

AGENDA

ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION

September 20, 2023

Hybrid Meeting In-person and via Zoom



<https://us02web.zoom.us/j/82138211183?pwd=U2hQbDRxaW53L05YK1hiVm0MS9zd09>

Meeting ID: 821 3821 1183

Passcode: 563460

AMERICANS WITH DISABILITIES ACT

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**CITY OF ELLENSBURG
ENVIRONMENTAL COMMISSION AGENDA**

**Council Conference Room
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via Zoom**

**Wednesday, September 20, 2023
5:15 PM - Regular Meeting**

- 1. Call to Order**
- 2. Approval of Agenda** (No Public Comment)
- 3. Approval of Minutes**
 - 3.A Environmental Commission Minutes 7/19/2023
- 4. New Business**
 - 4.A 2024 Water Quality Grant Application Review
- 5. Unfinished Business**
- 6. Citizen Comment**
- 7. Bicycle Advisory**
- 8. Staff Update/Discussion Items**
 - 8.A Climate Change and Resiliency Update
 - 8.B DEI Commission Presentation
- 9. Adjournment**



For more information on the Environmental Commission, contact Planner Laura Wilson at 509-962-7235.



CITY OF ELLENSBURG

Minutes of Environmental Commission, Regular Meeting

Date of Meeting

July 19, 2023

Time of Meeting

5:15 PM

Place of Meeting

**Council Conference Room
501 North Anderson Street
Ellensburg, WA 98926
And remotely via Zoom**

1. Call to Order

2. Approval of Agenda

3. Approval of Minutes

3.A Regular Meeting Minutes

Commissioner Sledge motioned to approve the minutes from May 17, 2023.
Motion passed 5-0.

4. Citizen Comment

None

5. New Business

None

6. Bicycle Advisory

None

7. Staff Update/Discussion Items

7.A Sustainability and Energy Plan Update

Stanavich gave a slide presentation updating members on a greenhouse gas baseline and how it will contribute to recommendations. He reviewed new regulations. A Steering Committee was created and has met twice. The community survey is currently open to the public to complete and the results will be added to the report.

8. Adjournment

No new meeting has been set, so the August meeting may be not be scheduled.
Commissioner Linhart will be absent in August if the meeting is held.

APPLICATION FORM



Ellensburg Community Grant Program Focus area: **2024 Water Quality**

Project Title: Ellensburg Adopt-a-Stream and Backyard Buffer

Applicant information

Name of applicant: Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group

Applicant's address: 413 N Main St Suite K, Ellensburg, WA 98926 / PO BOX 2211 White Salmon, WA 98672

Email: becca@midcolumbiafisheries.org

Phone (cell): (509) 281-1311

Please answer the following questions (be concise but include all requested information):

1) Describe your project and the steps you will take to accomplish it. What are your goals?

Mid-Columbia Fisheries (MCF) seeks grant support to maintain and increase the role of the Adopt-a-Stream program in Ellensburg. Currently, 11 community groups have assumed stewardship of 5.2 miles of stream in Ellensburg. These groups have committed to walking their reaches of stream, monitoring stream condition, and removing trash. As of the spring of 2023, the program had removed 5,391lbs of trash from local streams, installed 4,000 riparian plants, and engaged 803 volunteers for a total of 1500 hours. The overall goal of the Ellensburg Adopt-a-Stream and Backyard Buffer program is to improve water quality and habitat by involving community members in protecting and restoring urban streams.

Mid-Columbia Fisheries has six project objectives:

- 1) Provide logistical support for Adopt-a-Stream partners' semi-annual clean up events and program expansion;
- 2) Offer support to volunteers by providing refreshments and disposal of refuse;
- 3) Identify and plant a stretch of urban stream that would benefit from increased native riparian cover;
- 4) Replace and install adopt-a-stream program signs along a publicly accessible adopted stream reach;
- 5) Increase community awareness of water quality improvement needs in Ellensburg; and
- 6) Provide stewardship for previously installed backyard buffer projects.

Mid-Columbia Fisheries has seven projects tasks:

- a. Providing logistical support to current Adopt-a-Stream participants (22 events);
- b. Identifying an urban stream reach that would benefit from additional riparian plant cover and installing approximately 160 plants;
- c. Engaging the community through high volunteer turnout (aiming for 10-15 volunteers/event); and
- d. Installing adopt-a-stream signs for active participating groups.

