

Nelson Dam Removal Project: Water Supply, Riverine Process, and Fish Passage Improvements

Project Status Briefing – Winter 2022

OVERVIEW

The City of Yakima is pleased to provide a status report for the Nelson Dam Removal Project as the first in-water work window has come to a close (February 28, 2022). Fish passage through the project reach is currently available through both the main channel (newly constructed roughened channel fishway) and the temporary bypass channel along the north bank. Attached are several recent photos depicting the project reach, taken from Powerhouse Road bridge. Photos were taken on March 8, 2022 when flows were approximately 4,300 cfs during a high water event.

A brief summary of project activities occurring from the summer of 2021 through February 28, 2022 is provided below, along with a list of scheduled construction tasks from now through the opening of the next work window in July 2022.

Work Completed to Date: Summer 2021 – February 28, 2022

Despite the November 2021 flood event and challenges with winter road conditions for large boulder delivery to the site, the Contractor has maintained schedule and completed the following activities since in-water work commenced in July 2021:

- The north bank temporary bypass channel was excavated during early stages of the first in-water work window (July 16, 2021; Photo 1, attached) and remains open; it will be closed at the start of the next in-water work window (July 16, 2022), and work on the north bank, including the pilot channels, will commence. The Contractor has started work on the north portion of the roughened channel and secondary fish passage channels on the north bank, outside of the OHWM.
- Approximately 80% of the existing dam has been removed. Dam removal began at the existing fish ladder and extended south across the Naches River. Existing riverbed material was removed and replaced with material comprised of foundation rock, infill sediment, engineered streambed material, and weir boulders within the roughed channel including the primary fish channel in accordance with the Contract Documents. Approximately 9,800 tons of material (roughly 1/3rd of the anticipated amount) has been installed in the roughened channel.
- A sheetpile/bulk bag cofferdam now isolates the south bank in-water work area that will remain in place from now through July 16, 2022.

Next Steps: February 28, 2022 – July 16, 2022

The isolation area along the south bank of the Naches River (Photo 2, attached) will accommodate the following activities, scheduled to occur from now through the opening of the next in-water work window in mid-July:

- Removal of the remaining portions of Nelson Dam within the south bank isolation area
- Installation of the temporary irrigation structure and screen (details have been provided to WDFW)
- Excavation for the new sluiceway and intake, and subsequent construction
- Construction of the new intake including mechanical, electrical provisions
- Demolition of the existing surface water intake and screening structures (City structure now, and Naches-Cowiche in late summer)

March 16, 2022

Fish Rescue and Relocation Summary to Date

HDR has conducted several rounds of fish salvage during various dewatering stages, with assistance from the Yakama Nation, WDFW, USFWS, and the Northbank construction team. As of February 17, 2022, the fish salvage and relocation team has captured and released:

- 104 juvenile *O. mykiss*, with 4 injuries and 3 deaths
- 74 Chinook Salmon juveniles, with 2 injuries and no known deaths
- 22 Coho Salmon juveniles, with no injuries or known deaths
- 0 Bull Trout

Special Thanks

We greatly appreciate the outstanding efforts and participation by the regulatory community, Yakima County, and all project stakeholders to continue to support this project. Special thanks to the Yakama Nation, for their flexibility and gracious willingness to help with multiple salvage efforts.

We will provide another update at the start of the next in-water work window. In the meantime, if there are any questions or a desire to visit the site, please reach out.

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Photos of Nelson Dam Removal Project In-water Work Area

Photos from March 8, 2022, 4,300 cfs flow

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Photo 2. South bank in-water work isolation area for sluiceway and intake work. Area will be isolated behind cofferdams through July 16, 2022.