

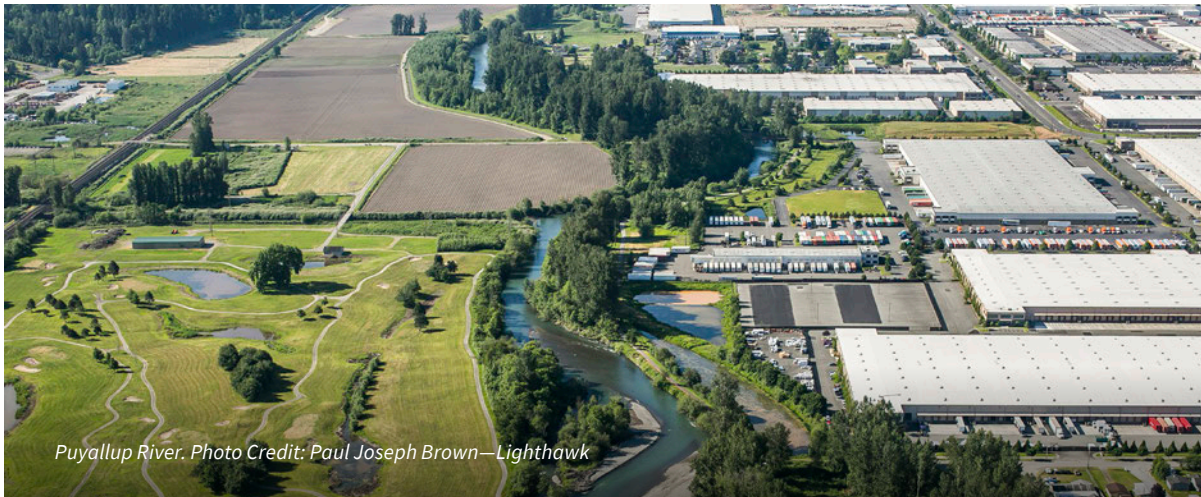


# Floodplains by Design

• REDUCING RISK, RESTORING RIVERS •

# Newsletter

May/June 2023



*Puyallup River. Photo Credit: Paul Joseph Brown—Lighthawk*

## By the Numbers: Floodplains by Design Fully Funded and Other State Capital Budget Outcomes

**BY ALLAN WARREN**

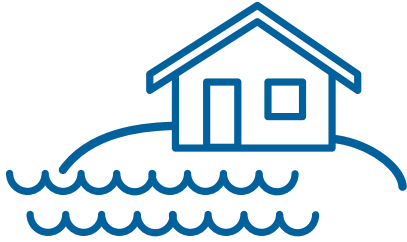
It was a busy legislative session, but now that it's behind us we wanted to provide a bit of a recap on some of the investments made by the legislature this spring. Floodplains by Design was fully funded at \$67.4 million, thanks to wonderful outreach by our partners across the state who put great effort into speaking with their representatives about the value of the FbD program. We had over 40 partners show up and hold 40+ meetings with legislators for FbD Legislative Day in late January. Partners traveled from as far away as La Push out on the coast and Stevens County in Eastern Washington (even though they didn't even have a project on this year's funding list!). It was inspiring to see the FbD network provide such great support for one another. This was the first year the legislature had to decide how to allocate revenues from the carbon allowances sales under the Climate Commitment Act (CCA), and it's important to note the legislature met the Governor's request of \$49.8M with the capital bond but added \$17.6 million from the CCA revenues. This was a key message partners carried to their representatives and is an important indication of how these projects truly are climate resiliency projects that have significant benefits for communities across the state.

On the next page are some key highlights from this historic investment in FbD, along with highlights of other key grant programs that are often leveraged with FbD to benefit salmon restoration, agriculture viability, and flood risk reduction.

