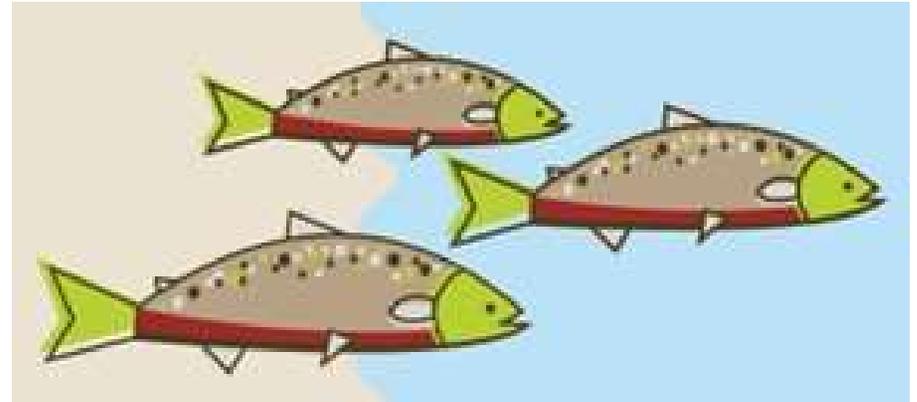


Fish Passage Restoration Program Strategic Plan

Local Services and Land Use
Committee Briefing
June 18, 2025



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Fish Passage Restoration Program Manager

Water & Land Resources Division, Department of Natural Resources & Parks

Fish Passage Restoration Program Strategic Plan

Today's Focus:

Drivers for the Strategic Plan

Fish Passage Restoration Program Strategic Plan:

- Mission & Goals
- Program Success Metrics
- Program Strategies & Implementation Actions

Next Steps and Timeline



Watercress Creek at 432nd SE (2024 construction)

Strategic Plan Drivers

Summer 2018: Initiation of the Fish Passage Restoration Program.

2019-2024: Program Development & Implementation

March 2024: Final audit report by the King County Auditor

December 2024: King County Council adopted the 2024 Comprehensive Plan



Tuck Creek @ NE Woodinville-Duvall Rd
(2023 Construction)

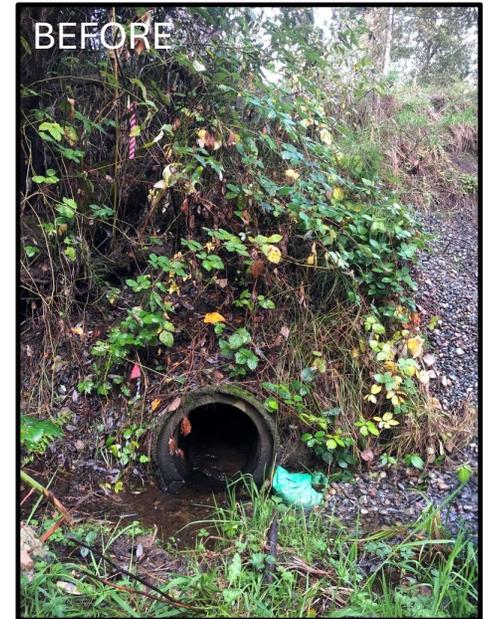
Mission and Goals

Program Mission Statement:

- Connecting Salmon to their Historic Habitat

Clarified Goals:

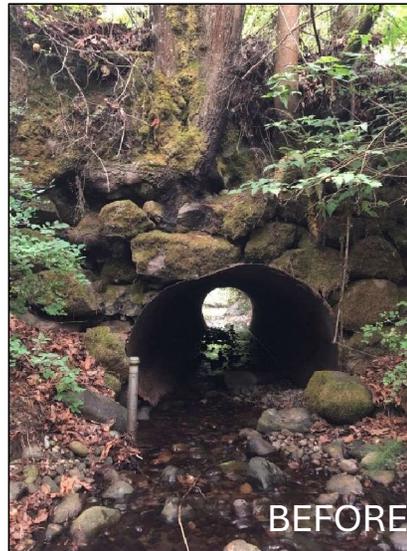
- Accelerate benefits for salmon by restoring fish passage
- Streamline fish passage projects from conception through successful completion.
- Partner to increase fish passage restoration throughout King County.



