



# Skagit County Board of Commissioners

Ron Wesen, First District  
Peter Browning, Second District  
Lisa Janicki, Third District

June 11, 2024

Puget Sound Partnership  
PO Box 40900  
Olympia, WA 98504

**Re: Similk Estuary Restoration Project**

To whom it may concern,

Skagit County writes to express its commitment to fully support the Similk Estuary Restoration Project proposed by Skagit River System Cooperative (SRSC) and the Swinomish Indian Tribal Community. Skagit County recognizes the extraordinary efforts of SRSC to secure over \$8.2 million dollars. The bulk of which is to improve Satterlee Road, under Skagit County jurisdiction, by replacing an existing tide-gate with a new bridge to allow free movement of tidal influence and replace the need to operate a pump. The existing infrastructure is ecologically problematic, maintenance intensive, and will be further threatened by anticipated sea level rise. Skagit County also supports the benefit to salmon recovery and tribal treaty rights this project will accomplish by restoring vital pocket estuary salmon habitat for the benefit of federally threatened Puget Sound Chinook and other species.

Skagit County and SRSC have worked to develop an interlocal agreement (ILA) for the road and bridge final design package over the past 15 months, and the County is committed to executing the ILA in the very near future. The ILA solidifies the County's significant dedication of staff resources overseeing the final design work for changes to County infrastructure in full cooperation with SRSC. Skagit County is committed to prioritizing and expediting the design work and developing a mutually agreeable schedule targeting the 2025 construction window. If required reviews and/or procurement requirements push the construction schedule out past 2025 then the County is fully committed to construction in 2026.

Skagit County is prepared to immediately commit at least 850 hours of staff time for design review, collaboration, stakeholder outreach, and other tasks. We continue to have internal discussions on possible funding sources for the project but are committed to dedicate staff time and be an active partner with SRSC. The County recognizes the project has a benefit to the community in a variety of ways including transportation access, improved infrastructure, reduced maintenance on the road and associated pump, climate resiliency, and salmon habitat restoration. We fully support SRSC's efforts to seek funding for the Similk Estuary Restoration Project and are excited to be partnering in this effort.

Sincerely,

**BOARD OF COUNTY COMMISSIONERS  
SKAGIT COUNTY, WASHINGTON**

  
Peter Browning, Chair

  
Lisa Janicki, Commissioner

  
Ron Wesen, Commissioner