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**FbD Impacts:**



**11**

projects in 7 Counties invested in, including first investments in Okanogan County and the Pacific Coast

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**3**

Tribally-led projects

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**\$179 million**

of leveraged additional funding for the 11 projects

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**8,300+**

families with reduced flood risk

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**3,202 acres**

of floodplain reconnected or restored

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**5,177 acres**

of farmland improved

**Other State Capital Investments:**



**\$50 million**

in new riparian restoration grant programs (\$25M each to Recreation & Conservation Office and the State Conservation Commission)\*

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**\$59.1 million**

in Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration Fund\*

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**\$2.3 million**

in Flood Control Assistance Account Program

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**\$15 million**

for Conservation Reserve Enhancement Program\*

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**\$30 million**

for On-farm Greenhouse Gas Reduction Grants\*

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\* Received significant funding from Climate Commitment Act revenues

# Leveraging ChatGPT for Enhanced Floodplain Management

BY CHATGPT

Accessible interfaces for AI-assisted chatbots like Bing, Bard, and ChatGPT are being made available to the general public.

*These Chatbots, also called Large Language Models, are trained on massive amounts of text data so that they are able to understand natural language and can generate complex responses to text-based inputs. These new technologies have the potential to dramatically change the way we work and are already being integrated into many sectors. The pace of AI development may already be exceeding the ability of organizations and collaboratives to understand and develop processes to govern their use. This brief, written with assistance from ChatGPT, will focus on the potential applications of ChatGPT to floodplain management. If you haven't already, you can try ChatGPT for yourself [here](#).*

**Prompt:** Write me a 300-word blurb about how ChatGPT can be used by floodplain managers. Provide some other applications of the tool to floodplain management, in addition to writing grants, data integration to support environmental planning, and improved early warning systems for flood hazards.

**ChatGPT:** In the quest for effective floodplain management, emerging technologies have the potential to revolutionize the way floodplain managers operate. Among these transformative tools, ChatGPT, an advanced language model developed by OpenAI, offers diverse applications beyond its conventional uses. Alongside writing grants, data integration for environmental planning, and improving early warning systems, ChatGPT can assist floodplain managers in various other crucial areas. We recognize the immense value of emerging technologies and are eager to hear from floodplain managers about their ongoing efforts and areas where they seek further insights.

ChatGPT opens doors to a plethora of applications in floodplain management. Its advanced capabilities can enhance risk assessment and modeling by analyzing complex datasets, predicting flood patterns, and simulating scenarios to evaluate mitigation strategies. Floodplain managers can leverage ChatGPT to engage with communities by disseminating accurate flood risk information, providing education on preparedness measures, and addressing common concerns through interactive chatbots or virtual assistants.

Moreover, ChatGPT's ability to process large volumes of data can aid floodplain managers in adaptive planning and decision-making. By analyzing historical flood data, climate projections, and land use patterns, floodplain managers can identify long-term trends and develop resilient strategies. The model's capacity to generate alternative scenarios and evaluate their impacts empowers decision-makers to adopt proactive measures and optimize resource allocation.

Real-time monitoring and response during flood events can also be enhanced through ChatGPT. By incorporating the model into monitoring systems, floodplain managers can analyze sensor data, weather forecasts, and historical patterns to generate timely alerts and tailored recommendations for emergency response. The model's natural language processing capabilities can facilitate automated processing and interpretation of incoming reports, improving situational awareness and enabling faster decision-making.

ChatGPT presents a remarkable opportunity for floodplain managers to harness the power of emerging technologies. Join us in exploring how this tool can enhance risk assessment, community engagement, adaptive planning, and real-time monitoring, ultimately advancing floodplain management to new heights.

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The FbD backbone team is looking into how emerging technologies can benefit floodplain managers, and we want to hear from you about what ways you're already using chatbots or other emerging AI technologies or what things you might be wanting to learn more about. Feel free to reach out to [hbuehler@b-e-f.org](mailto:hbuehler@b-e-f.org) with any thoughts or ideas.





