Small forest landowners own 3.2 million acres of Washington’s forests—half of the private forestland in the state. These family forests are important to fish and include thousands of miles of fish-bearing streams.

Removing fish passage barriers is one of the most cost efficient means of restoring fish populations. A single barrier on a stream can keep fish from reaching many miles of habitat upstream. To help protect fish, state Forest Practices Rules require forest landowners to correct fish barriers by 2016.

Because eliminating fish passage barriers can be costly, especially for the family forest landowner, the 2003 Washington Legislature established the Family Forest Fish Passage Program (House Bill 1095). In general, the bill requires that:

- The state created a program that funds the corrections of small forest landowner’s fish barriers
- By signing up for the program, a landowner is relieved of any Forest Practices obligation to fix a fish barrier
- The barriers presenting the highest benefit to fish habitat are fixed first