



Dungeness River Management Team

Cooperative Management of Our Watershed's Resources

Coordinated by Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Clallam County
1033 Old Blyn Highway • Sequim, WA 98382 • (360) 683-1109

May 18, 2015

Senator Jim Hargrove
PO Box 40424
Olympia, WA 98504

RE: Dungeness River Management Team Capital Budget Support – Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR)

Dear Senator Hargrove,

The Dungeness River Management Team (DRMT) expresses its complete support for **fully funding the 2015 Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) capital budget request, including the use of funds for acquisition**, a critical tool for reversing habitat loss.

The State Senate's inadequate version of the budget cuts \$5 million from the \$30 million needed for implementing high priority projects. This action would both slow the pace of and threaten the region's progress toward Puget Sound recovery. Further, preventing land acquisition funds per a Senate-proposed budget proviso would substantially weaken the PSAR program's capacity to protect and restore habitat. The importance of acquisition to restoration and protection cannot be overstated. **We strongly urge that the Senate budget proviso be eliminated.**

As you know, North Olympic salmon stocks are greatly diminished from what their numbers were previously, and there are now four ESA-threatened salmon species in the Dungeness River watershed. Three of the eight proposed projects are within the DRMT focus area, and would not all be funded at the \$25 million level. These include:

- *Dungeness River Railroad Reach Restoration* - Trestle Replacement Phase,
- *Dungeness River Floodplain Restoration* - the Robinson Phase, and;
- *Sequim Bay Shoreline Restoration* - Dawley Phase

The Robinson Phase of the *Dungeness River Floodplain Restoration* requires acquisition prior to restoration, and would not be possible if acquisition is not eligible for funding. This restoration project will result in over 29 acres of floodplain habitat restored, to which public access will be provided.

Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration funding has proven an invaluable tool in our area for advancing Puget Sound Recovery. Since 2007, PSAR dollars have supported local actions to recover the lower Dungeness River floodplain, create log jams in the Elwha River to maximize restoration, and remove undersized culverts in Washington Harbor, to name but a few. If funded, the current PSAR proposals will continue the multiple environmental and economic benefits to Puget Sound, boosting the economy

by creating jobs for construction crews, heavy equipment operators, engineers, biologists, planners, surveyors, and others.

PSAR projects are well-vetted, and structured to fund properly sequenced and high priority restoration. This PSAR proposal, in tandem with the Coordinated Investment for Puget Sound Floodplains, will advance the clean-up of Puget Sound area waters and help ensure that salmon continue to be a part of the way of life here for all. **The DRMT supports funding for PSAR at the \$50 million level requested by the Governor, and again – this must include funding for acquisition if Puget Sound recovery is to reach success.**

On behalf of the Dungeness River Management Team, thank you very much for your consideration.

Sincerely,



Scott Chitwood, Chair, DRMT
Dungeness River Management Team (membership listed below)

Clallam Conservation District (Advisory)

Clallam County

Clallam PUD #1 (Advisory)

City of Sequim

Dungeness Beach Association

Dungeness National Wildlife Refuge (USFWS) (Advisory)

Dungeness-Quilcene Watershed Planning

Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe

North Olympic Land Trust

Protect the Peninsula's Future

Riverside Property Owners

Sequim-Dungeness Water Users Association

Sports Fisheries

US Forest Service (Advisory)

WA Department of Ecology

CC: Senator Jim Honeyford, Representative Steve Tharinger, Representative Kevin Van De Wege, Cheryl Baumann, House Capitol Budget Committee, Senate Ways and Means Committee