

Snohomish County's Puget Sound Initiative

Fish Passage Culvert Program



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There are several thousand culverts under roadways that block or interfere with the migration of salmon in Puget Sound. The County's Surface Water Management (SWM) Division has a team of biologists and engineers focused on the identification, inventory, and prioritization of culverts on County right-of-way (ROW) that are barriers to fish passage. The County is playing a leadership role in the region addressing the fish passage problem by having a dedicated team assigned to proactively design and build culvert replacement projects.

Currently there are 647 known culverts in the County's ROW with upstream fish distribution (not including driveway culverts within the ROW). Of those, 162 are passable by fish, 222 are partial or full blockages, and 263 are pending evaluation. SWM is currently working on design for the replacement of 33 culverts. The current top 50 replacement projects on the list would open approximately 125 miles of partially or fully blocked habitat for coho, chinook, bulltrout, and steelhead. The County will continue to collect additional data and update progress made in this Program. In the last decade, SWM has replaced approximately 65 culvert blockages to allow for fish passage.

