



**COMMISSION**  
**AGENDA MEMORANDUM**

**Item No.** 7a.

**BRIEFING ITEM**

**Date of Meeting** September 24, 2019

**DATE:** September 17, 2019

**TO:** Stephen P. Metruck, Executive Director

**FROM:** Sandra Kilroy, Director, Maritime Environment and Sustainability  
Jane Dewell, Maritime Stormwater Program Manager

**SUBJECT:** Salmon-Safe Recertification Presentation to Maritime Division

**EXECUTIVE SUMMARY**

At the September 24, 2019 Commission meeting, Salmon-Safe will provide a brief presentation and a plaque to the Port of Seattle in recognition of our salmon-safe certification.

The Port of Seattle's Maritime Division has been granted recertification under the Parks and Natural Areas standard by Salmon-Safe. Salmon-Safe is an independent 501(c)3 nonprofit organization that developed certification standards to recognize and support habitat and water quality improvements on rural and urban lands. The Port's Maritime parks and public access areas have been Salmon-Safe certified since 2008. This environmental assessment and management system is unique to Cascadia and conducted exclusively by Salmon-Safe in Washington, Oregon, California and British Columbia. The market driven conservation measure highlights work that the Port performs to benefit salmon and the marine environment. In addition to the Parks and Natural Areas certification, the Seattle-Tacoma Airport was certified by Salmon-Safe in 2016 through the organization's infrastructure standard and is the first airport in the U.S. to receive this designation.

**BACKGROUND**

Since 1998, Salmon-Safe has successfully defined and promoted ecologically sustainable development and land management practices that protect water quality and aquatic biodiversity throughout the Northwest. Businesses and other landowners achieve Salmon-Safe certification after a rigorous assessment and independent verification of their operations by experts in stormwater, landscape management and fish biology. The Salmon-Safe Parks and Natural Areas initiative is the nation's first certification program linking park system development and operation with the protection of water quality and an imperiled species. In Washington State, Salmon-Safe activities include more than 100 farms, orchards, and dairies. Together they engage corporate, commercial and institutional landowners in addressing critical issues impacting Northwest salmon and Puget Sound including urban and municipal parks projects.

Meeting Date: September 24, 2019

The Port has participated in the Salmon-Safe program since 2008, when maritime parks and public access points along the Duwamish and Elliott Bay were among the first Washington sites to receive certification. In 2016, the Seattle-Tacoma airport was added as the first U.S. airport certified under Salmon-Safe’s infrastructure standard.

The Salmon-Safe certification is a continuous improvement program that involves reassessment every five years. Salmon-Safe conducts an assessment for site-wide certification of the approximately 50-acre Port system of eight parks and 22 public access areas, including review of restoration master planning and activities, landscape management, stormwater systems, habitat restoration, and design guidance in future park development to ensure alignment with Salmon-Safe standards. Policy and field-level evaluations are conducted using Salmon-Safe’s peer reviewed Park and Natural Area standards to evaluate whether park system planning, operations and restoration activities are consistent with Salmon-Safe principles of net-positive watershed impact.

The recent recertification actions included the following:

- (1) Site visit and meeting – the Salmon-Safe science team and Port staff visited Port parks and publicly accessible properties on March 20, 2019 to evaluate landscape, stormwater treatment, and habitat restoration projects developed since the last recertification cycle. Properties included the Horton Street Marine Maintenance facility; Terminals 102, 105, and 108 parks; Jack Block, 8<sup>th</sup> Avenue, and Centennial parks; Maritime Industrial Center; and Fishermen’s Terminal.
- (2) Report and outreach – a report of findings on the past cycle and recommendations for the next five-year cycle was provided to the Port, with meetings to discuss findings and next steps for continuous improvement. Accomplishments between 2013 and 2018 included updating the Port’s Landscape Management Guidelines, revising the fertilizer management plan, implementing a water conservation plan, assessing opportunities for additional opportunities for stormwater treatment and habitat restoration, and installing at least two stormwater treatment and habitat restoration projects.
- (3) Verification – annual review of progress and to address questions and changes will be provided by Salmon-Safe staff. Salmon-Safe defined seven new conditions for the Port through 2023, with various milestones along the way.

Port maintenance and environmental staff carry out the work associated with maintaining certification, from landscape management to habitat development to innovative stormwater treatment projects. The certification program is consistent with and supports the Century Agenda to be the greenest Port in North America.

**NEXT STEPS**

Ellen Southard, Salmon-Safe’s Puget Sound Manager, will provide a brief presentation and a plaque to the Commissioners during the September 24, 2019 Commission meeting.

Meeting Date: September 24, 2019

**ATTACHMENTS TO THIS BRIEFING**

- (1) Presentation slides

**PREVIOUS COMMISSION ACTIONS OR BRIEFINGS**

January 8, 2019 – The Commission authorized funding for three cycles of Salmon-Safe review and recertification

June 28, 2016 – The Commission was briefed on Salmon-Safe certification for the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport