

GREEN/DUWAMISH AND CENTRAL PUGET SOUND (WRIA 9) IMPLEMENTATION TECHNICAL COMMITTEE



WRIA 9 Implementation Technical Committee Meeting

May 15, 2024 | 9:30 am – 11:30 am

[Click here to join the meeting](#) or call in (Teams audio only) [+1 425-653-6586](tel:+14256536586), [185643467#](tel:+14256536586)

Meeting ID: 212 285 313 251

Passcode: t9wk6N

9:30 **Welcome & Introductions**

9:40 **Update from May 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum**

Informal presentation/update

Matt Goehring,
WRIA 9

Matt will report on the May 9 Watershed Ecosystem Forum meeting and the Forum's consideration of the ITC-recommended 2024 funding package.

9:50 **Herring's House Park (Tualtwx) Shoreline Restoration Feasibility Study**

Presentation followed by Q&A

David Graves,
City of Seattle

City of Seattle hired an Environmental Science Associates (ESA) consultant to complete a study of the shoreline habitat at Herring's House Park (Tualtwx). The study identified options, partners, and stakeholders to evaluate to select a design option that will promote improved use of the habitat by juvenile salmon. The goal is to promote a stronger salmon population in this historic waterway. David will present current progress and anticipated next steps. Project website: <https://www.seattle.gov/parks/about-us/projects/herrings-house-shoreline-restoration>

10:50 **Round Robin Updates**

Map activity

All

We are bringing back the map-based round robin from March! I've pre-populated a Jamboard with our previous comments. Please update and add new projects and project updates at this link:

https://jamboard.google.com/d/1XexpNn201OhYRfXwxElOgJmBncOUpAkQ_Q1GsHiZx1c/edit?usp=sharing. You can also email updates directly to Iris (ikemp@kingcounty.gov).

11:30 **Adjourn**

WRIA 9 ITC web page: <http://www.govlink.org/watersheds/9/committees/ImpleTechCmte.aspx>

Participant list:

Alicia Kellogg, Ashley Allan, Chester Bennett, Cleo Neculae, David Graves, Erik Rigaux, Halley Kimball, Iris Kemp, Jenn Stebbings, Josh Hopkins, Julian Douglas, Kollin Higgins, Mike Mactutis, Mike Perfetti, Nikolas Novotny, Rowena Valencia-Gica, Shailee Jain, Suzanna Smith, Zach Wilson

Round-table Updates – check out our [Jamboard map at this link](#) and at [the screenshot below](#)

- WRIA 9 staff are working to implement the Salmon Habitat Plan recommendation for an ad hoc project workgroup made up of ITC members to support elements of project development and increase capacity to review project designs in detail.
 - **Action item:** Please review the draft Project Review Subcommittee Scope of Work and contact Iris with edits, thoughts, and/or questions by May 22.
- The ITC will not meet in June. ITC members are invited to attend the WRIA 9 Riparian Prioritization Tool Workshop on Tuesday, June 18, 12pm-2pm virtually on Teams. Suzanna will forward the workshop invitation. Please reach out with any questions and feel free to add other interested parties to the invite.

Herring's House Park (Tualtwx) Shoreline Restoration Feasibility Study

David presented concepts for habitat and public access at Herring's House Park (Tualtwx). This Duwamish site is just south of the West Seattle Bridge and in 2001 was one of the first habitat projects in the Duwamish. Since then, many lessons have been learned from other projects in the Duwamish as well as lessons learned from research and observations at Herring's House Park suggesting lower-than-desired fish use and social trail creation through the site by the public. City of Seattle contracted ESA to assess current site conditions and draft design recommendations that would improve the habitat lift of the site, increase site resiliency to expected sea level rise, and encourage public use in ways that are less likely to negatively impact habitat.

