

Improvements to Nippon Paper Industries' Water Treatment Plant to be Made This Summer

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The environmental assessment analyzing effects for a new outfall pipe from the Nippon Paper Industries USA (NPI) Water Treatment Plant has been completed and a Finding of No Significant Impact has been released. The new outfall pipe, and other improvements to the mill's water treatment plant, are scheduled to occur this summer and will help protect the mill's water supply during and after removal of the two Elwha River dams.

The NPI paper mill is located on Ediz Hook in Port Angeles and is currently the sole user of the Elwha River industrial water supply line.

The new outfall pipe will discharge sediment removed by the NPI water treatment plant into the Strait of Juan de Fuca. Since sediment levels will increase during and after dam removal, increased amounts of sediment will be released into the Strait. In order to insure proper mixing and dispersion, the sediments must be released at a greater depth than they currently are, necessitating the outfall pipe to be extended further into the Strait. The 20-inch diameter pipe will extend 1,200 feet into the Strait of Juan de Fuca, with the end of the pipe located at a depth of 30 feet.

The project also includes other improvements to help protect the water supply for the NPI plant. The NPI paper-making process requires particularly clear water, requiring the plant to have its own water treatment facility. The Elwha Water Treatment Plant, currently under construction by the National Park Service, will remove sediment during dam removal to maintain existing turbidity levels for the City's industrial water users. The proposed modifications to the NPI water treatment plant will remove even more sediment in order to provide a continued supply of water that will meet the mill's requirements.

More information about this project is available online at the NPS Planning Environment and Public Comment website at <http://parkplanning.nps.gov>.

Restoration of the Elwha River ecosystem is an investment in the future that will result in ecological, cultural and economic benefits to the Olympic Peninsula and beyond. The Elwha is the largest watershed on the Olympic Peninsula and was once one of the most productive salmon streams in the

Pacific Northwest, home to all five species of Pacific salmon, as well as other fish species. Two dams, constructed in the early 1900s, now block fish from all but the lower five miles of the river. Removal of the Elwha and Glines Canyon dam will restore the Elwha to its natural, free-flowing condition and will once again allow fish access to over 70 river miles of habitat now protected within Olympic National Park. Dam removal will begin in 2011.