Unnamed tributary to Cedar River at SR169 (2021 construction)

Strategies & Implementation Actions

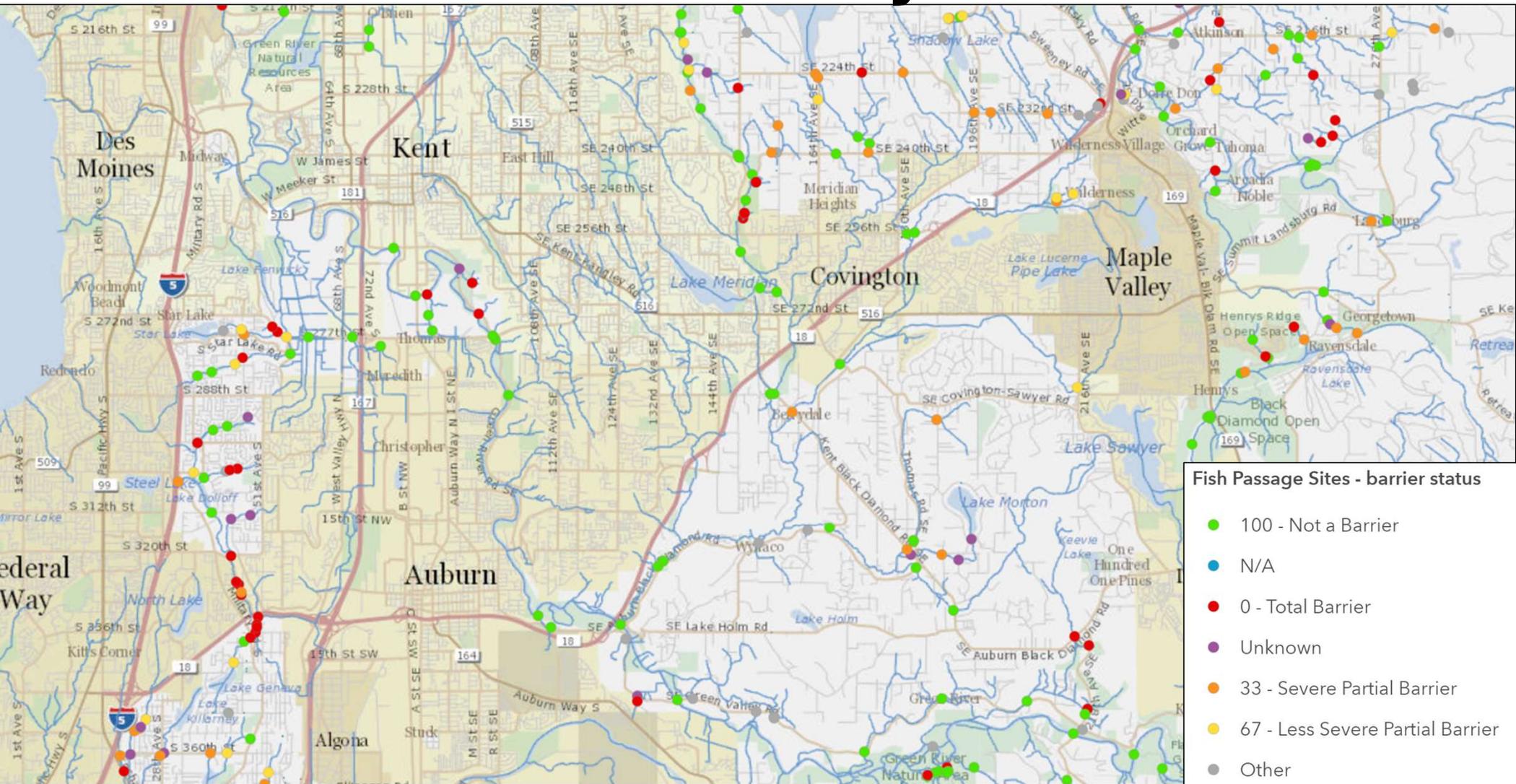
- Inventory & Prioritization
- Program Procedures
- Capital Project Delivery
- Partner Coordination
- Consultation, Outreach & Engagement