## An Interview with Brynne' Walker

*Brynne' has 6 years of experience as a Floodplain Management Planner working for Pierce County Planning and Public Works—Surface Water Management. She supported the Pierce County Flood Control Zone District and was the Project Manager for the 2023 Pierce County Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan. Throughout her career, she worked for 8 years at the Washington Military Department, where she successfully managed multiple FEMA HMA grant programs and worked for the state's Earthquake/ Tsunami Program. Brynne' is also an alumni of the FEMA External Stakeholder Workgroup and was Chair of the Northwest Regional Floodplain Managers Association (NORFMA). Brynne' and her husband Nelson live in University Place, Washington with their golden retriever named Emerson.*

**Hannah Buehler:** Could you give a brief overview of your background, including your role at Pierce County? What drew you to work in this field of emergency management and natural hazards?

**Brynne' Walker:** I went to San Jose State. I originally wanted to go to school to be a meteorologist, and then I realized there was too much chemistry and physics involved. I wasn't good at any of those, so I went down two floors and I got a Bachelor's degree in earth science and a minor in atmospheric and seismic hazards. I've always kind of been a natural disaster junkie; even as a kid I was fascinated with tornadoes, hurricanes, earthquakes, tsunamis, all of it. At the end of my schooling I knew I didn't want to go into the oil industry and that I wanted to work to educate the public regarding these hazards. I had done an internship with Washington State Emergency Management my junior year of college and loved it. I worked in the tsunami program, doing public education and outreach to citizens on the coast, along with the hospitality industry, and that's where I really fell in love with the field. Luckily, right when I graduated, they were ramping up their program at the state and looking for a program assistant, and I got the position and moved back to Washington.

I worked in the tsunami program doing a lot of public education and outreach, working on installing tsunami sirens, helping with tsunami walks, working to educate the hospitality industry, doing public forums, all kinds of stuff, and I loved it. Then I kind of told myself I needed to branch out, and so I applied for a position doing Hazard Mitigation grants for the state. After doing that for a while I fell in love with the FEMA grant world

because it's still tied to hazards but was working on different aspects. And so I was like, Oh, I like this lot. The last position I held at the state was doing pre-disaster mitigation and flood mitigation assistance. I was a program manager, managing all the annual grant programs. I thought it was great; I got to manage grants without managing people and I got to work with the community, which I loved.

I had a mentor that told me, "It's time for you to move on. You cannot get comfortable yet." That's how I ended up at Pierce County. I had no clue what I was even applying for. I had no clue what a flood control zone district was; I had no clue what its purpose was, how it was even created, who I'd even be working with. Anne-Marie Marshall-Dody, who was one of the people that interviewed me, really took me under her wing and shaped me into the person I am today. I've never really liked being the center of attention when it comes to talking about the projects I was working on. I like to do the behind-the-scenes stuff. Anne-Marie always told me to just do it, even if it takes you out of your comfort zone. I think that has really kind of given me the competence to say I can do these things, even though I don't like to be in the forefront, but I can do it.



*Brynne with colleagues at a NORFMA Conference.*



**HB:** You served on the FEMA External Stakeholders Working Group (ESWG) and helped bring experts here to Washington to better understand the challenges and opportunities for supporting increased flood resilience. What do you want people to understand about our glacier-fed river systems?

**BW:** The ESWG was a collective group of folks from all over the country that dealt with various hazards. They wanted to have the third quarter in-person meeting in Washington and wanted to come out to Pierce County. One thing I wanted them to take away was that our river systems are very special here. I would point to Mount Rainier; I was like “See that giant thing there? That causes a lot of issues for us. It’s beautiful. We love it, but that has a lot of impacts on our river systems. That’s why we have to do the work we do, to try and give the river more room, instead of trying to put it in a confined box.” Then they’d ask, “What are these sirens we saw on the drive? And I’m like, “Oh, yeah, that’s because it’s an active volcano, too. Welcome to Washington!”

The ESWG looked at me like, “Where did you bring us?” I just think people need to hear that every river system is different throughout the country. We’re not all the same, and so they all need to be treated a little bit differently, especially here in Washington.

**HB:** In your experience, thinking across different levels of government, what do you see going well with respect to flood resilience, salmon recovery, and urban growth? What could be done better?

