

OVERVIEW

The City of Bellingham (City), American Rivers (AR) and partners, are working to implement a multi-benefit project on the Middle Fork Nooksack River. The project aims to improve fish passage for three ESA-listed Puget Sound threatened anadromous fish species by removing the diversion dam while maintaining water supply diversion at the site. The project has secured significant private and public funding, has completed design and permitting, and is in the construction bid document development process. For more information, including a description of the project's Partner Advisory Committee (PAC) and Design Review Team (DRT), visit the project [webpage](#).

THIS MONTH

- **Funding** –
 - The Washington State Legislature approved the 2019-21 capital biennium budget on April 27, within the regular legislative session. Among other critical funding needed for orca and salmon recovery, the budget includes \$49,507,000 for the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) program. This amount fully funds local PSAR projects, and the first few projects on the PSAR Large Cap list, including the MF Nooksack Project (PSAR grant amount for the Middle Fork: \$10,560,250).
 - A proposal was submitted to the NOAA Community-Based Restoration Program requesting funds to cover the minor remaining portion estimated for full implementation, and biological monitoring to be conducted by the Nooksack Tribe.

- **Outreach** –
 - DNR State Lands representatives attended a site visit on April 18.
 - A King 5 news [story](#) covering the MF Nooksack project aired on April 26.
 - Publicly available MF Nooksack Project outreach items:
 - [Short video](#)
 - Project [website](#)

- **Permitting** –
 - *Permits/Authorizations secured:*
 - SEPA: Determination of Non-Significance. Issued in September.
 - Northwest Clean Air Agency Demolition Notification: Issued in January.
 - DNR Forest Practices Permit: Issued in January.
 - WDFW Hydraulic Project Approval (HPA): Issued in January.
 - USACE National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) Section 106 consultation: Completed in January.
 - WDFW Management issued a letter relative to agency approval of project as fish habitat enhancement project per RCW 90.58.147, for Whatcom County Shoreline Exemption. Completed in January.

- Joint Services Programmatic (PROJECTS) ESA Section 7 and MSA consultation: Completed in February.
- USACE CWA 404: Completed in February, with issuance of Nationwide Permit verification.
- ECY NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit: Verification of coverage issued in February.
- Whatcom County Shoreline Exemption Permit: Issued in February.
- Department of Ecology CWA 401: Issued March 6
- Department of Ecology Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Act Consistency Determination: Issued March 7
- DNR Aquatic Lands Use Authorization: requires other in-water permits to be issued prior to authorization. All other in-water permits have been issued and were sent to DNR.
- *Local Permits Remaining:*
 - Building Permit packages for the project were submitted to Whatcom County on March 25.

May 2019

- Development of bid documents will be ongoing from May into June.
- Coordination with RCO to compile the PSAR Large Capital grant contract deliverables will be initiated.