

OVERVIEW

The City of Bellingham (City), American Rivers (AR), and supporting 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 team has completed the design phase and secured the majority of project funding. The project is now in the construction phase, with the Notice to Proceed issued on January 2, 2020. Dam removal and channel restoration elements are scheduled for completion in 2020.

THIS MONTH

- **Construction Activities**

- Walsh Construction has continued construction planning and project development activities. Several construction submittals were submitted and reviewed by the project and construction management team in April.
 - The In-Water work plan was submitted to WDFW and ECY for review 45 days prior to in-water work beginning on June 1.
 - A Debris Management Plan was submitted to ECY for review.
- Soil overburden and rock excavation continued for the fish screen facility and pipeline extension.
 - Numerous large boulders were encountered. It is anticipated that all boulders needed for channel restoration have been found in the areas of upland excavation.
 - Differing subgrade conditions than those anticipated by design studies will require a revised shoring system for further excavation of the new water intake and fish screen facilities. At this time, we do not anticipate this issue affecting the in-water work schedule.
- In addition to previous amendment of the Site-specific safety plan to include COVID-19 safety guidelines and procedures, the City required Walsh to adhere to the “Phase 1 Construction Restart COVID-19 Job Site Requirements” issued by Governor Inslee.

- **Outreach**

- The USFWS created a project [story map](#) highlighting the ecological benefits of the project.
- Select construction photos from the 1st quarter of 2020 were posted to the [project webpage](#)

- **Other**

- The [Porter Creek fire](#) ignited approximately 1 mile from the project site on the evening of Wednesday, April 15. DNR crews performed helicopter water drops throughout the day on April 16, with firefighting efforts continuing for a few days after. Project construction

Middle Fork Nooksack River Fish Passage Project

Update #31

**April
2020**

personnel coordinated with DNR crews for notification on fire activity, but no fire-related site evacuations were required at the project.

May 2020

- Soil overburden and rock excavation of the pipeline trench from the fish screen facility to the existing water diversion intake will continue.
- Additional construction planning and preparations will be made in anticipation of the in-water work period beginning June 1.
- A virtual meeting to discuss the project communication and media outreach plan will be held with the partner communications group on May 6 at 1pm.