**BW:** I think what’s going well is that everyone’s finally talking. Communication is finally happening. One thing I know I will take with me is that now, having worked in local government, I understand more of the challenges, but I also see there’s hope as well because finally silos are coming down. The conversations that are being had have needed to happen for a long time. I don’t know if that’s due to the hard work of many individuals trying to break down some of those barriers or if it’s because everyone is realizing we’re all in this together.

**HB:** What is something you’d want people to know about being a woman of color in this field?

**BW:** There aren’t a lot of people who look like me in this field. Having been on the ESWG helped a little bit because I saw a little bit more of people who look like me in this field. Even when I was in college, there were not many people who looked like me in the field I was in. Being a black woman in this field, I always feel like I have to work a little harder to gain respect. People would say, “Oh no, you don’t,” but I’m like, no, I feel like I have to earn my keep and prove a little bit more than other people that I actually do know what I’m talking about. But, at the same time, I love a good challenge. I love how sometimes people underestimate me and what I am capable of.

In the beginning it was difficult because I had hoped to have someone who looked like me that could mentor me along the way in this specific field. But that wasn’t happening. This is not a typical field that a young, African-American woman would probably be a part of, but I’m happy to be a part of it. I hope I can inspire other young, African-American women to take the leap into this amazing line of work.

**HB:** Can you tell us a bit about what’s next for you and what you’re most excited about entering a new position at FEMA? What did you learn from your work at the local level that you will bring with you to your new position?

**BW:** I’m starting a new position as a Senior Hazard Mitigation Specialist for the state of Oregon Hazard Mitigation Grant Program. I will be overseeing the open disaster grants for the State of Oregon. When I was part of the FEMA external stakeholder workgroup, one item we discussed was that the amount of grant money being allocated to States is overwhelming. There is a lot of money available right now to fund various projects or planning efforts. But finding the manpower to first obtain those grant funds and then complete the project or plan is sometimes very hard. That is something I will definitely bring with me into this new position: to always keep in mind that each jurisdiction is different and to try to figure out ways to help each jurisdiction succeed.



## A Conversation with Joel Freudenthal

*Throughout his career, Joel has worked in infrastructure design, reconfiguration, and relocation; and mainstem channel modification to improve fish habitat and reduce flood hazards. Joel spent 11 years in Clallam County working with 6 major river systems, estuaries, and the marine shoreline; and 23 years in Yakima County working primarily for the Yakima County Flood Control Zone District. Prior to working with counties, Joel worked for the US Forest Service for 7 years in various capacities related to water resource and fisheries aspects of the Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie and the Idaho Panhandle National Forests Forest Land Use Management Plans.*

**Hannah Buehler:** Can you share a little bit about your background and the arc of your career?

**Joel Freudenthal:** I was born and raised in Idaho and went to the University of Idaho where I majored in range resource management, so cows, desert, all that kind of stuff. Then I worked for the Forest Service and traveled around the West, and became fascinated by watersheds and decided I wanted to go to graduate school. For the first time, I started to live in this four-dimensional world in which you always know where you are. I mean that hydrologically—when you start to have an awareness of what that stream is, what’s downstream of you, what’s underneath you, what’s around you, in addition to learning about sediment history, native culture, and the history of settlement. I went to graduate school at the University of Washington because they had a forestry school, a fisheries school, a law school, and an urban planning school, and they let me create my own program. I had a really difficult time there because I felt we were learning a lot of the science but not fully understanding why we were doing what we were doing. It seemed like we were having problems applying all this knowledge to water and land use management. And I still feel that way.

While I was in grad school I worked for the Forest Service, starting as a watershed technician and then working on the forest plan for the Mount Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest in the Seattle office. In that role I was doing lots of public outreach and writing watershed prescriptions for the Forest Plan. Then I went back to Idaho and worked for the Idaho Panhandle National Forest developing their Aquatic and Watershed Monitoring Program. From there I got a job with Clallam County and Port Angeles, and I was there for 10 years. Since then, I’ve been with Yakima County for the past 22 years.

