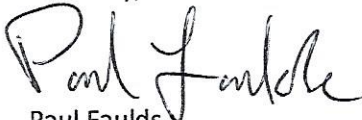
In 1997, the City of Seattle successfully exchanged lands within the South Fork Tolt watershed with the Weyerhaeuser Company, giving Seattle 70% ownership (approx. 8400 acres) of the land that supplies the water to the reservoir and is a large portion of the South Fork Tolt River head waters. The eastern 30% lies in the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest. The City now manages this land under the South Fork Tolt Municipal Watershed Management Plan largely focusing on near-term road system improvements, small aquatic habitat restoration projects, and implementing the plan's long-term forest habitat management program. The City also has land ownership in the North Fork Tolt River, Stossel Creek and the Tolt River.

Seattle is an active, engaged stakeholder in WRIA 7 that has focused on salmon recovery, working collaboratively to protect and restore aquatic ecosystems through the purchase of strategic land parcels for protection of important habitats. The City's water management strategies, funding and implementation of research, restoration projects and monitoring are vital to the ongoing understanding and protection of anadromous salmonids and aquatic habitat. Examples of our recent WRIA 7 involvement include:

- Land acquisitions focused on protection and restoration for salmon recovery. Currently 161 acres have been purchased under the SCL ESA Lands Program on the Tolt River and Stossel Creek.
- Identifying and implementing restoration projects including the completion of the Lower Tolt River Floodplain Restoration Project, where the City, provided both key financial sponsorship and technical expertise in partnership with King County and multiple grant funders; and completion of the South Fork Tolt Large Woody Debris project with the collaboration of the Tolt Fish Advisory Committee.
- Participating in long-term monitoring including funding over 20 years of Chinook spawning surveys by the Tulalip Tribes and summer and winter steelhead spawning surveys by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife on the South Fork Tolt River; funding the USGS stream gage network in the Tolt and Snoqualmie to monitor stream flows and water/air temperature in the Tolt and Snoqualmie Rivers, managing a temperature logger network to complement the gages and collaborating with other stake holders and researchers as part of SnoSCAT.
- Implementing protective stream flow management practices that provide beneficial stream flows and water temperature for all salmon and steelhead life stages in the South Fork Tolt River.
- Participating in stakeholder groups including chairing the Tolt Fish Advisory Committee and Co-Chairing along with the Wild Fish Conservancy the Tolt Fish Habitat Restoration Group.
- Implementing research focused on salmon and steelhead including a summer steelhead juvenile life history study which has also contributed to understanding of the genetic makeup of Tolt summer and winter steelhead, stream substrate studies, and a scour study on the South Fork Tolt River.
- Participating in salmon recovery as members of the WRIA 7 Technical team and the Snohomish Salmon Recovery Forum, the Snoqualmie Fish Farm and Flood Advisory Committee and its buffer task force to name a few.

As an Ex Officio Member the City of Seattle will be at the table, able to actively engage in the planning process. Seattle is part of the WRIA 7 community and has a tremendous amount of knowledge and experience in creating long-term community-based plans focused on natural resources. We believe our history in the basin, perspective as a major water supplier, and expertise in the area of water management, hydrology, engineering, and fish biology will benefit this planning effort.

Sincerely,



Paul Faulds  
Water Resources Manager  
Seattle Public Utilities



Kate Engel  
Science Policy Manager  
Seattle City Light