



MEMORANDUM

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

THROUGH: Elizabeth Kosa, Public Works Director *ek*

FROM: Julie Anderson, River and Flood Manager *JWA*
Gary Stoyka, Natural Resources Manager *GStoyka*

RE: Washington State Department of Ecology 2023-25 Floodplains by Design (FbD) Grant SEAFBD-2325-WhCoPW-00054

DATE: August 2, 2024

Please find enclosed for your review, two copies of the Shorelands Floodplains by Design Grant agreement "Nooksack River: Floodplains that Work – Phase 3" between the Washington State Department of Ecology (DOE) and Whatcom County Flood Control Zone District (FCZD) for your review and approval. Hard copy signatures are required for this agreement.

Requested Action

Public Works respectfully requests that the County Council, acting as the FCZD Board of Supervisors, authorize the County Executive to sign this grant agreement.

Background and Purpose

This grant agreement provides Floodplains by Design funding to the FCZD at an 80/20 cost-share and builds upon existing Floodplain Integrated Planning (FLIP) efforts to reduce flood hazard, increase flood resiliency, and improve habitat. Components of this grant include advancing four capital projects, providing support to ongoing floodplain management efforts, and key land acquisitions. Funding from this grant will support the FCZD as well as agricultural, tribal, small city and other watershed partners affected by recent flooding.

Phase 3 will build broad momentum for projects on the mainstem (Reaches 1-4), Everson Overflow (Reach 5), North Fork (NF)/South Fork (SF) and tributaries of the Nooksack River. Phase 3 actions include:

- Advancing three Phase 2 capital projects and one new capital project.
- Responding to opportunities or needs presented through recent catastrophic flooding, including property buyouts, easements, structure relocations, and elevations of at-risk structures.
- Acquisition or easement of key properties needed for future floodplain reconnection, habitat restoration and flood risk reduction.
- Advancing broadly supported early actions including the Cougar Creek Fish Passage and Habitat Improvement Project.

- Conducting technical and outreach pre-work for large-scale, integrated projects that benefit ag lands, salmon habitat, cultural resources, and at-risk communities.
- Funding support for the agricultural, tribal, and small city communities for participating in the FLIP process to update the Lower Nooksack River Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan and participation in the Nooksack Transboundary Flood Initiative.

Funding Amount and Source

The total cost of this grant agreement is \$12,500,000, with \$10,000,000 (80%) provided by the Department of Ecology and \$2,500,000 (20%) provided by the FCZD and project partners. There are sufficient funds in the FCZD budget for expenditures proposed for 2024. Funding for 2023-2025 will be included in those budgets.

Please contact Julie Anderson at extension 6258, if you have any questions or concerns regarding the terms of this agreement.