

Tribal Engagement Overview

Finance, Native Communities, and Tribal Governments Committee
March 17, 2026

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Tribal Relations Advisor

Agenda

- Background of Tribal advisor position and why it is important
- Provide background on our work and an update on Tribal Engagement for various SPU/City projects
- Inform on future outreach for projects that are in the planning stages
- Questions



Background - SPU Tribal Relations

- Numerous SPU infrastructure, projects, and programs occur in areas of potential Tribal interest
- SPU exercises government-to-government relationships with Tribal governments by:
 - Implementing negotiated agreements with Tribal governments;
 - Conducting Tribal consultation through federal, state, and local cultural resource and environmental regulatory processes; and
 - Conducting Tribal engagement on a broad range of issues of interest to Tribal governments
- Where appropriate, SPU also engages urban Indian organizations in variety of projects to integrate the priorities and interests of Native communities



Shared Areas of Interest

Combined
Sewer
Overflows

Duwamish
River Clean Up

Fisheries
Management

Interpretative
Signage

Long Range
Planning

Urban
Watershed
Management

Water Quality

Bitter Lake Reservoir Interpretive Signage

- Bitter Lake Reservoir Improvement Project – replacing the existing 21-million-gallon Bitter Lake drinking water reservoir, an expanded park space, and public art
- Tribal engagement on integration of stories, language, or Tribal histories



Salmon Bay Natural Area Interpretive Sign



20+ year restoration project near the Ballard Locks

Tribal and Native engagement in interpretation signage renewal and public art rededication with Native partners

Thornton Creek Watershed Culvert Strategy



Early stages of developing a comprehensive creek culvert strategy to address fish passage barriers in Thornton Creek Watershed

Met with WSDOT Fish Passage staff to review lessons learned from State efforts

Initiating Tribal engagement early to ensure we connect with our Tribal partners in this planning process to be respectful of the Tribal priorities

South Park Water Quality Facility

- Building a water quality treatment facility along the Duwamish River in the South Park neighborhood
- Tribal government and community outreach and engagement to discuss potential for salmon habitat and the merits of off-channel versus intertidal bench habitat approaches
- Working with ARTS and planning artist to identify opportunities for Indigenous art and cultural placemaking



Cedar River Sockeye Hatchery



- SPU's Cedar River hatchery is a long-term commitment to account for blocking sockeye passage upstream
- Working relationships with Muckleshoot Indian Tribe and WDFW, collaborating to haul sockeye by truck from the Ballard Locks
- Seeking to enhance adult salmon storage at the hatchery
- Building stronger relationship under the MSA across the Cedar River Watershed

Watershed Tribal Engagement



- Muckleshoot and SPU Watershed coordination and collaboration in Cedar River Municipal Watershed for wildlife management, habitat improvement, firewood designation, and access for hunting and gathering
- Snoqualmie Tribe and SPU coordination in Tolt Watershed for road access, fire management, and forest management
- Tulalip Tribes and SPU coordination in Tolt Watershed for road access and issues of mutual concern

South Fork Tolt River Watershed

- Federal Energy Regulation Commission (FERC) Relicensing
 - Effort underway
 - Extensive engagement and conversations with FERC team and direct participation with SPU and SCL leadership
- Property Neighbors
 - Access through property
 - Communication
 - Wildfire preparation and coordination



Cedar Falls Long-Term Plan

- Joint Seattle City Light/SPU planning project to evaluate various future alternatives to inform future hydropower and water supply operations at Cedar Falls
- Sending general information letter to Tribal governments with interests in the Cedar River Watershed



**Questions?
Thank you**

