

Environmental mitigation

The approach to mitigation includes three steps:

- **Avoid** impacts to the extent possible through measures like modifying the bridge alignment to avoid sensitive resources.
- **Minimize** impacts through measures like increasing the span length between bridge columns to affect a smaller area of aquatic habitat.
- Identify appropriate **mitigation measures** to offset remaining project effects that cannot be avoided or minimized.

Mitigation measures include:

- Creating new wetlands to mitigate for wetland fill.
- Enhancing low-grade wetlands to mitigate for clearing and shading of wetlands.
- Implementing stormwater treatment to improve water quality and benefit fish.
- Improving, restoring, and/or constructing habitat within the watershed to mitigate the effects on aquatic habitat.

We will be able to move forward with advanced mitigation planning when a preferred alternative is identified. WSDOT is working closely with resource agencies to advance mitigation planning.

Endangered Species Act consultation

- The Endangered Species Act (ESA), passed in 1973, protects animal and plant species whose populations are dangerously in decline or close to extinction. Section 7 of the ESA requires projects with federal funding or federal permits to consult with the appropriate federal resource agencies to determine whether the project could harm ESA “listed” species or their habitat.
- Key ESA listed species in the SR 520 corridor include Chinook salmon, steelhead trout, and bull trout. Additional ESA listed species in the pontoon construction and transport route include marbled murrelets, eulachon, and green sturgeon, among others.
- WSDOT is consulting with the National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS) and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service (USFWS) to describe the project’s effects on listed species.
- The results of our analysis will be submitted to NMFS and USFWS as a Biological Assessment. NMFS and USFWS will then issue a Biological Opinion that includes specific measures to protect listed species.



An example of regional salmon species.