

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 planning, design and permitting phase, and secured project funding to meet the estimated need for construction. The project was advertised for bidding on August 5 and five bids were received on September 19.

THIS MONTH

- ***Bid Process/Procurement***
 - A pre-bid site visit was held for interested bidders/construction contractors on September 4. This site visit was attended by 22 people, representing 15 companies
 - Several bidder questions were received. A total of (6) addenda were issued during the bid period to address bidder questions.
 - The five construction bids received covered a construction price range of approximately \$15 – \$22 million.
- ***Funding***
 - Funding to meet the full estimated project cost (i.e., the actual design and permitting phase costs, and HDR's Opinion of Probable Construction Cost (OPCC) including a healthy contingency) was fully secured in September 2019 with the NOAA grant ([press release link below](#)).
 - The OPCC was \$2.3 million less than the lowest bid received for the project. With customary contingency added, the anticipated funding shortfall will likely border around \$4 million.
- ***Outreach***
 - Select Project media items:
 - Project [website](#), [video](#), King 5 news [story](#), City [press release](#) re State funding, NOAA [press release](#) re Community-based Restoration Program funding
- ***Permitting***
 - All project authorizations have been secured.

OCTOBER 2019

- Efforts are ongoing to address the funding shortfall so the City can execute a construction contract this fall without project construction delay. The goal is to address the funding shortfall with potential funding associated with re-negotiation of the Pacific Salmon Treaty. The funding request submitted to Congress in May 2019 included up to \$10 million for the Project. \$30 million for Pacific Salmon Treaty funding is included in

the FY20 Appropriations Bill in the Department of Commerce budget and has passed the House but is awaiting final Congressional and presidential approval of the new FY budget. We expect another update on the federal budget in November.

- American Rivers will prepare a letter to be circulated for project partner signatures outlining the need for the Department of Commerce budget to pass in a timely manner. This letter will ultimately be sent to the Congressional delegation and several federal budget committee members to outline the risk of a delayed budget to the project and re-establish the need for timely passage of the FY20 budget. It is not anticipated that this will make a difference in how quickly the committees approve the budget for the President's approval. However, it will convey the risk a delayed FY20 federal budget creates for the Project.
- We will continue to have discussions at the local, State and federal level to understand how PST funds are administered locally after federal budget approval.
- Internal discussions are ongoing to understand how the construction funding shortfall may affect the City's ability to execute a contract and the construction schedule targeting upland work beginning in early 2020. The project team will be exploring all possibilities to remain on schedule to complete in-water work in the summer of 2020.