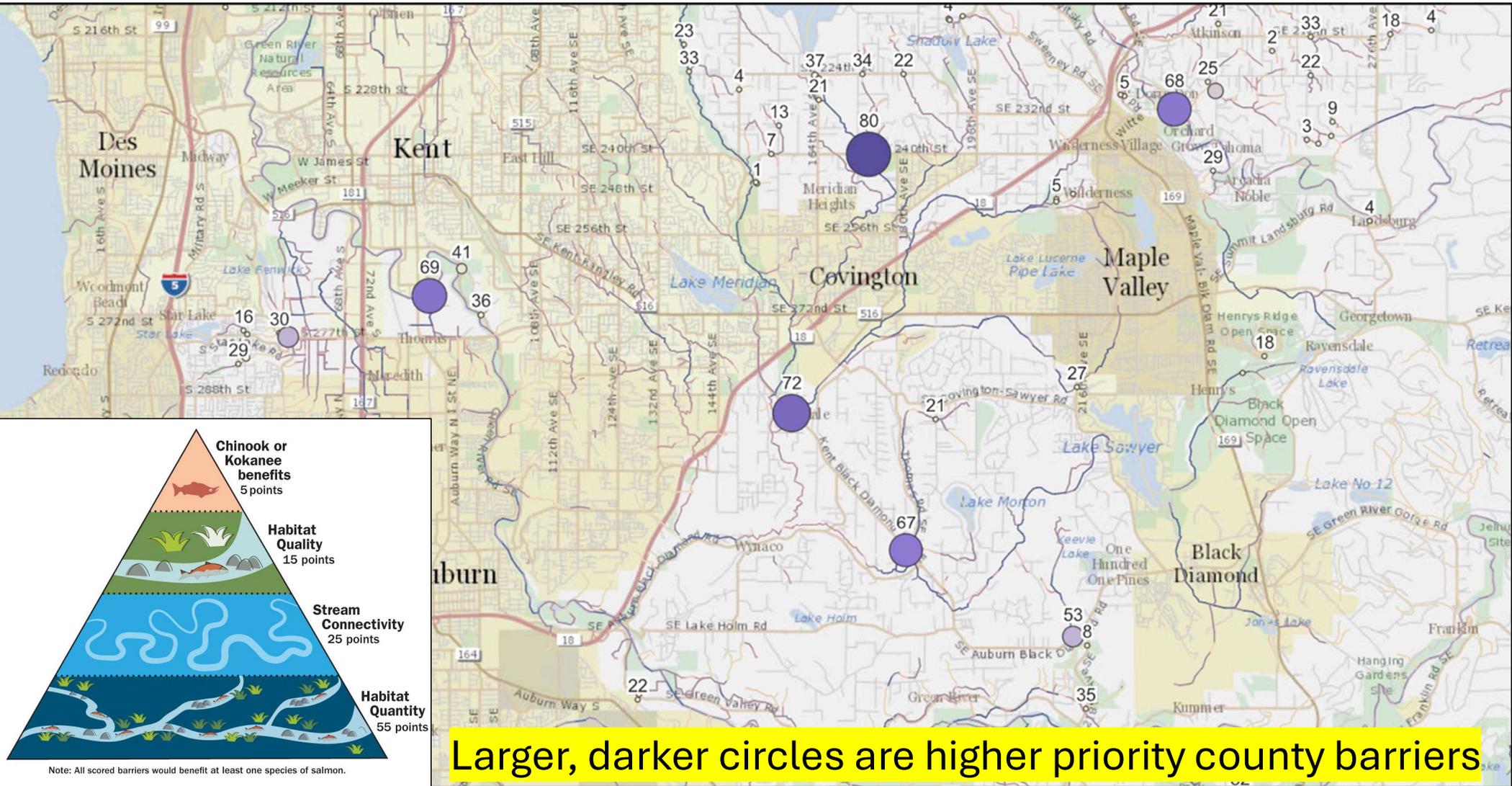
Mary Olsen Creek at Green River Rd.
(2020 construction)



Inventory

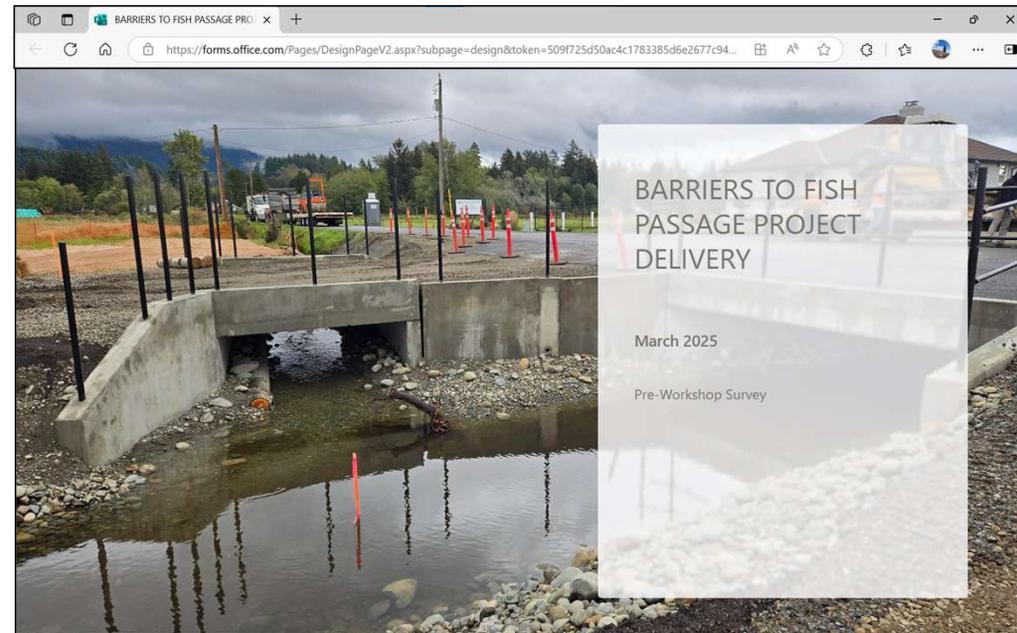


Prioritization



Program Procedures

- Streamline delivery of fish passage projects
- Develop and clarify standard approaches for common project elements:
 - Permitting,
 - Contracting and procurement,
 - Acquisition of real estate interests,
 - Engineering methods and practices, and
 - Priority transfer



Online survey to county fish passage staff to rate threats to delivery of fish passage capital projects (March 2025), in prep for Apr 2025 workshop.

