



2021

HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT AT ANCIL HOFFMAN

Frequently Asked Questions



About the Project

WHAT IS THE ANCIL HOFFMAN HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECT?

The Ancil Hoffman Habitat Restoration Project will enhance spawning and rearing areas for salmon and steelhead trout in the Lower American River near Ancil Hoffman Park by laying approximately 15,800 cubic yards of clean gravel into the flowing river and carving a new alcove in the existing gravel bar, parallel to the river.

WHEN IS THE PROJECT GOING TO TAKE PLACE?

The project is expected to begin in late-August and finish by late-October 2021, before fall-run Chinook salmon return in high numbers from the Pacific Ocean to the Lower American River. Crews may be on site Monday through Saturday from 6 a.m. to 6 p.m. (noise starting at 7 a.m.) with in-river work occurring only on weekdays (and not on Labor Day).

WHERE IS THE PROJECT AREA?

The project area is the Lower American River, at Ancil Hoffman Park. The construction zone will start just upriver from the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and extend downriver to about the golf course parking lot.

WHY IS THIS PROJECT IMPORTANT?

The Ancil Hoffman area of the river has been a prime spot for spawning salmon and steelhead, but spawning beds and side channels degrade through natural processes with time and high flows. Because of Nimbus and Folsom dams, upstream sediment sources that would otherwise replace old gravel are blocked. This project will restore this crucial spawning and rearing habitat to nurture native fish. The Ancil Hoffman Habitat Restoration Project is expected to be even more crucial to fish survival given the very dry and warm conditions expected in the river by fall 2021.

WHAT ARE SOME PROJECT BENEFITS?

- **Benefits to Salmon and Steelhead:** This will be the Water Forum's 10th project restoring fish spawning gravel beds and improving juvenile fish rearing habitat on the Lower American River. Previous projects have demonstrated measurable results, including surges in native fish nests in areas where there were very few prior to restoration. You can learn more about the Water Forum's habitat restoration projects and their results at waterforum.org/AH.
- **New educational opportunities through Effie Yeaw Nature Center:** The Water Forum is pleased to be working in partnership with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center to enhance educational opportunities for the community via this project. These include trail improvements along the river for observing salmon; new interpretive signage along the river and throughout the grounds; citizen science tours of the restoration project area and afterward to monitor results; and support for a new exhibit on salmon and steelhead within the museum.

WHAT IS THE SACRAMENTO WATER FORUM AND THEIR ROLE?

The Water Forum brings together water providers, environmentalists, business groups and local governments to balance the water needs of people and the environment of the Lower American River. The Water Forum coordinates restoration activities in cooperation with the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation, and provides City of Sacramento Department of Utilities personnel to construct projects. You can learn more at waterforum.org.

WHO IS FUNDING THIS PROJECT?

The project is funded by the U.S. Bureau of Reclamation Central Valley Project Improvement Act Anadromous Fish Restoration Program, and made possible through partnerships between the Water Forum, City of Sacramento Department of Utilities, Sacramento County Regional Parks, Sacramento Area Flood Control Agency, California Department of Fish and Wildlife, and the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service.

Potential Project Impacts

HOW IS THE PROJECT EXPECTED TO IMPACT PARK VISITORS AND NEIGHBORS?

Potential project impacts to park visitors and surrounding neighborhoods during construction may include noise, traffic and impaired access to the river.

- **Noise:** Most of the noise is expected to come from machinery that washes and sorts rock before it is placed into the river. The project team is planning to contain this noise to the hours of 7 a.m. to 6 p.m.
- **Employee traffic:** The project team includes about a dozen employees who will travel to and from the project site twice daily (at the beginning and end of the day). They will park in the equipment staging area and not in the paved parking lot.

- **Equipment traffic:** The project will use heavy equipment to excavate, move, wash and place gravel into the river, as well as create a side alcove. This equipment includes large bulldozers, excavators, front loaders and trucks. The equipment will move into and out of the project area twice—once at the beginning and another at the end, and otherwise will remain on site.
- **Access to the river:** During construction, access to the river from the shore will be blocked to the public within the construction area, which will start just upriver from the Effie Yeaw Nature Center and extend downriver to about the golf course parking lot.

