



The following is an excerpt from the upcoming Tri-County proposed salmon protection and recovery framework. The proposed framework is referred to in the Summary section of the draft "4(d) Rule" that will provide protection for the 14 populations of federally protected salmon and steelhead from California's Central Valley to Washington's Puget Sound. The Rule will be issued by the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) in the near future. The proposed framework will be published in the Federal Register in late January 2000.

The Tri-County group, formed in early 1998 when King, Snohomish, and Pierce counties brought together cities, tribes, businesses, the environmental community, utilities and other community groups to recover salmon, has worked hard to exercise local control over how the 4(d) rule will affect the Puget Sound region. The language below reflects that work.

At this time, the Tri-County Group has not had a chance to review the complete draft 4(d) Rule. However, we are very encouraged that NMFS is including the work that the Tri-County has done to date to recover the salmon.

I. SUMMARY OF THE RULE

"The NMFS proposes limitations on the prohibitions on take in the Puget Sound ESU for cities and counties in compliance with the complete program of scientifically based, mandatory actions specified in the final 4(d) rule for the Puget sound ESU. The program of mandatory actions includes two phases as follows. Phase One must be completed within 5 years. In the first two years of Phase One, cities and counties will be required to complete the Early Action Program (EAP) specified in the final 4(d) rule. The EAP shall include regulatory improvements to land use and land development standards and procedures, a model stormwater program, road maintenance standards, commitments to habitat acquisition and restoration, performance of Watershed Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) assessments, and development of WRIA Planning process principles and conservation principles.

In the third through fifth years, cities and counties are required to implement the planning and process principles and complete WRIA Plans in compliance with the conservation principles. Phase Two would begin on the date the NMFS approves the WRIA Plan and would continue until the delisting of the Puget Sound ESU as long as participating jurisdictions have legally committed to implementing the WRIA Plan and remain in compliance with the requirements of the WRIA Plan."

For more information on Tri-County salmon recovery and how the public can get involved, please visit the Tri-County's Salmon Information Center at <http://www.salmoninfo.org>, or call the toll-free helpline at 1-877-SALMON-9.

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