Partner Coordination

Salmon don't care who owns a barrier. Strategic coordination to:

- Coordinate and accelerate work on multiple barriers on high priority streams,
- Ensure access to remedy the highest-priority passage barriers,
- Leverage available funding toward the most benefit,
- Share best practices, and
- Demonstrate how fish passage provides tangible benefits to salmon in the region.

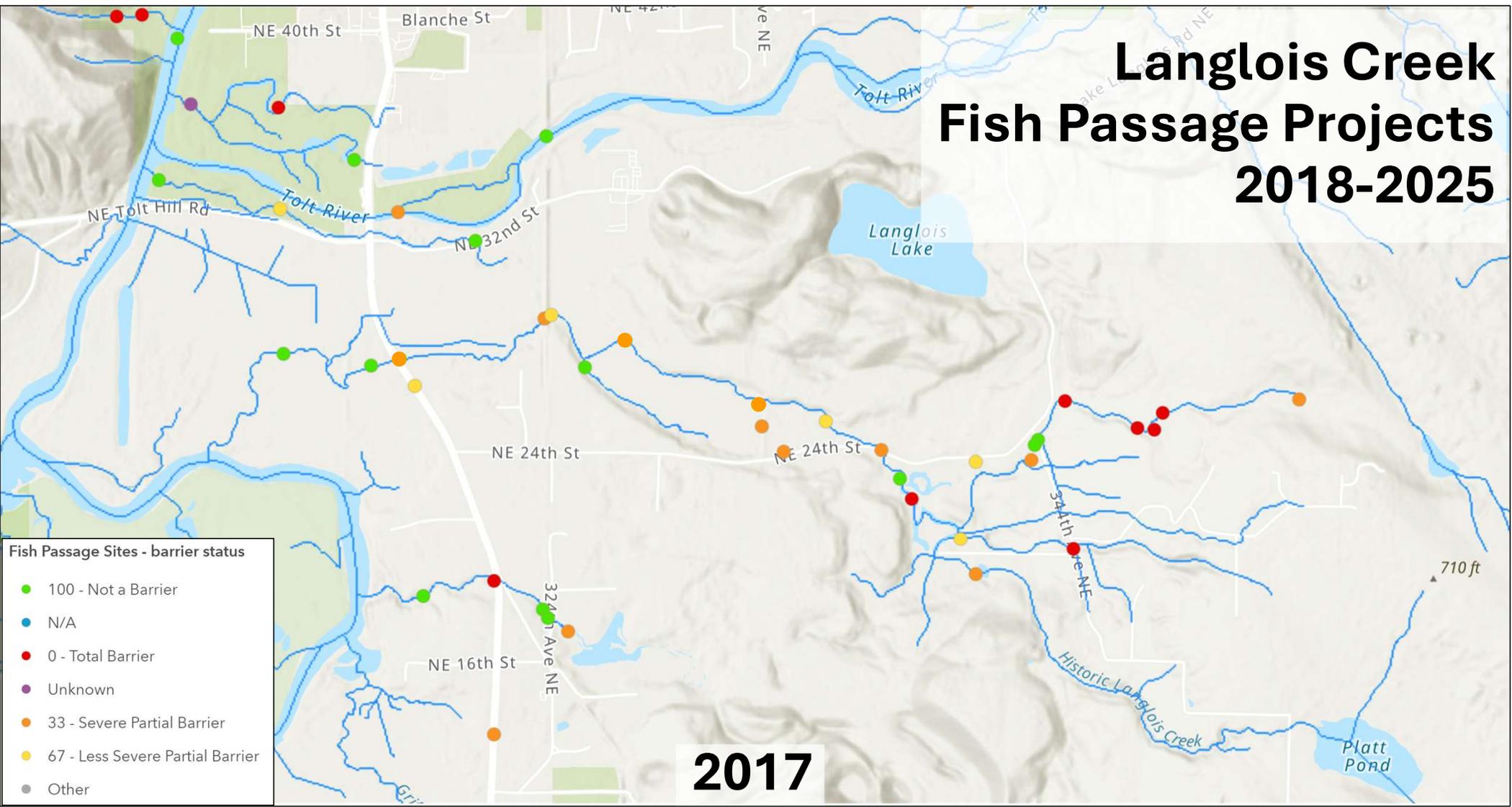


Ravensdale Creek at Green to Cedars Trail (2021/2022 construction)

