Resolution 2017-01
Accelerating and amplifying Chinook salmon recovery for Southern Resident Killer Whales

WHEREAS, the Partnership is designated by law to serve as the regional recovery organization for Puget Sound Chinook salmon; and

WHEREAS, Puget Sound Chinook salmon are crucially important to our tribal partners, commercial and recreational fishers, and the average Puget Sound resident; and

WHEREAS, it is well established that our endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales (hereinafter orcas) depend heavily on Chinook salmon for food, both in Puget Sound and at sea; and

WHEREAS, orcas are an iconic and treasured species throughout the Pacific Northwest, whose numbers continue to decline; and,

WHEREAS, recent science indicates that reduced availability of Chinook salmon within and outside Puget Sound undermines the potential for the orca population to successfully reproduce and recover; and

WHEREAS, science indicates that salmon recovery throughout Washington State and elsewhere along the West Coast—including the Columbia and Fraser River Basins—is urgently needed for orca recovery; and

WHEREAS, there remains scientific uncertainty on the potential of various West Coast Chinook salmon stocks and associated management strategies and actions to improve prey availability and quality for orcas;

NOW, THEREFORE BE IT RESOLVED that the Leadership Council commits to both accelerate and amplify efforts to recover sustainable, harvestable runs of Chinook salmon originating in Puget Sound; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support the “Washington Way” in sustaining salmon recovery statewide – calling on each region to identify strategies and actions to restore robust salmon runs; and

BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED that we support the collaboration between Federal, State, and Tribal partners in the U.S. with their counterparts in Canada and the First Nations to identify and implement science-based strategies and actions that will restore robust salmon runs to increase food supply for orcas, while also meeting treaty right and international obligations and salmon recovery goals; and
BE IT FURTHER RESOLVED, that the Leadership Council strongly supports timely and focused efforts to bring together experts within and outside of Puget Sound, to identify priority West Coast Chinook salmon runs and implement actions with the highest potential to increase Chinook populations, and access to and availability of food for orcas.

Resolution Moved By: Stephanie Solien

Resolution Seconded By: Deborah Jensen

Approved/Denied/Deferred

DATE: November 1, 2017