

**WHATCOM COUNTY
PUBLIC WORKS DEPARTMENT**

**ELIZABETH KOSA
DIRECTOR**



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MEMORANDUM

TO: The Honorable Members of the Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District Board of Supervisors

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director

FROM: Julie Anderson, River & Flood Manager *JMA*
Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager *GStoyka*

RE: Interlocal Agreement with Laurel Watershed Improvement District for Neevel Levee and Cougar Creek Fish Passage Project (No. 19082038)

DATE: October 15, 2025

Enclosed is an Interlocal Agreement between the Whatcom County Flood Control District (FCZD) and the Laurel Watershed Improvement District (LWID) for your review and signature.

Requested Action

Public Works respectfully requests that the County Executive and the County Council, acting as the FCZD Board of Supervisors, enter into the above referenced Interlocal Agreement for the Neevel Levee Cougar Creek Fish Passage Project.

Background and Purpose

A Floodplain Integrated Planning (FLIP) Reach 2 (Lynden to Ferndale) design charrette held in February 2020 identified Cougar Creek as a focus area for early action project development. The proposed project includes replacement of an outdated fish blocking floodgate with a self-regulating structure to improve fish passage, correction of levee deficiencies, and placement of instream wood structures to improve habitat. This project was also coordinated with landowners to improve agricultural drainage while better protecting water quality in Cougar Creek. The design was funded by a combination of grants from The Nature Conservancy and the Department of Ecology Floodplains by Design program, and the Flood fund. Construction of the project is substantially complete as of October 2025.

The Agreement will provide for a \$10,000 cost-share from the LWID towards construction of the project.

Funding Amount and Source

Funding for project construction is from an Ecology Floodplains by Design Grant, Flood fund, and a cost-share from the landowner through a payment assignment of a Natural Resources Conservation Service (NRCS) grant. The total project construction cost is estimated at \$2,250,000 with approximately \$380,000 from the Flood Fund. The attached Agreement provides for a \$10,000 contribution from the LWID.

Please contact Christina Schoenfelder at extension 6274, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.

Encl.