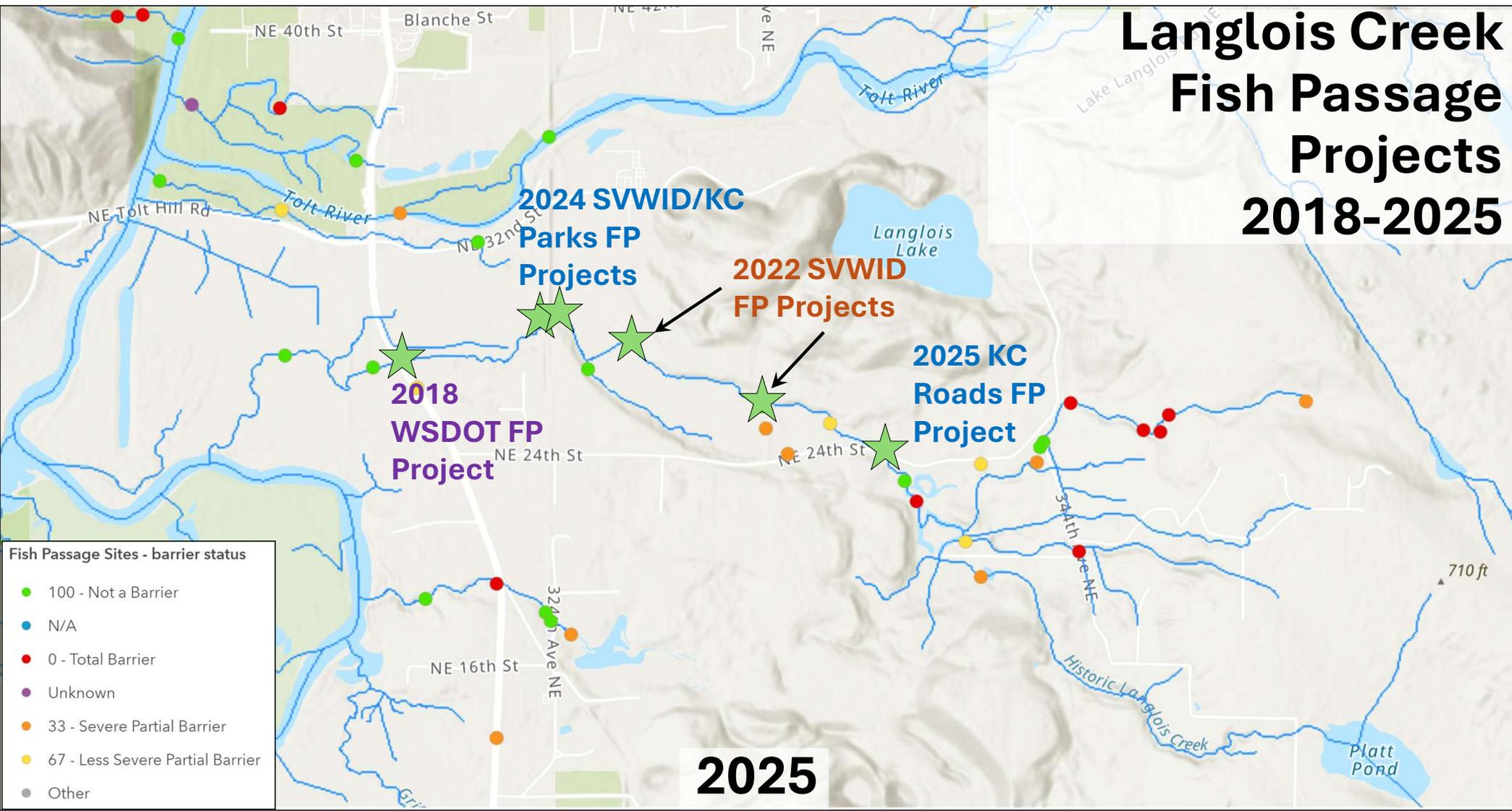


Langlois Creek at Snoqualmie Valley trail (2024 construction)