In those years at Clallam County, I worked on my first Comprehensive Flood Hazard Management Plan (CFHMP) and the Growth Management Act. That was fascinating; it was about working to try to figure out what was really going on in the floodplain and how all the pieces were fitting together. With those early ordinances, you’d get appealed and would have to stand in front of the growth management hearings board and explain how things work in theory and how they work in the real world.

A lot of that work revolved around figuring out how we restore while development is still occurring. How does this development relate to that hazard for the folks living there, to the habitat, and to the environment itself? That work was particularly exciting because it’s one of



*Joel after 48 days of working at the Nile landslide.*

the rare opportunities you have to work at larger-scale things, like on multi-reach projects like levee removals and modeling. The beauty of the way the CFHMPs are structured is that, when you have all this damage and you turn in damage estimates to FEMA, things just get rebuilt the way they were before; but if you have a plan you can change that so its not restored to how it was before but rather restored to how it should be.

In that work you also respond to flood emergencies. In that role you really have to have courage in your convictions because you made a commitment when you created the plan. Even though individual flood projects are designed by engineers and dictated by engineering standards, they really don't get the full context again of what's going on. I think a lot of the broader community doesn't understand this is really dangerous work; every once in a while you're getting these truly life-or-death situations that are really dangerous, and so there is a lot of responsibility there.

**HB:** What have you learned about being in relationship to land and waterways as you've worked with these systems throughout your career?

**JF:** I've worked with engineers my whole career. Something I've learned is, if you have a more holistic approach that incorporates a natural history perspective, and you understand just physically how rivers work, then you don't need to rely on models. That knowledge gives you a lot of predictive power. That's the beauty of living in a place. I live in Yakima, so I can go out when the floods hit those different thresholds and then I don't need a model. I can go out and look out and watch; I can go out repeatedly and watch the same things over time. There's a value of place, of watching, of observing how things fit together. There's a lot of engineers that really valued that additional context. The models are abstractions. They're trying to get to that same level of predictive power, and while they have their advantages like being able to check your work, they're actually not better; they can actually be worse.

**HB:** What are you seeing on the horizon of Integrated Floodplain Management (IFM) that really gives you concern right now? What is on the horizon that gives you hope?

**JF:** I don't think I have a lot of concerns about the future of Integrated Floodplain Management. I think FEMA knows that people are trapped in these silos and that the answer from one perspective is not really the final answer. It's part of a universe of answers. I think IFM is fundamentally a good thing to help break out of the silos.

To me, the biggest concern is really what's happened over the last eight or 10 years where the Clean Water Act regulations have come into play in the riverine environment more than they ever were before. The wetland regulatory scheme of the Corps of Engineers being put to use in the riverine environment is very concerning to me. So if I could do anything, and I'm going to try and do it even after I retire, is to change some of the evaluation techniques that are very static in many ways, especially when applied to the living things that are rivers and flowing environments.

The way we design things now, there's a lot of emphasis on type zero, which means we are designing things to a standard so that when we walk away, if a 100-year flood instantaneously happened, we know how the system would perform. But that's pretty unrealistic, and I think it does more harm than good. The real part is that, before you ever got to 100-year flood, you would first have a two-year and then a five-year and a 10-year and a 25-year and a 50-year flood. It would ramp up through all those other flows before it ever got to this big flow. I think a better philosophy, rather than working on type zero, is to ask, "What would make this river work best?" That's a very different question. How many different habitat elements can I put out here? What potential does the system have? What are the ecological trajectories? How can I take something that's maybe tending towards these negative things and change directions? That's the most gratifying thing, honestly, when I design projects, is seeing how with every flood event things are only getting better. They're improving every event. Everything is getting better.

**HB:** What's next for you personally and professionally?

**JF:** Well, I promised my wife I would move back to her hometown in Illinois. But in the modern world, you're no longer bound to a place, so I'm going to become a consultant. There's lots of stuff happening in Yakima that I need to stay involved in, and I think I have the resources and expertise so that wheels don't need to be reinvented once I leave. I want to figure out what we can do with these Corps of Engineers regulations. I want to figure out what we can do to develop geomorphic ways of talking about functional uplift, sustainability, and those kinds of things that incorporate living, moving systems, that help us to wrap our heads around those kinds of things. Also, I'm looking forward to my springtimes being much more pleasant in the future without the workload of grant writing.