Event Support and Trash Disposal

MCF will support Adopt-a-Stream participants by providing refreshments and disposing of refuse gathered during volunteer events. Dump fees are minimal but add up after multiple clean-up events.

Small-scale Riparian Enhancement

With approximately 12 miles of stream flowing within city limits, the potential to enhance riparian condition here is immense. Many homeowners, unaware of the value of the area along streams, maintain lawn right up to the banks of the creek. This exacerbates erosion problems, reduces the quality of fish habitat, and allows contaminants to flow directly into the creeks.

With grant support, Mid-Columbia Fisheries will continue to implement a riparian planting program that allows community members to work together to improve the condition of our local streams. We will expand a riparian planting in a publicly visible location along Wilson Creek to increase awareness of the value of riparian buffers.

Adopt-a-Stream Program Signs

Adopt-a-Stream signs provide an excellent opportunity for outreach and recognition. MCF has managed several urban stream restoration projects and has found signs to be an easy and cost-effective way to spark interest in both the Adopt-a-Stream program and backyard buffer restoration projects. These signs are important to this water quality program because they incentivize participation by providing public recognition to those groups and individuals who volunteer their time to help keep local urban streams clean. Additionally, signage acts as a constant reminder to our community members that water quality matters in Ellensburg. Furthermore, these signs promote the program by sparking interest. This interest helps to garner support and increases community participation, both of which are key objectives for this MCF program and the City of Ellensburg's Water Quality grant program.

Stewardship

An important component of the Ellensburg Adopt-a-Stream Program is stewardship of urban projects installed in previous years. This will be accomplished one of two ways: 1) an MCF seasonal restoration crew will spend up to two days a month performing stewardship tasks (weeding, watering, replanting) at local sites, or 2) an MCF staff person will host one volunteer stewardship event during the spring months to manage invasive weeds and water native plants. Performing such stewardship activities has been proven to increase the success of riparian enhancement projects. Such success translates into long-term water quality benefits.

2) How will your project improve water quality in Ellensburg?

Native plants protect streams and adjacent structures by slowing runoff and allowing water to soak into the ground. This is crucial in the capture and reduction of sediments, fertilizers, pesticides, heavy metals and petroleum products that flow freely into urban streams during heavy rains and snow melt. Riparian plants also help in recharging wells and reducing flooding. Roots help to stabilize soil and control erosion. Trees act to shade water and keep it cool for native species that inhabit the streams. The introduction of native plants contributes to better water quality in all these ways with the added benefit of aesthetic value.

Trash presents direct and indirect water quality issues. Plastics adsorb toxic materials from their surrounding environments and act to transport pollutants over large stretches of water. These plastics break down into smaller particles due to ultraviolet (UV) radiation, mechanical forces, and weathering. The resulting leaching of chemicals and the subsequent bioaccumulation occurring from consumption of microplastics is a water quality issue that can be mitigated through community involvement.

Adopt-a-Stream signs installed along publicly accessible stream reaches are an effective means of conveying the importance of water quality in our urban areas and the far-reaching impacts of water pollution. These signs recognize the groups that participate in the program and act as public outreach. When placed in high traffic areas, these signs are a great way to increase interest in the Adopt-a-Stream program and work to highlight the Ellensburg community interest in supporting local urban streams.

3) Do you have any partners in this project? If so, what is their role or level of involvement?

Our partners include:

Adopt a Stream participants (CWU Environmental Club, Our Environment, EHS Environmental Club, Yakima Fly Fishers, On Target 4H Club, CWU Geology Club, CWU Track and Field, KEEN, CWU Army ROTC, Kittitas Girl Scouts, KVVUC): will assist with identifying planting reaches, advertising to landowners, and installing plants.

Central Washington University – Sustainability: Project planning, advertisement, and potential matching funds (not yet secured).

Central Washington University – Facilities – Project planning, stewardship, and potential matching funds (not yet secured).

Central Washington University – Center for Leadership and Community Engagement: Volunteer recruitment.

4) Who are your other contributors, either in-kind or providing funds?

