



Rock scaling operations crucial to improving fish passage



Rock scalers continue to rappel from the top of the slope to the base, removing hazardous debris and loose rock as they descend. The objective of current rock scaling operations is to stabilize the rock above the river bank where the slide occurred. This operation allows crews to work at the base of the slide safely, when water levels are low enough. Scalers are also using hydraulic and air-powered tools to manipulate rocks to create channels for fish passage. Through the combined efforts of the rock scalers and helicopter sluicing, more than 219,000 salmon have successfully swum past the landslide to date.

These successful operations mean that fish transport operations are not required at this time and related equipment is being demobilized where possible. This strategy remains a contingency plan if needed.

Scalers are also working on the west bank to move debris in preparation for a spider excavator and to secure anchors for highlines. The excavator is a highly specialized piece of equipment that will be lowered down the west slope via cable to an area below the slide. It will support work on rocks that cannot be manipulated by hand. Once installed, anchors for highlines will allow access to debris mid-river for manipulation. This is required in order to restore long-term natural fish passage through the Big Bar landslide area.



Miryke Ciaramidaro and Brady Blaine are rope access technicians working on the Big Bar landslide. Watch the short video [Rope Access Technicians – Big Bar Landslide Rock Scaling Operations](#), by Trevor Mack, for a first-hand view of the rock scaling operations.



The image above shows technicians working to manipulate rocks to increase natural fish passage. This has been a successful strategy with lower water levels in the landslide area. Once the spider excavator is in place at the base of the slide, it will support technicians by moving debris that is too big to move by hand.