# Habitat Recovery Pilot Program (HRPP) Update

BY GINA PIAZZA AND DIANE HENNESSEY

## What would you want to share with the FbD community about approved HRPP projects?

Although the HRPP began in June 2021, the first Hydraulic Program Approval (HPA) application for review under the program was received in March 2022. To date, we have received 17 applications, and 12 HPA permits have been issued. Nearly half of those 12 projects were for restoration in freshwater habitats, including native riparian introduction, off-channel habitat creation, channel realignment, and engineered log jam installation.

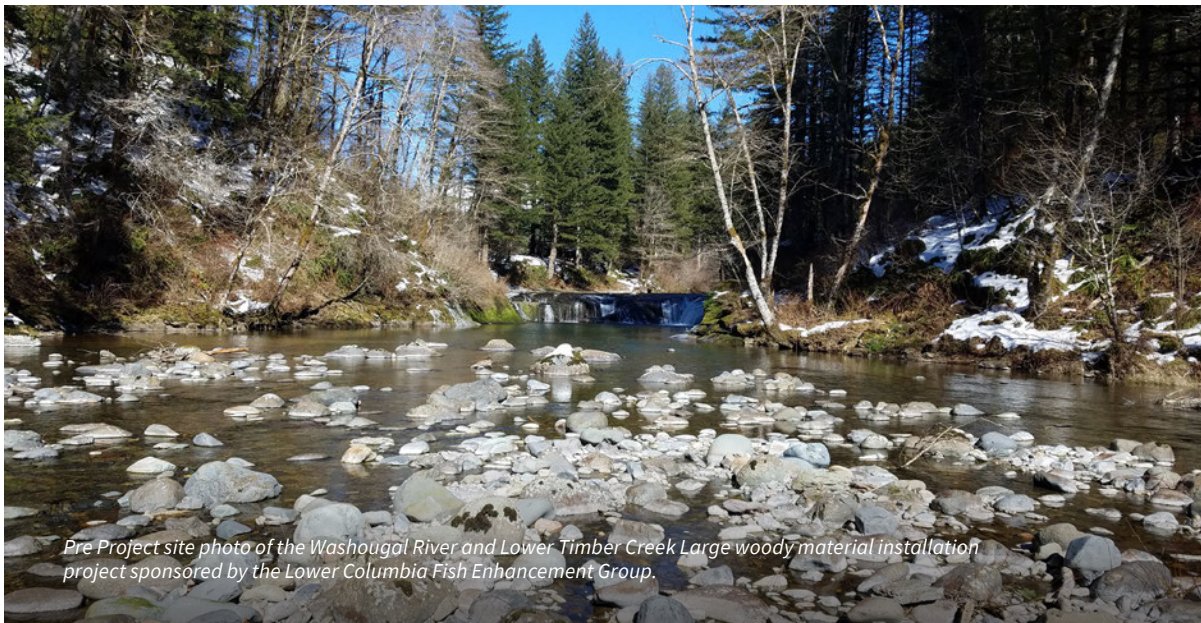
## What have you learned through the development of this program that is beneficial to partners?

Applicants with projects that qualify for review under the HRPP see a time and cost savings benefit because, per statute ([RCW 77.55.480](#)), they are not subject to the requirements of the State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) and no local or state government may require

permits or charge fees (other than the HPA), except where minimally required for participation in a federal program. While most federal permitting requirements can happen after or concurrently with HRPP review, this new program requires cultural resources review be complete before application—this includes federal Section 106 review where applicable. While local, state, and federal flood risk reduction requirements are called out in statute, the requirement is for applicants to have initiated review with the applicable local government and attest to their contact via the [HRPP supplemental application form](#). The supplemental application form, along with the statute and [HRPP website](#), are the main resources for information and guidance on the program.