The Adopt-a-Stream program in Ellensburg was originally started with support from Washington State Department of Ecology through a Clean Water Act Section 319 grant. Two current DOE grants will help MCF fund development of planting plans for some of the stream sites, manage the MCF volunteer program, and support landowner outreach. Additionally, WDFW's Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account will help support the purchase of plants and planting materials. A Washington Conservation Corps Individual Placement from Americorps will be coordinating some of the logistical components of the program.

Previous City of Ellensburg Storm Water Grant funding has provided MCF with the means of growing our volunteer base and allows the Adopt-a-Stream coordinator to identify potential candidate stream reaches that would benefit from increased riparian cover. These funds also helped MCF and our volunteers install 4,250 native riparian plants since 2018. Additionally, City funding allowed the Adopt-a-Stream program to provide logistical support for current stream adoptees and manage the cost of trash disposal.

5) Who will benefit directly from this project? Where applicable, describe the demographics and number of people impacted. How visible will the results of the project be for the general public?

This project will improve water quality in Wilson, Mercer, Reecer, and Whiskey Creeks. This will benefit the residents of Ellensburg who depend on these streams for recreation, aesthetic value, and to provide valuable fish and wildlife habitat. Advertising this project on a local level and the installation of permanent public signage will increase awareness and instill a sense of stewardship in community members. The community-based riparian enhancement work will engage citizens of all ages in hands-on stewardship.

6) Where will the project occur? Provide the specific location(s) of your project.

Each Adopt-a-Stream partner has a specific stretch of one of the four urban streams running through Ellensburg, as displayed on the map below (Figure 2). The planting location will be determined through collaboration with partners.

7) How will you evaluate the success of this project? What does success look like?

A successful project will be based on multiple criteria:

- a. Providing logistical support to current Adopt-a-Stream participants (22 events);
- b. Identifying an urban stream reach that would benefit from additional riparian plant cover and installing approximately 250 plants along it;
- c. Engaging the community through high volunteer turnout (10-15 volunteers/event); and
- d. Installing new adopt-a-stream signs for participating groups at public locations.

8) Describe how the project impacts will be sustained after your project is completed.

Adopted stream plantings will primarily be maintained by landowners, with some support from Mid-Columbia Fisheries' staff and volunteers. Additionally, public signs will continually remind Ellensburg residents of important water quality issues and the benefit of maintaining healthy riverine and riparian habitats. We also expect that the Adopt-a-Stream groups will continue their work after the termination of grant funding.

9) How will the community know that the City of Ellensburg supported this request?

Mid-Columbia Fisheries will advertise the Adopt-a-Stream project and the City's support through the local newspaper, local radio stations and social media. In addition to advertisements, the City of Ellensburg will be highlighted as a funding source and partner on the public signs.

Project budget

Cost Category						
Personnel	Hour	#/Hour	\$/Hour	Grant	In Kind	Total
MCF Staff Time to permit and plan riparian planting	hrs	50	\$40	\$2,000		\$2,000
Americorps member to support stream clean-ups	lump	1	\$2,494	\$2,494		\$2,494
Riparian site stewardship (2-person crew)	hrs	10	\$52.00	\$520		\$520
Bookkeeping	hrs	4	\$46	\$184		\$184
Volunteer time for plantings and stream clean-ups	hrs	100	\$31.80		\$3,180	\$3,180
				\$5,198	\$3,180	\$8,378
Materials and Supplies	Unit	#/Unit	\$/Unit	Grant	In Kind	Total
Plants	ea	250	\$12	\$2,435	\$565	\$3,000
Wood chips	cy	7	\$48	\$336		\$336
Irrigation supplies	lump	1	\$500	\$500		\$500
Volunteer Refreshments	per volunteer event	4	\$25	\$100		\$100
Tools and PPE	lump	1	\$500	\$500		\$500
				\$3,871	\$565	\$4,436
Professional Services	Unit	#/Unit	\$/Unit	Grant	In Kind	Total
AAS Signs	ea	24	\$25	\$600		\$600
				\$600		\$600
Funds from other sources	Unit	#/Unit	\$/Unit	Grant	In Kind	Total
Other	Unit	#/Unit	\$/Unit	Grant	In Kind	Total
Permit fees -- City Critical Areas Ordinance	ea	1	\$150		\$ 150	\$150
Dump fees	tons	2	\$99.85	\$200		\$200
Mileage (travel to stream clean-up and planting site)	mile	200	0.655	\$131		\$131
				\$331	\$ 150	\$481
Total				\$10,000	\$3,895	\$13,895



Figure 1. Example of the Adopt-a-Stream program sign.

