

2024 Agency Request Legislation



The [Habitat Recovery Pilot Program \(HRPP\)](#) was passed in the 2021 legislative session to advance the construction of habitat restoration projects. The HRPP was developed to streamline the local and state environmental permitting process for habitat recovery projects that benefit fish or their habitats. This pilot program intends to promote and implement habitat restoration as quickly and efficiently as possible, thereby bolstering the natural resources and natural resource economy of Washington.

Currently, with regard to cultural resources, the HRPP requires that before applying for a [Hydraulic Project Approval \(HPA\)](#) permit under the program, applicants must review their proposed project with the Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP) and complete any required site surveys. This requirement by DAHP introduces a new order for permitting hydraulic projects, which is at times inhibiting the intended streamlined processing and permitting of fish recovery projects under the HRPP. WDFW recommends aligning the cultural resources review requirements for an HPA with current practices before the pilot program sunsets to make an accurate determination of the impact and effectiveness of permit streamlining programs.

This proposal will remove the requirement that review with DAHP is completed before applying to the HRPP, and instead allow for concurrent processing. This change aligns with other permitting procedures, will better allow for the intended streamlined permitting of vetted habitat improvement projects, and will support the efficient and effective use of state and federal funds for restoration.

Cultural resources review is still required to be completed prior to issuing an HPA.

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