## What things are still obstacles for the program?

We recognize continued outreach and coordination are required to help communicate this program and see its efforts be successful. Namely, this includes outreach to local jurisdictions and state partners as the most



*Pre Project site photo of the Washougal River and Lower Timber Creek Large woody material installation project sponsored by the Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group.*



affected regulatory partners. The HRPP coordinator and the Multi-Agency Permitting (MAP) team convene twice a month to help resolve issues identified through the process and conduct outreach to interested partners and practitioners. The MAP team consists of representatives from the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Washington Department of Ecology, the Recreation and Conservation Office, the Governor's Salmon Recovery Office, the Washington Department of Natural Resources, and the Puget Sound Partnership. Please do not hesitate to contact the HRPP if you have feedback on the process, comments, or concerns.

### What is the MART and how does it interact with the HRPP?

The Multi-Agency Review Team (MART) is a group of federal and state regulatory staff working together to coordinate and simplify the permitting process for restoration projects under existing pathways. The MART facilitates navigation through the entire (federal, state, and local) permitting process and directs applicants to existing or emerging streamlined permit pathways that might not be known or clear. The MART recognizes the HRPP as a useful tool for streamlining the local and state permitting process. The HRPP and MART Coordinators are working together to support permit streamlining where possible. For questions and support regarding the MART, contact Diane Hennessey at [hennessey.diane@epa.gov](mailto:hennessey.diane@epa.gov).

Benefits of the MART as noted by applicants:

- Brings the right permitting staff to the table early in the permitting process whom applicants can continue to communicate with throughout the permit process.

- Provides a clear understanding of required permits, application materials, and the overall permit process.
- Provides valuable assistance in navigating the permitting process, especially at the federal level.
- Achieves potential reduction in permit processing time, especially federal permitting.

### What else do you want people to know?

A few changes have occurred since this program was initially reported in this newsletter. A new HRPP coordinator, Gina Piazza, has been hired. She has been with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife for 15 years, including the last seven years as a scoping biologist in the Fish Passage division. As a scoping biologist, she provided technical assistance and permitting to the Department of Transportation in order to meet the terms of their Federal injunction, as well as provided technical assistance and project development for the Fish Barrier Removal Board.



#### GINA PIAZZA

Please reach out to Gina via [HRPP@dfw.wa.gov](mailto:HRPP@dfw.wa.gov) if you have questions or want to discuss your project's eligibility.



*Pre Project site photo of Bear Creek, a tributary to Wallace River wetland/floodplain restoration of 1,920 square feet using pre-planted pallets installed by helicopter sponsored by the Tulalip Tribes.*

# HB 1181: Advancing Climate Resilience and Sustainable Growth in Washington

BY AMELIA PETERSEN

Washington is consistently rated as one of the best states to live in the U.S. Because of this, it has experienced unprecedented growth: over a million new residents arrived in the last decade.

To accommodate this growth and meet aggressive greenhouse gas emissions reductions targets, state and local governments must plan together. The state intends to transition to a net-zero clean energy economy by 2050.

[House Bill \(HB\) 1181](#) aims to improve the state's response to climate change by updating the Growth Management Act (GMA) with climate change and resiliency goals for local governments. The GMA is the comprehensive land use planning framework for cities and counties in Washington. It serves as a critical tool for municipalities to plan ahead for population growth and land use.

The bill integrates climate change into the state's planning framework and requires local governments to take meaningful action to address climate change by supporting greenhouse gas emission reduction goals and fostering resilience to climate impacts and natural hazards, among other requirements. These improvements allow local governments to better plan and deal with the impacts of climate change. The bill includes direction for the Department of Ecology (Ecology) to update shoreline master program guidelines to incorporate climate considerations. HB 1181 also adds consideration of climate change impacts to the list of elements that must be contained in optional comprehensive flood hazard management plans (CFHMPs). Ecology's 2021 update of its [CFHMP guidebook](#) incorporated climate guidance.