IS PUBLIC PARKING EXPECTED TO BE IMPACTED?

Public parking is not expected to be impacted. Employees will park in the equipment staging area and not in paved lots.

HOW IS THE PROJECT EXPECTED TO IMPACT RAFTERS?

The project team is working to minimize impacts on rafters. Construction will be taking place during weekdays only (and not on Labor Day). When in-river work is occurring, the project team will include designated spotters stationed upriver to notify rafters about the construction zone ahead and communicate with equipment operators (similar to road construction traffic control). In addition, rafters will be notified about the project via signage placed at popular upriver entrance points.

WILL THE PUBLIC BE ABLE TO ACCESS THE CONSTRUCTION ZONE (ON SHORE AND FROM THE RIVER) WHEN CREWS ARE NOT THERE?

During off-work hours, the excavation area and equipment will be secured with fencing and on-site security. However, the public will have access to the river along the shore. Rafters and boaters will be able to travel through the area via the river and access the shore.

HOW IS THE PROJECT EXPECTED TO IMPACT THE EFFIE YEAW NATURE CENTER?

Potential impacts to the Effie Yeaw Nature Center include noise and access to the river (see above). However, the Water Forum is pleased to be working in partnership with the Effie Yeaw Nature Center to enhance educational opportunities for the community via this project. These include a new platform along the river for observing salmon; new interpretive signage along the river and throughout the grounds; citizen science tours of the project area and afterward to monitor results; and support for a new exhibit on salmon and steelhead within the museum.

Project Construction

WHAT KIND OF EQUIPMENT WILL BE USED AND HOW DO YOU MAKE SURE IT DOESN'T HARM THE RIVER?

The project will utilize river-friendly heavy equipment to place gravel and woody material into the river flows and alcove. This equipment, which will move around and in the river, includes large bulldozers, excavators, front loaders and trucks that have been thoroughly pressure washed and equipped with food-grade vegetable oil (rather than motor oil) to protect water quality during in-river work.

WHERE IS THE ROCK COMING FROM THAT WILL BE PLACED INTO THE RIVER?

The project will excavate rock and gravel from an existing bar to create a new area for young fish to hide from predators and grow. This excavated gravel will be cleaned and sorted into the optimum size for salmon and steelhead spawning, and then strategically placed back into the flowing river according to design plans. Any excess gravel will be placed in the southwest portion of the project site and graded to match the existing landscape. Other past projects have sourced gravel previously removed from the river by 19th-century mining activities.

WHAT KIND OF MATERIAL WILL BE PLACED INTO THE ALCOVE?

About 15 large woody tree structures (sourced from offsite) will be placed into the side alcove to provide protected places for young fish to hide and for food to grow. This material may include trees with their root balls and at least one trunk and crown. This material will be anchored to help prevent it from washing away.

DID THIS PROJECT UNDERGO AN ENVIRONMENTAL REVIEW?

Yes. Water Forum projects have undergone an environmental analysis as required by California Environmental Quality Act (CEQA) and National Environmental Policy Act (NEPA). You can find environmental documentation at <https://www.waterforum.org/resources/resource-library/>.

More Information

HOW CAN I LEARN MORE ABOUT THE PROJECT?

For more information please visit waterforum.org/AH. In addition, the Water Forum is hosting open houses to share information about the project and answer questions on Thursday, July 15, 6-7 p.m. (Virtual), Tuesday, July 20, 6-8 p.m. (Effie Yeaw Nature Center) and Monday July 26, 6-8 p.m. (Ancil Hoffman Golf Course). More information is available at waterforum.org/AH.

HOW CAN I GET IN CONTACT IF I HAVE QUESTIONS OR CONCERNS?

You can reach the project team at 916-808-1994 or contact@waterforum.org.