Preliminary design recommendations included:

- Over-excavate the inlet channel to provide additional accommodation space for sedimentation. Over-excavation will likely induce sediment capture until an equilibrium condition is attained.
- Widen the channel to at least 50 feet to restore hydraulic functions and up to 120 feet for salmon habitat requirements.
- Rotate the channel alignment to be perpendicular to the existing shoreline to allow for a shorter overall channel length.
- Dredge pilot channels through the marsh to increase tidal inundation and tidal interaction at the project site.

The next steps for this project will be seeking grant funding to start preliminary design work, including additional preliminary research into many of the topics addressed during discussion

today (e.g., contaminants, cultural resources). Anticipate moving forward within the next 12-18 months.

Q&A:

- What drove the inclusion of pilot channels and conversion of mudflat to marsh in the design recommendations? Creating pilot channels could result in a lot of habitat disturbance. Is the proposed widening of the inlet channel sufficient to increase fish use?
 - The biggest limitation to fish use is the narrowness and depth of the inlet channel; widening and deepening channel to make it more obvious to juvenile Chinook could be the biggest bang-for-buck. There has been some really good vegetation growth since project completion in 2001; understand the hesitation around disturbance.
 - The current mudflat is mostly high and dry across a large portion of the tidal cycle. Adding channels could provide more fish access.
 - The channel in concept drawings still looks quite long and skinny compared to other sites in the Duwamish.
- What considerations went into decisions about the use and depth of riprap to constrain the channel inlet?
 - This is partly a result of considerations around contaminated sediment – the rock layer was placed during the initial project at this site to deal with contamination.
 - Riprap may cause more problems than benefits over long-term, especially with sea level rise. If riprap capping is needed, would recommend dramatically over-excavating and getting as deep as possible. Add thicker soil layer and more natural fine sediment surface. Otherwise the topsoil layer could move out with tide etc., leaving a perched inaccessible wetland.
- Was a second channel ever considered? By adding a second access point it will provide fish options for entering and leaving. Will also address a potential predator pinch point by only having one channel. Often see seals in this area of the Duwamish.
 - No, we went into this with a goal of exploring how to improve existing channel.
 - Hydraulic design may be difficult with more than one channel. Multiple channels will reduce the velocity of water entering/exiting causing aggradation limiting ingress/egress.
- Has there been any conversations with the Trustees about increasing recreation features and impacts to riparian areas? Given this is a NRDA site, they seem less likely to want to increase recreation that will have new/additional impacts on habitat quality.

- Definitely a consideration we are thinking about. The more extensive (boardwalk and bridge) public access option is also more expensive and likely to have some habitat impact.
- How have the tribes been involved?
 - Muckleshoot and Suquamish were involved in the original project design. We have not brought them into this process yet since we were only at preliminary stages of assessing the current state of the site and developing early recommendations for concepts. They will be involved in the next step of getting to design.
- What parameters were given to the consultant? Were they asked to focus on fixing the channel or given a blank slate?
 - Somewhere in the middle – the prompt was something like “We aren’t seeing much fish use; what would you recommend to increase fish use”, which is probably partly why we got to pilot channels and widening and deepening the channel.
- Has there been any modeling done for sediment and scour? Another Duwamish project widened and deepened a channel and found the velocities weren’t enough to keep the project site from sedimenting in. Just something to keep in mind – widening and deepening a channel without creating another alternate in/out might just create a mud bath.
- Seems like the channel width is the main limiting factor for salmon use. Is the interior of the site also limiting use?
 - We think so. Based on lessons from other Duwamish projects, we expect a marsh site will be more attractive to fish in low water; they won’t be stranding in the mudflat.
- A large SPU property is adjacent to the site – could there be potential to expand the restoration project site footprint? The current site use on that property looks like mainly parking lot, and your sea level rise model graphic showed that it would be underwater in 50 years. Is there anything we can do now that would set us up for a larger project in future?
 - Certainly it is worth having a conversation with SPU as we move into the next phase of the project to see if something like this is a possibility.

Further questions? Contact David Graves at david.graves@seattle.gov.

