



Family Forest Fish Passage Program

Program Guidelines



Washington
Department of
**FISH and
WILDLIFE**

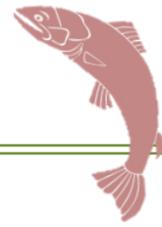


WASHINGTON STATE
Recreation and
Conservation Office



WASHINGTON STATE DEPARTMENT OF
Natural Resources
Peter Goldmark - Commissioner of Public Lands

Family Forest Fish Passage Program Contacts



Laura Till, 360-902-2352, laura.till@dfw.wa.gov
Program Biologist, Department of Fish and Wildlife
P.O. Box 43200 Olympia, WA 98501-1091

Dave Caudill, 360-902-2649, dave.caudill@rco.wa.gov
Outdoor Grant Manager, Recreation and Conservation Office
P.O. Box 40917 Olympia, WA 98504-3026

Tami Miketa, 360-902-1415, tamara.miketa@dnr.wa.gov
Small Forest Landowner Office Manager, Department of Natural Resources
P.O. Box 47012 Olympia, WA 98504-7012



Introduction

The Family Forest Fish Passage Program is a funding program that helps small forest landowners correct fish passage barriers on their forestlands. The program provides 75-100 percent of the cost of correcting a barrier; it also provides technical assistance.

Why the program was created

Small forest landowners own 3.2 million acres of Washington's forests- about half of the private forestland in the state. These family forests are important to fish because they include thousands of miles of fish-bearing streams.

A major key to restoring fish populations is removing barriers to fish passage. A single artificial barrier on a stream can keep fish from reaching many miles of habitat upstream. To help protect fish, a public resource, state Forest Practices Rules require forest landowners to address fish barriers by 2016.

Because eliminating fish passage barriers can be costly, especially for the small forest landowner, the 2003 Washington Legislature established the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (House Bill 1095). In general, the bill required that:

- The state create a funding program that provides 75-100 percent of the cost of correcting small forest landowners' fish barriers.
- Small forest landowners enrolling in the program are required to fix their barriers only if financial assistance is available from the state.
- Barriers be prioritized and repaired on a worst-first basis.

Eligibility

- **Projects**

For a structure to be eligible for the program, it must be:

- located on forestland
- located on fish bearing streams
- a barrier to fish passage
- owned by a small forest landowner, and
- located at a road crossing

- **Forestland**

Forestland is land capable of supporting a merchantable stand of timber and not being actively used for anything incompatible with timber growing.

- **Fish-Bearing Streams**

Streams are generally considered fish-bearing if they are greater than 2 feet wide in Western Washington, or greater than 3 feet wide in Eastern Washington, and have a gradient of less than 20 percent. Intermittent streams which go dry during a portion of the year may have fish present during those times when the streams are flowing. A fish bearing determination will be made by program staff during the project.

- **Fish Passage Barrier**

A fish passage barrier is any structure in a fish bearing stream that impedes fish passage to habitat up or downstream.

- **Small Forest Landowner**

A small forest landowner harvests less than 2 million board feet of timber on average per year, from their forestland in Washington.

- **Road Crossing**

A structure must be associated with a road crossing in order to be eligible.

Program Steps

- How the Program Works
 - Landowner applies for a barrier evaluation
 - Barrier is evaluated and prioritized
 - Project is funded when it is a high priority
 - Project sponsor manages the project

Step One: Landowner applies for an evaluation

Landowners can request the Application for Fish Passage Barrier Evaluation from the Small Forest Landowners Office (SFLO) at DNR.

Apply Online:

<http://surveymonkey.com/FFFPP>

Contact our office: 360-902-1404 or sflo@dnr.wa.gov

Small Forest Landowner Office
Department of Natural Resources
PO Box 47012
Olympia, WA 98504-7012

Applications are accepted year round. To be considered for funding in the following year, applications must be received by June 30.

Step Two: Barrier is evaluated and prioritized

Once an application is received, you will be contacted to schedule an evaluation of the barrier. If the evaluation determines the structure is not a barrier, is not on a fish bearing stream, or is not on forestland, the landowner will be notified in writing that it is not eligible, and will not be enrolled in the program.

Projects will be ranked within their watersheds based on the:

- Amount and quality of habitat opened by the project
- Number of fish species which would benefit
- Other up and downstream barriers
- Project cost

Step Three: Project is funded when it is a high priority

Those projects providing the greatest benefit to fish habitat will be funded for construction the following year. Projects considered lower priority during one funding round will be reconsidered during future rounds. Lower priority projects remain in the program until they become high priority.