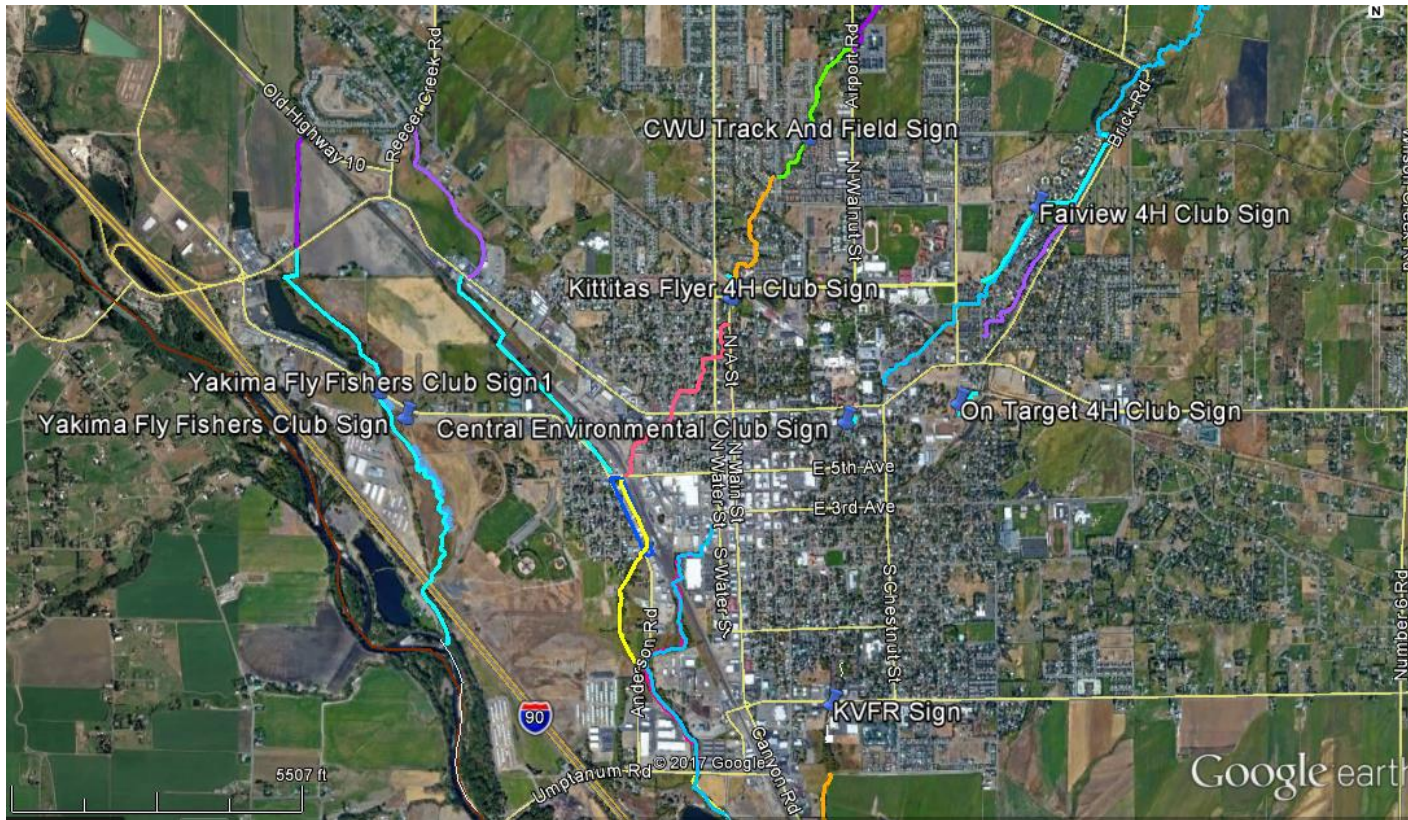


Figure 2. Adopted stream reaches. MCF will work with local groups and landowners to identify planting locations.