

**WHATCOM COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**Elizabeth Kosa
Director**



NATURAL RESOURCES

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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Satpal Singh Sidhu, County Executive, and The Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Council, collectively serving in their capacity as the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director *ek*

FROM: Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager *GS*
Erika Douglas, Environmental Program Manager *ED*
John N. Thompson, Senior Salmon Recovery Planner *JNT*

DATE: April 18, 2024

RE: State Grant Agreement for Black Slough Comprehensive Barrier Removals Design

Attached for your review is an agreement between the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District and the State of Washington, Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO), for the Black Slough Comprehensive Barrier Removals Design. The authorized agreement will be signed electronically.

Requested Action

Public Works respectfully requests that the Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors authorize the County Executive to sign this agreement.

Background and Purpose

Construction ready designs and cost estimates will be prepared to remove barriers to fish passage at culverts carrying Black Slough and its tributaries under Homesteader and Clipper Roads in the South Fork valley northeast of Acme. Black Slough is identified in the WRIA 1 Salmonid Recovery Plan as an important source of cool summer water to the temperature impaired South Fork. Restoration planning and projects on recently acquired county properties adjacent to the project sites will restore wetland, riparian, and instream habitat functions in Black Slough and Homesteader Creeks to improve summer stream flows, moderate summer water temperatures and buffer winter high flows. Those actions contribute to improved water quality for ESA-listed early Chinook salmon downstream in the South Fork while the barrier remediation work will restore fish access to habitat important to ESA-listed steelhead, coho salmon and coastal cutthroat trout. Elimination of the county barriers also provides an incentive for nearby landowners to take voluntary action to address barriers on their properties. This agreement will be coordinated with the HSIL grant agreement with the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WCC# 202401021).

The Environmental Program of Natural Resources will administer the grant while the Fish Passage Program within the Bridge and Hydraulic Division will manage consultant design. Resolution 2022-019 authorized the original grant application.

Funding Amount and Source

The grant provides \$207,000 plus local match of \$40,500 for a total project amount of \$247,500. The HSIL grant with 2024 budget authority is providing funding to begin the Black Slough project; budget authority for this RCO grant will be included in the 2025 Natural Resources Division budget request.

Please contact Erika at extension 6294 or John at extension 6295 if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.