

## OVERVIEW

The City of Bellingham (City), in coordination 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. A significant amount of funding has been secured towards the project. 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** –
  - The project's Alternatives Analysis and Conceptual Design Report (AACDR) was published to the project webpage. This report includes background information, an alternatives analysis, basis of design information, conceptual design of the preferred alternative, ROM estimate of construction cost, a permitting memo, and draft design drawings.
  - HDR provided the core team with interim design deliverables on June 29th.
  - 3D modeling of the project is under development.
  - A Design Criteria Report is being drafted. This document builds upon the basis of design and information in the AACDR. It will be updated at critical design milestones.
  - Staff gages have been installed along the shoreline through the intake reach
  - The hydraulic model has been refined to include new data.
  - A survey of geophysical lines and geophone locations has been completed.
- **Permitting** –
  - A draft cultural resources report was sent to the USACE to initiate early consultation under Section 106 of the National Historic Preservation Act.
  - Whatcom County provided a staff report to the City that details local permitting requirements in response to a pre-application meeting with Whatcom County held on May 31<sup>st</sup>. The report confirmed the county's intent to issue a shoreline exemption for the project, if the requirements of the county code and WDFW are met.
  - HDR completed drafting a SEPA compliance document.
  - In response to the City's submission of a pre-application document to the USACE, the USACE issued a preliminary determination of project verification under the streamlined nationwide permit program. This is significant as it makes it possible for the project to potentially achieve in-water construction within the 2019 work window.
- **Funding** –
  - The Pacific Salmon Commission has expressed their support of the project as a top priority in their negotiation of the U.S./Canada 10-yr treaty update. This has positive

- implications for the project, but potential for additional funding from this source depends on finalization of treaty negotiations and Congressional approval.
- A full proposal to the PSAR Large Cap program to cover remaining construction costs was submitted through PRISM on June 22<sup>nd</sup>. The project was tiered very high during pre-proposal review.
  - Letters demonstrating a high level of support for the project were received from the Nooksack Tribe, Lummi Nation, WDFW, WRIA 1 Management Team, City of Bellingham, American Rivers, Paul G. Allen Philanthropies, Long Live the Kings, American Whitewater, Whatcom County Public Works and Natural Resources Departments, Whatcom Land Trust, and the Ag Water Board.

## **JULY 2018**

- Comments from the project's PSAR proposal will be received on July 5<sup>th</sup>. Final scoring of projects for PSAR Large Cap funding will be completed in July and rankings announced on July 27<sup>th</sup>.
- The project design will continue to be advanced through preliminary design, with updated design plans completed at the end of July.
- A DRT meeting is scheduled for August 1st to review and refine draft design plans.
- Initial permit applications (e.g., JARPA) are scheduled to be completed in July as part of the Phase 2 design work, and submitted in early August. All final design and bid document deliverables are scheduled to be completed in February 2019.
- The National Fish and Wildlife Foundation released an RFP for grant funding under the National Coastal Resilience Fund. In July, the team will be assessing the priorities identified in this funding opportunity to identify alignment with project goals, outcomes and benefits and will be preparing a proposal if applicable to address the design funding gap.