Step Four: Project Sponsor Manages the Project

A project sponsor is selected from local groups experienced in fish passage projects.

Typically a sponsor is a fish enhancement group, conservation district or tribe. Having an experienced sponsor manage the project is strongly recommended to ensure the project gets completed on time and meets all fish passage requirements. Project management includes: engineering, permitting, construction oversight, billing and grant management.

The landowner, if he or she wishes, can manage all aspects of the project.

Program History

Small forest landowners own 3.2 million acres of Washington's forests—half of the private forestland in the state. These family forests are important to fish because they include thousands of miles of fish-bearing streams.

Removing fish passage barriers is one of the most cost efficient means of restoring fish populations. A single barrier on a stream can keep fish from reaching many miles of habitat upstream. To help protect fish, state Forest Practices Rules require forest landowners to correct fish barriers by 2016, or by the extension deadline October 31, 2021 if approved by DNR per WAC 222-24-051 (8).

Because eliminating fish passage barriers can be costly, especially for the family forest landowner, the 2003 Washington Legislature established the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (House Bill 1095). In general, the bill requires that:

- The state created a program that funds the corrections of small forest landowner's fish barriers
- By signing up for the program, a landowner is relieved of any Forest Practices obligation to fix a fish barrier
- The barriers presenting the highest benefit to fish habitat are fixed first

Definitions

Fish Passage Barrier

Any artificial (human-caused) structure in a stream that impedes the free passage of fish. Examples of fish passage barriers include: perched or undersized culverts, puncheons, fords, standpipes, dams, weirs, and spillways.

Fish-bearing stream

Streams are generally considered fish-bearing if they are 2-feet or greater in width in Western Washington, or 3 feet or greater in Eastern Washington, and have a gradient of 20 percent or less. Intermittent streams (those which go dry during a portion of the year) may have fish present during those times when the streams are flowing. A determination can be made during project evaluation if it is unknown whether a stream is fish-bearing.

Forestland

Land capable of supporting a merchantable stand of timber and not being actively used for anything incompatible with timber growing.

Frequently Asked Questions

If I sign up for the Program and choose to fix a fish barrier at my own expense, can I still receive technical assistance for the project?

Yes. The Fish Passage Team can provide technical assistance, including guidance on necessary permits, project design, construction, etc.

If I do not enroll in FFFPP, am I still obligated to fix fish barriers on my property or fix fish barriers associated with a Forest Practices Application (FPA)?

Yes. Forest Practices Rules require that you address fish barriers located on your forestland by 2016. Barriers included in an active FPA for harvest must be addressed before any future FPAs are approved.

How are barriers prioritized for funding?

The Fish Passage Team evaluates and ranks projects based on the following:

- Number of salmon and trout species benefiting from correcting the barrier
- Quantity and quality of habitat to be opened by the project
- Location and number of upstream and downstream barriers
- Project cost

Note: numerical values, thresholds, or targets have not been established for these criteria. Each project will be compared and contrasted to all projects in the current program cycle and those projects not funded during previous cycles.

When will I be notified whether my project is considered a high priority and will be funded?

Although applications are accepted year round, there is an annual deadline of June 30 for projects to be considered for funding in the following year. Those projects providing the greatest benefit to public resources will be funded for construction the following year. You will be notified of funding decisions early the following year after the June 30 cut-off date.

How much money can I apply for?

You do not apply for a specific amount of money to fix your barriers. Rather, you apply to have your barriers placed on a ranking list for funding. Once a barrier correction has been funded and the work completed, you or the sponsor will be reimbursed for the project costs minus any required matching amount.

Once a barrier has been fixed, who is responsible for maintaining the new structure?

You own the new structure and are responsible for maintenance. This may include: removing debris that accumulates at the culvert inlet and outlet or at the upstream side of a bridge, maintain roads to prevent sediment delivery at a stream crossing, preventing damage to the structure during normal road maintenance activities, etc.

Can I receive funding for fixing more than one barrier?

Yes, if your projects are ranked high priority after the evaluation process.

If I have a fish barrier on one parcel but am harvesting timber on another parcel I own elsewhere in the state, will I still be required to provide matching funds for my funded projects?

Yes. Anytime you harvest timber on any part of your forest ownership in the state between now and the time the state determines your project is a high priority you will be required to provide matching funds to fix your fish barrier.