Langlois Creek Fish Passage Projects 2018-2025

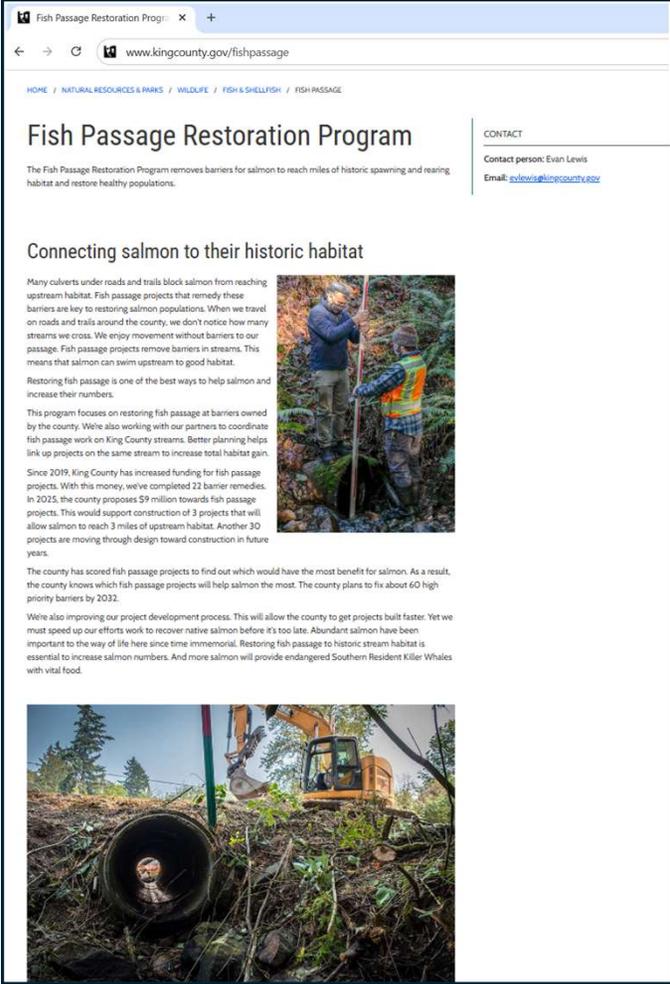


Langlois Creek Fish Passage Projects 2018-2025



Consultation, Outreach & Engagement

- Updates to the Fish Passage Restoration Program website
 - www.kingcounty.gov/fishpassage
 - Coordinated w/ county fish passage project websites.
- Continued frequent and close coordination with non-profits, salmon recovery groups, local and state agencies.
- Consultation with tribal staff.
 - Cross-agency tribal collaboration protocols for the county fish passage program and projects.
- Outreach on funding
 - Work with grant specialists, legislative liaisons, and the Executive's office to engage grant programs and legislative staff for funding of important county fish passage projects.
 - Public-private partnership opportunities



The screenshot shows the website for the Fish Passage Restoration Program. The browser address bar displays www.kingcounty.gov/fishpassage. The page title is "Fish Passage Restoration Program". Below the title, there is a navigation menu with links for HOME, NATURAL RESOURCES & PARKS, WILDLIFE, FISH & SHELLFISH, and FISH-PASSAGE. A contact information box on the right lists the contact person as Evan Lewis and the email as evanlewis@kingcounty.gov. The main content area features the heading "Connecting salmon to their historic habitat" and several paragraphs of text. The text discusses the importance of removing barriers in streams to restore salmon populations and mentions funding for barrier remediation projects. There are two images: one showing two people working in a stream and another showing a large pipe being installed in a stream bed.

Fish Passage Restoration Program

CONTACT
Contact person: Evan Lewis
Email: evanlewis@kingcounty.gov

Connecting salmon to their historic habitat

Many culverts under roads and trails block salmon from reaching upstream habitat. Fish passage projects that remedy these barriers are key to restoring salmon populations. When we travel on roads and trails around the county, we don't notice how many streams we cross. We enjoy movement without barriers to our passage. Fish passage projects remove barriers in streams. This means that salmon can swim upstream to good habitat.

Restoring fish passage is one of the best ways to help salmon and increase their numbers.

This program focuses on restoring fish passage at barriers owned by the county. We're also working with our partners to coordinate fish passage work on King County streams. Better planning helps link up projects on the same stream to increase total habitat gain.

Since 2019, King County has increased funding for fish passage projects. With this money, we've completed 22 barrier remedies. In 2025, the county proposes \$9 million towards fish passage projects. This would support construction of 3 projects that will allow salmon to reach 3 miles of upstream habitat. Another 30 projects are moving through design toward construction in future years.

The county has scored fish passage projects to find out which would have the most benefit for salmon. As a result, the county knows which fish passage projects will help salmon the most. The county plans to fix about 60 high-priority barriers by 2032.

We're also improving our project development process. This will allow the county to get projects built faster. Yet we must speed up our efforts work to recover native salmon before it's too late. Abundant salmon have been important to the way of life here since time immemorial. Restoring fish passage to historic stream habitat is essential to increase salmon numbers. And more salmon will provide endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales with vital food.