The legislation additionally offers local governments help, guidance, and funding from the state to help with identifying actions to reduce greenhouse gas emissions. HB 1181 also emphasizes the incorporation of strong environmental justice principles. The bills requires local governments to prioritize vulnerable populations when planning for climate impacts and natural hazards.

## A Note from Ecology on Match Updates

For the 2023-25 biennium, match will still be required for those FbD grantees who did not meet eligibility requirements for a match waiver in this funding round. The Ecology Project Manager and Financial Manager will work with each grant recipient that has a match requirement to ensure reporting and EAGL are set up accurately so that reimbursements will be correct.

Looking ahead to future FbD funding rounds (2025-27 or later), Ecology is continuing to research the possibility of eliminating the match requirement entirely. Stay tuned!



Photo credit: Carol Macilroy

## Events, Opportunities & Resources

### Lummi Nation is Hiring a Water Resources Manager

**Application Deadline: June 29, 2023**

This position provides administrative and technical support and makes recommendations to Lummi Nation policy and legal staff to achieve the Lummi Water Resources Division (LWRD) mission to effectively protect and restore the Lummi Nations water resources, including shorelines, throughout all usual and accustomed grounds and stations to: (1) ensure an adequate quantity and quality of water to support the purpose of the Reservation as a permanent, economically viable homeland for the Lummi People; and (2) ensure an adequate quantity and quality of water to support a sustainable, harvestable surplus of salmon and shellfish sufficient to support the Lummi way of life (Schelangen).

[Learn More](#)

### Department of Transportation's Federal Highway Administration Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Grant Program

**Application Deadline: August 18, 2023**

FHWA has opened applications for the first round of the Promoting Resilient Operations for Transformative, Efficient, and Cost-Saving Transportation (PROTECT) Discretionary Grant Program, a new competitive grant program created by the Bipartisan Infrastructure Law to help make surface transportation more resilient to natural hazards, including climate change, sea level rise, flooding, extreme weather events, and other natural disasters. Up to \$848 million in Fiscal Year 2022 and 2023 funding is available.

[Learn More](#)

### City of Yakima Celebrates Removal of Nelson Dam, Looks to Future Projects

Partners gathered on the Naches River for a ribbon-cutting ceremony on Wednesday, May 24th to celebrate the removal of Nelson Dam and completion of Phase 1 of a project to improve fish passage, decrease flooding risks for nearby landowners and improve water supply reliability. This project was funded in part with Floodplains by Design funding and is part of an ambitious vision and powerful collaboration in Yakima.

[Learn More](#)

## Join us for a Fall FbD Convening!

Please save **September 11 and 12, 2023** on your calendars for the first in person gathering FbD has held in a number of years. Stay tuned for registration and accommodation details. Topics to include permitting, federal funding complexities, celebration of partnerships, and more.

### NORFMA Conference Call for Abstracts is Open

The September 19-22nd Northwest Regional Floodplain Management Association Conference in Spokane Valley is now accepting abstracts.

[Learn More](#)

### Department of Ecology is Hiring a Floodplain Management Policy Lead (Environmental Planner 5)

This position works with the Coastal/Shorelands Section within the Shorelands and Environmental Assistance Program at the Department of Ecology. This position would work with partners throughout Washington to promote and advance locally led, integrated floodplain management (IFM) approaches such as the Floodplains by Design program that reduce flooding risks to Washington's communities while also achieving other benefits (restoring habitat and other ecosystem functions of floodplains). Key priorities for this work include: climate resilience, equity, diversity, inclusion, and environmental justice.

[Learn More](#)

### Forterra is Hiring a Director of Conservation Transactions

This position will have a primary portfolio of land transactions in King, Pierce, Snohomish, Kittitas, and Yakima Counties with a focus on farmland, lowlands, ranchland, and urban open space. The role will also oversee the Hamilton Floodplains by Design program. The Director is expected to become a regional leader for the organization by engaging with local government, state leaders, state agencies, Tribes, business leaders, and local community leaders, including collaborations like the Pierce County Strategic Conservation Partnership and Snohomish County Sustainable Lands Strategy groups to conserve farmland and floodplain areas.

[Learn More](#)