
HYDRAULIC PROJECT APPROVALS

MODULE 3 - MATT CURTIS

Matt Curtis



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Fish and Wildlife

**Fish Passage Scoping Section Manager
Habitat Program
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Current duties: Oversee and manage fish passage scoping biologists and grant programs that fund fish passage restoration.

Background & Experience: Matt's has a background working with fish and wildlife species all over the United States, but has always been employed by either state or federal governments and is a dedicated public servant. Matt has worked for WDFW for a total of 6 years. He started at WDFW in 2014 as a Regional Habitat Biologist mostly in the marine world, issuing HPAs for projects along Puget Sound shorelines. Eventually, Matt worked his way into supervising the biologists covering the South Puget Sound for the Habitat Program. He now works as the Fish Passage Scoping Section Manager at WDFW out of Olympia.

Education: University of Minnesota 2001, BS in Fisheries and Wildlife; Hood College 2010, MS in Environmental Biology

Personal interests: Matt lives with his partner Becca, their cat Eugene, and their snake EL Rojo, in Olympia, and enjoys birdwatching and good movies.

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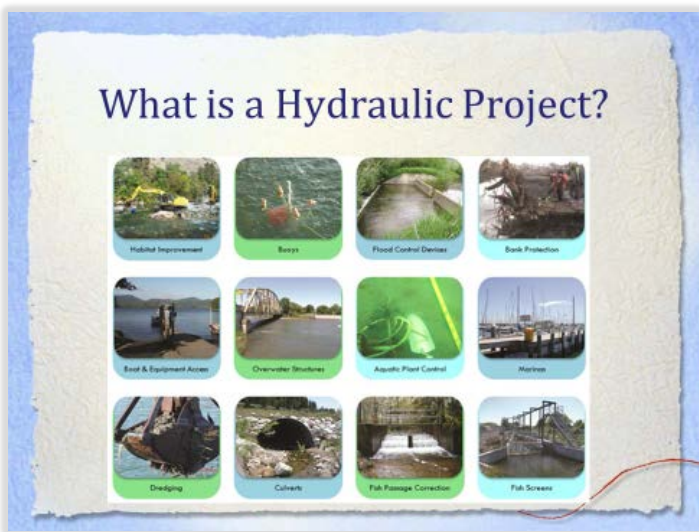
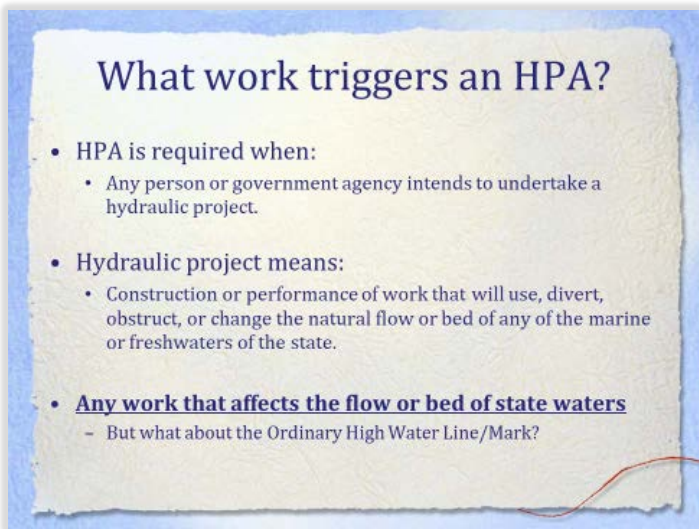
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Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs)

This will be an overview of the origins of the State Hydraulic Code and how the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife applies the authority granted it under the Hydraulic Code. The presentation will provide an introduction into what is considered a hydraulic project, what it means to protect fish life, and more specifically, the typical process that WDFW and WSDOT go through to permit projects.



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What is the Regulatory Authority?

- First Hydraulic Act in 1943
 - Any person or government agency that wants to undertake a hydraulic project, must before commencing work, secure the approval of the department in the form of a permit.
- HPA statutes: RCW 77.55
- HPA rules: WAC 220-660



What is the purpose of the permit?




Who is Not Required to Get an HPA?

- Railroads
- Federal Agencies (Sometimes)
- Tribal members working on tribal trust lands or exercising treaty rights



What Activities do not require an HPA?

- Work that does not affect the bed or flow of state waters.
- Work in an entirely artificial watercourse.
- Private, commercial aquaculture.




What Activities are exempt?



Types of HPAs: WAC 220-660-050

- Standard
 - 45 days - up to 5 years
- Expedited
 - 15 days - up to 60 days
- Emergency
 - Immediate verbal - up to 5 years
- Pamphlet
 - Continual
- Fish Habitat Enhancement
 - Same as standard



Fish Habitat Enhancement Projects (FHEP):

- RCW 77.55.181 - Must benefit fish habitat through:
 - Elimination of human-made fish passage barriers
 - Restoring streambank through bioengineering
 - Placement of woody debris or instream structures to benefit naturally producing fish stocks
 - Restoration of native kelp and eelgrass beds and restoring native oysters.
- Must have sponsor as provided by statute
- 15 day comment period for local governments
 - Exempt from SEPA: Cannot be approved if size or scale raises public health or safety concerns*
- Regional approval

FHEP WATER CROSSING STRUCTURES

- **Elimination of human-made fish passage barriers**
 - Unimpeded fish passage today, tomorrow, and the future
 - Excessive slope, drop, or velocity
 - Shallow flow
 - Lack of surface flow
 - Uncharacteristically coarse bed material
 - Fit the crossing to the stream
 - Avoid trapping or limiting natural stream behavior - known commonly as...




STREAM SIMULATION*

- WAC Rules (220-660-190)
 - Width
 - Gradient
 - Bed Slope
 - Culvert Fill (Countersink)
 - Sediment Size
- Site conditions will always override standardized provisions.
- Coordination
 - Tribes
 - Local Jurisdiction




Getting an HPA

- Complete application:
 - Plans for overall project
 - As complete as possible
 - Notice of compliance with SEPA
 - Not with FHEP
 - Completed APPS Forms
 - <https://www.govonline.aas.com/WA/WDFW/Public/>



Contacting a Habitat Biologist

- Scoping Biologist
 - Fish passage corrections related to injunction
 - Projectwise project list has assignments
 - Dave Collins - SW and as needed to support
 - Julie Grobely - Snohomish and King County
 - Gina Piazza - Olympic
 - Cade Roler - Skagit and Whatcom Counties
- Regional Biologist
 - Other hydraulic projects outside of injunction case area or not funded through I-4.
 - <https://wdfw.wa.gov/licensing/hpa/>
 - Can also be generally helpful



Questions?