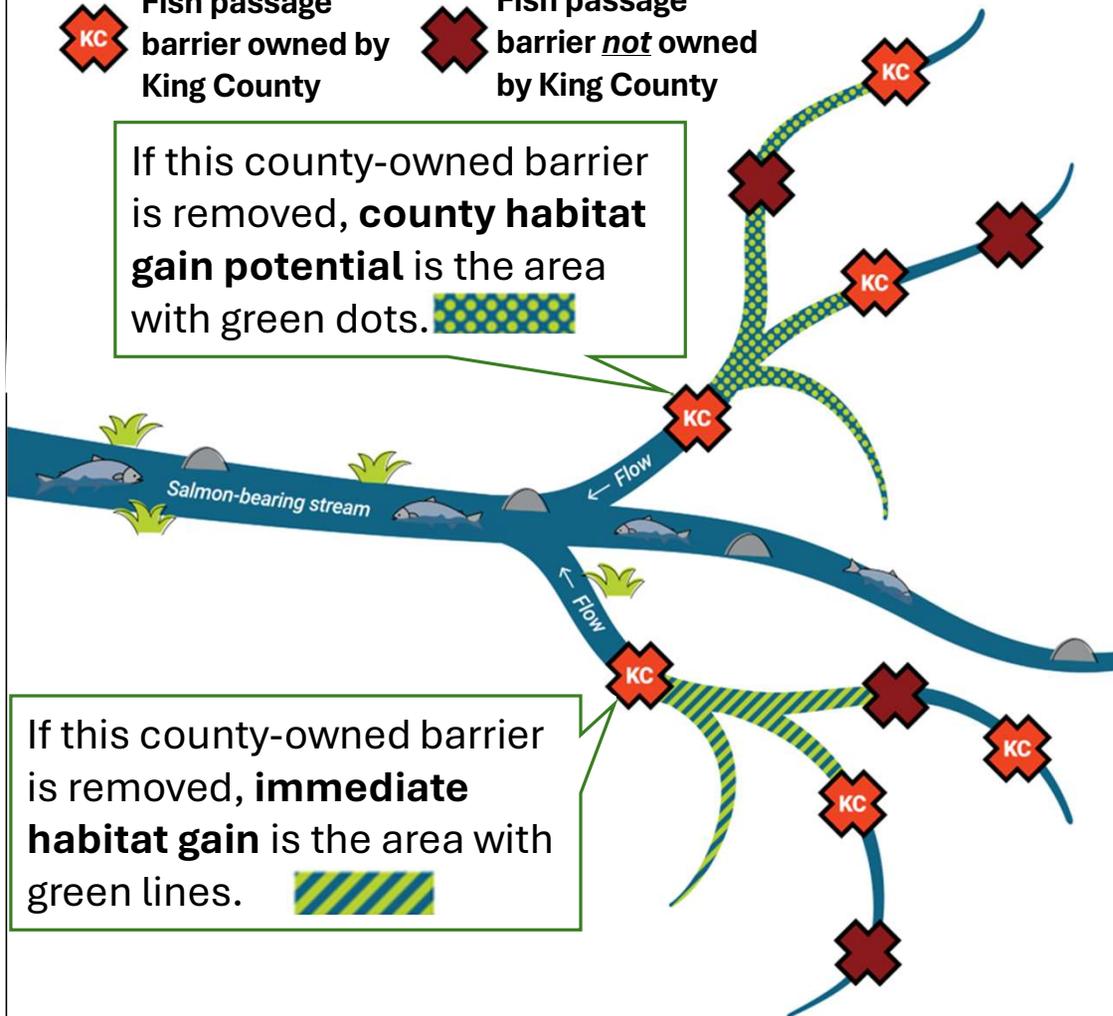
County habitat gain potential vs. Immediate habitat gain

 Fish passage barrier owned by King County

 Fish passage barrier *not* owned by King County

If this county-owned barrier is removed, **county habitat gain potential** is the area with green dots. 

If this county-owned barrier is removed, **immediate habitat gain** is the area with green lines. 

