



NOAA awards Smith Island project \$1 million grant

Snohomish County was recently awarded \$1 million for its Smith Island Restoration Project thanks to the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration (NOAA), a key partner in the Snohomish River estuary project.

An additional \$1.3 million has been requested and is pending Congressional authorization for Fiscal Year 2015 and 2016. If awarded, \$1 million will go toward additional construction costs for a new setback levee, habitat improvements and breaches. The remaining funds would be used for project monitoring.

The Smith Island project is part of the larger Sustainable Lands Strategy (SLS). During the last three years, the SLS has made significant progress toward its goal of fish and farm “net gain” — developing a cooperative framework for creating strategies to improve agricultural productivity and habitat function simultaneously, while also gaining broad support and streamlined approvals for SLS objectives.

The Smith Island project proposes to balance both needs by restoring historic tidal



Snohomish County
November 2013

This e-newsletter will provide you with the latest information about Snohomish County’s Sustainable Lands Strategy.

Contacts

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marshlands with construction of a new dike that will protect the most productive farmland while providing critical habitat for threatened Chinook salmon and other salmon species in the Snohomish River Basin.

“These types of projects will help protect commercial fishing jobs, tribal fishing rights and should provide increased opportunities for sports fishers,” said Debbie Terwilleger, the county’s Surface Water Management director.

“Likewise, protecting farmland in Snohomish County contributes to our local economy and livelihoods,” she said. “Local production means better prices, more variety and greater food security.”

NOAA is one of a number of project sponsors and funders including:

- Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund
- Puget Sound Partnership
- Salmon Recovery Funding Board
- Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program
- Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
- Washington State Recreation and Conservation Office
- US Fish and Wildlife Service
- Tulalip Tribes
- City of Everett

The Smith Island project is expected to be under construction beginning next summer.

Final part of Lower Skykomish Reach Scale package available

SLS Executive Committee members received the final piece of the Lower Skykomish Reach Scale Package during their meeting earlier this week.

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The committee received the first two parts, which focus on the background and goals of the Sustainable Lands Strategy, during their October meeting. Members are reviewing the document and a forthcoming list of available projects for future approval.

In the meantime, work has begun on the next packages, including the Snohomish River Estuary and the Stillaguamish River. Work on the Lower Snohomish River Reach Scale package will begin in early 2014 when assessments and modeling work are completed.

The reach scale plans lay the foundation for salmon restoration and farmland preservation in the Lower Skykomish River, Lower Snohomish River, Snohomish Estuary and the Stillaguamish River areas.

“We’re making movement forward on the critical work that will lead to successful projects in the future,” said Debbie Terwilleger, Snohomish County’s Surface Water Management director. “By incorporating a consistent review process, a host of expertise and the idea that projects must show net gains, we are showing the region and the state how such projects should be done.”

To read a draft of the Lower Skykomish River Reach Scale package, [click here](#).

SLS subcommittee to review ag metrics used in reach plans

The agriculture metrics used to measure net gains for farming, as identified in the draft Lower Skykomish River Reach Scale plan, will be reviewed by a subcommittee of the Sustainable Lands Strategy’s Executive Committee.

The available metrics were developed through ongoing SLS discussions as well as regional agriculture initiatives through the years, but members believe they could be stronger and need a careful review before inclusion in future reach scale plans.

Representatives of the farming industry and other SLS members will meet Tuesday, Nov. 26, from 3 to 4 p.m. at the Snohomish County Campus.

For more information, contact Brian Parry at Brian.Parry@snoco.org or 425-388-6650.

Key agreements help move Smith Island project forward

Snohomish County has reached agreement with Puget Sound Energy (PSE) to work cooperatively in the design and construction of the proposed setback dike that will cross the energy company's Everett Delta Pipeline.

The agreement means PSE will allow Snohomish County to develop the design for the pipeline – necessary for the project to move forward – in exchange for PSE's review of the setback design.

Snohomish County and other local, regional and federal partners are restoring estuary tidal marshlands in the Snohomish River watershed. PSE owns and operates an existing 16-inch high-pressure natural gas pipeline that traverses the Project.

The project will cross the pipeline with a new setback dike.

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