

- Thank you, Chairwoman McCollum and Ranking Member Joyce. I am here today to discuss a few issues of great importance to me. Specifically, funding for Puget Sound recovery efforts, the US Forest Service's Legacy Roads and Trails program, and increasing recycling and the reduction of single use plastics.
- Now, all that being said, I know I don't have time right now to go over everything here, but I will be submitting comments to the record on all these items.

Puget Sound

- I, along with my colleagues, will soon be submitting a formal appropriations request for \$38 million in funding for EPA's Puget Sound Geographic Program.
- Every EPA dollar spent on Puget Sound recovery efforts has leveraged more than \$24 in matching funds from other federal agencies and local partners—an enormous return on investment.
- The Puget Sound region is also home to 19 federally recognized tribes, which includes 17 with tribal treaty rights. The federal government is obligated to ensure these tribes' treaty-reserved rights are protected.
- Several species of Pacific salmon and steelhead in Puget Sound are listed as "threatened" under the Endangered Species Act. The iconic Southern Resident Killer Whale is on the brink of extinction with a population at a 30-year low of 73 southern residents.
- Consistent, dedicated funding to the Sound will greatly benefit the region and future generations to come.

Legacy Roads and Trails

- I am planning to introduce legislation soon which will codify the US Forest Service's Legacy Roads and Trails program.
- This program leverages public and private funding to address water quality and access for threatened and endangered species like the Chinook salmon, bull trout, and steelhead.
- It was created in 2008 because the general Forest Service road maintenance budget was unable to address the sheer volume of blocked culverts, landslides and washouts which were impacting water quality and access for threatened and endangered species.
- In 2018, the Supreme Court ruled that Washington state had an obligation to restore habitat access to meet its promises to the tribes. Washington State will have to replace each fish-blocking culvert with a larger design. It's estimated the ruling will require replacement of about 1,000 state-owned culverts at a cost of about \$4 billion to the state. The state has until 2030 to meet that requirement.
- While our state is identifying possible funding streams to address downstream barriers, there are thousands of upstream barriers, on US forest service lands, which desperately require similar fixes.
- When a stream runs into a culvert, it forces a waterway that may be a dozen or more feet wide into a pipe that might be just 3 feet in diameter. That pushes a tremendous amount of water pressure through the culvert, often to the point that fish can't swim upstream through it. Some culverts are also elevated, dumping water into a pool below at a distance too high for returning fish to jump.

- For many salmon, the journey upstream ends below such a metal pipe. Even if there are miles of pristine habitat beyond, they'll remain barren unless the fish have a way to make it there.
- Washington State has invested millions of dollars to address downstream barriers that block Chinook salmon from reaching their spawning grounds. Headwaters located in national forests are critical to salmon populations downstream.
- Funding for the program has been zeroed out since the program was moved under the 'Capital Improvement and Maintenance' line item in the budget. The last pot of funds provided for this critical program was in FY 2018. I respectfully request that the Committee funds the program again at the 2018 level of 41m under the Capital Improvement and Maintenance Line item.

Recycling & Single-use Plastics

- Finally, an issue that is of great importance to me and others in this room is increasing recycling rates throughout the country and reducing the amount of single use plastics produced.
- I am co-leading a letter which is currently circulating calling for increased funding for RCRA (rick-ra) and further data collection related to the performance of a needs assessment of the U.S. recycling industry.
- Strong data is the foundation of all smart policy solutions. For too long, the recycling system in the United States has been characterized by its lack of reliable, comprehensive data.
- Municipalities and stakeholders from across the spectrum require strong data sets to make targeted, informed investments and

improvements for the future of the recycling system, especially in communities with the greatest need.

- By conducting a nationwide census on the types and capacities of community recycling programs in existence, we can better determine our infrastructure needs and investments.
- Having the authority of EPA behind the request for this information is crucial – private industry is unable to comprehensively collect information on a nationwide-scale without the weight and credibility of the federal government behind such a request.
- Better data will lead to stronger investments in recycling programs and infrastructure. We can help ensure materials are kept within the circular economy and in their next best use.
- Manufacturers will be able to use this data to identify consistent feedstock sources and business opportunities to invest in the circular economy system.
- Community recycling programs will be able to use the data to identify potential solutions to optimize their programs and lower costs.
- A comprehensive data set will be the foundation of every effort to improve the system. As the old saying goes, what gets measured gets managed!

Closing

- I sincerely thank the Committee for the opportunity to testify today on a few issues of critical importance. Thank you.