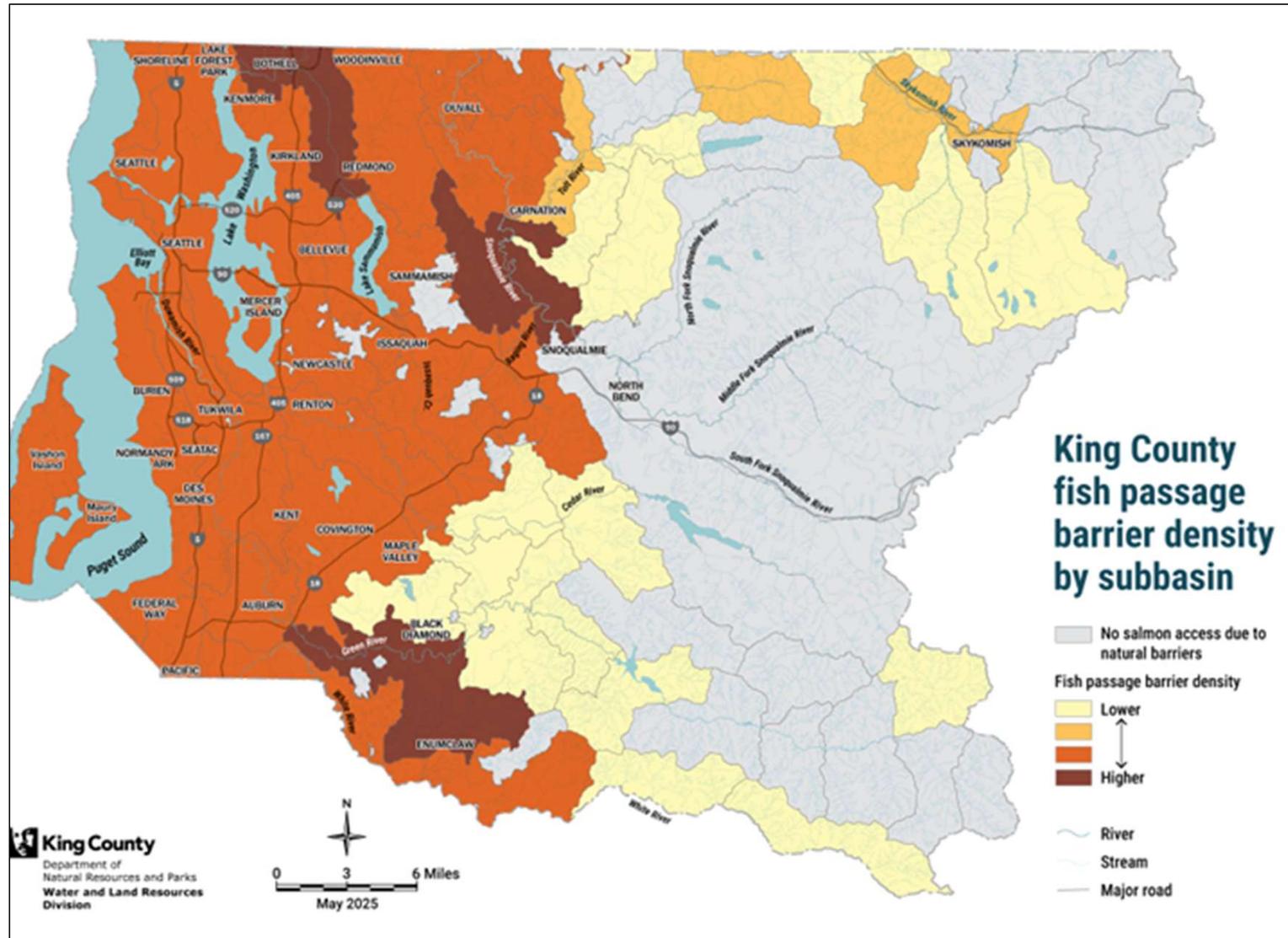


Success Metrics

- Upstream habitat gain
 - County Habitat Gain Potential
 - Distance and habitat quantity upstream to the next county barrier (or upper limit of salmon habitat)
2023-2039: **350 miles** of County Gain Potential
 - Immediate Habitat Gain
 - Distance and habitat quantity upstream to the next known barrier (or upper limit of salmon habitat)
2023-2039: **155 miles** of Immediate Gain

Success Metrics

- Subbasin Barrier Density
 - Track changes in barrier density numbers over time.



Funding and Financing

Estimated remaining cost for the 2023-2039 fish passage work plan is \$251 million

- WLRD, Roads, and Parks track expenditures, funding need, and grant opportunities.
- Dedicated local fish passage funding stream recommended for program sustainability.

Since 2019:

County funding (SWM and REET)	\$44M (supplemented by Parks levy, Roads operations)
Grants (local, state, federal)	<u>\$26M</u>
Average	\$10M/year

- Other potential funding sources:
 - Coordinated grant applications with partners;
 - Increasing state funding for county fish passage and transportation capital projects;
 - Direct state and federal funding for county fish passage projects.

Risk Assessment

THREAT	RISK	WAYS TO MITIGATE
Local flood permitting	H	County code revisions to support salmon recovery and floodplain management goals.
Property acquisition challenges	H	Pro-active, early outreach, clear messaging; adequate funding.
Contracting/Procurement	H	Process improvement, staff training, innovative procurement methods.
Staff capacity	M	Dedicated teams in Roads, Parks, and WLRD working on fish passage.
Insufficient funding/cost increases	M	Seek diverse and robust funding/financing plan.
Project delivery processes	M	Plan, do, check, act to improved processes and efficiency.

Strategic Plan: Next Steps & Timeline

Strategic Plan Review Process	Dates	Status
SME/Regional Planning review/revision	May 14 – Jun 13	Complete
Technical Editor Review/Revision	Jun 16 – 27	In progress
PAO Review/Revision	Jun 30 – Jul 18	Pending
Pre-review copy to Exec Office	Jul 21	Pending
Divisional Review/Revision	Jul 21 – Aug 8	Pending
Departmental Review/Revision (DNRP/DLS)	Aug 11 – 31	Pending
Exec Office Review/Revision	Sep 1 – 29	Pending
Due date to KC Council and Auditor	Sep 30	Pending

FISH PASSAGE RESTORATION PROGRAM



Questions?

