

OVERVIEW

The City of Bellingham (City), with American Rivers (AR) and partners, is planning 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 is currently in the permitting phase. For more project information, including a description of the project's Partner Advisory Committee (PAC) and Design Review Team (DRT), visit <https://www.cob.org/services/environment/restoration/middlefork/>.

THIS MONTH

- **Design** –
100-percent design plans and specifications were submitted on February 22. The final design plans incorporate design review feedback and address known permitting requirements.
- **Permitting** –
 - *Joint Services Programmatic (PROJECTS) ESA Section 7 and MSA consultation:* Completed.
 - *USACE CWA 404:* Completed, with issuance of Nationwide Permit verification.
 - *ECY NPDES Construction Stormwater General Permit:* Verification of coverage issued.
 - *Whatcom County Shoreline Exemption Permit:* Issued
 - *Permits/Authorizations obtained previously:*
 - 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.
 - *Permits/Authorizations Remaining:*
 - Department of Ecology CWA 401 and Coastal Zone Management (CZM) Act Consistency Determination: Ongoing. ECY's review of the project is ongoing.
 - DNR Aquatic Lands Use Authorization: requires other in-water permits to be issued prior to authorization. The City submitted an exhibit to support the authorization process.
- **Funding** –
 - The Governor's proposed budget for the 2019-21 biennium included \$42.5 million for the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration (PSAR) program. This amount includes "base funding" for local WRIA projects (\$30M), full funding for the #1 project (MF Nooksack) on the PSAR Large Cap list, and partial funding for the #2

project (Dungeness Floodplain). The State capital budget requires legislative approval, with regular session ending on April 28th.

March 2019

- We encourage all project partners and supporters to vocalize support to the Legislature for full PSAR funding of the Large Cap project list. Several outreach items are forthcoming in March and will be sent to this larger group of project supporters. These include an op-ed in the Seattle Times by 42nd District Representative Sharon Shewmake, a short video showing the project site targeting social media channel distribution, and a pending tv interview of several project partner representatives. Please consider further distribution of these resources to promote the MF Nooksack project, and other PSAR Large Cap projects, through your various organization's media channels.
- Pending final review of the 100% design submittal by the City and American Rivers, project bid documents will begin development.
- ECY continues review and processing of the project's CWA 401 water quality certification (WQC) and CZM consistency determination. The DNR Aquatic Lands Use Authorization is pending ECY WQC and CZM determination.
- Applications for Building Permits associated with the project will be submitted to Whatcom County in March.