

RCW 77.95.180 Fish passage barrier removal program. (1) (a) To maximize available state resources, the department and the department of transportation must work in partnership to identify and complete projects to eliminate fish passage barriers caused by state roads and highways.

(b) The partnership between the department and the department of transportation must be based on the principle of maximizing habitat recovery through a coordinated investment strategy that, to the maximum extent practical and allowable, prioritizes opportunities: To correct multiple fish barriers in whole streams rather than through individual, isolated projects; to coordinate with other entities sponsoring barrier removals, such as regional fisheries enhancement groups incorporated under this chapter, in a manner that achieves the greatest cost savings to all parties; and to correct barriers located furthest downstream in a stream system. Examples of this principle include:

(i) Coordinating with all relevant state agencies and local governments to maximize the habitat recovery value of the investments made by the state to correct fish passage barriers;

(ii) Maximizing the habitat recovery value of investments made by public and private forestland owners through the road maintenance and abandonment planning process outlined in the forest practices rules, as that term is defined in RCW 76.09.020;

(iii) Recognizing that many of the barriers owned by the state are located in the same stream systems as barriers that are owned by cities and counties with limited financial resources for correction and that state-local partnership opportunities should be sought to address these barriers; and

(iv) Recognizing the need to continue investments in the family forest fish passage program created pursuant to RCW 76.13.150 and other efforts to address fish passage barriers owned by private parties that are in the same stream systems as barriers owned by public entities.

(2) The department shall also provide engineering and other technical services to assist nonstate barrier owners with fish passage barrier removal projects, provided that the barrier removal projects have been identified as a priority by the department and the department has received an appropriation to continue that component of a fish barrier removal program.

(3) Nothing in this section is intended to:

(a) Alter the process and prioritization methods used in the implementation of the forest practices rules, as that term is defined in RCW 76.09.020, or the family forest fish passage program, created pursuant to RCW 76.13.150, that provides public cost assistance to small forestland owners associated with the road maintenance and abandonment processes; or

(b) Prohibit or delay fish barrier projects undertaken by the department of transportation or another state agency that are a component of an overall transportation improvement project or that are being undertaken as a direct result of state law, federal law, or a court order. However, the department of transportation or another state agency is required to work in partnership with the fish passage barrier removal board created in RCW 77.95.160 to ensure that the scheduling, staging, and implementation of these projects are, to [the] maximum extent practicable, consistent with the coordinated and prioritized approach adopted by the fish passage barrier removal

board. [2014 c 120 § 2; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7 § 83; 1995 c 367 § 3.
Formerly RCW 75.50.170.]

Effective date—2010 1st sp.s. c 26; 2010 1st sp.s. c 7: See note following RCW 43.03.027.

Severability—Effective date—1995 c 367: See notes following RCW 77.95.150.