



North Wind's Weir Cleanup Prepares Site for Construction



In May, King County completed removal of contaminated soils from the North Wind's Weir (Site 1) restoration site in Tukwila. The next phase will involve creating the habitat rehabilitation components, including a 0.7 acre embayment for shallow water habitat, placement of large wood, and planting of riparian vegetation. This project will expand critical transition zone habitat in the Duwamish Estuary. Project completion is scheduled for summer 2009.



Message from the Coordinator

*This edition of **News fit for a King!** again shows the many accomplishments of many people to improve the watershed for people and fish. From Myrtle Edwards Park on Elliott Bay in Seattle to numerous partners working on the Highline Water Festival to Newaukum Creek in the midst of King County's largest Agricultural Production District, people are taking action to restore, protect, involve, and educate.*

To me, this means that the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan is working to leverage funding for habitat projects and to stimulate changing personal behaviors to benefit the watershed. While not at the pace or at the funding levels outlined by the Salmon Habitat Plan, implementation is happening in this watershed at a clip much greater than prior to all local governments working together to solve one of the Puget Sound region's most complex and challenging problems—recovering the Green/Duwamish Chinook salmon population. The WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan is showing why it was awarded the 2006 VISION 2020 award for promoting a livable region—it contains science-based, prioritized solutions that we all came up with together. It is exciting to see these broadly-supported solutions coming to life.

A provision of the Salmon Habitat Plan that many WRIA 9 participants are most proud of is the ecological economics analysis that demonstrates the very significant economic value – expressed in dollars -- of the goods and services provided by the Green/Duwamish River and Puget Sound nearshore ecosystems. I'm pleased to announce that we are embarking on the next level of economic analysis to support implementation of the Salmon Habitat Plan actions. Earth Economics was recently awarded a grant from our partner, the King Conservation District, to study funding mechanisms that will better match the scale of the watershed's needed actions to recover salmon and efficiently capitalize on the goods and services provided by the watershed's ecosystem. The recommendations of the study will help the Watershed Forum revise its implementation plan and financial strategies to better match the needs of and schedule for salmon recovery in WRIA 9. This effort demonstrates the ongoing commitment at the local watershed level to "Making Our Watershed Fit for a King".

- Doug



Highline H₂O Festival Continues Educating Young People



Students study insects from WRIA 9 streams at the H₂O Festival. Photo courtesy of City of Kent.

On March 26 and 27, 1,600 fourth and fifth grade students from south King County had fun learning

about water quality protection and conservation, watersheds, and salmon habitat at the H₂O-2008 Water Festival. The sponsors included the Cities of Kent and Auburn, Highline Water District, Covington Water District, Lakehaven Utility District, and Soos Creek WSD. Staff from WRIA 9, KCD, King County, Seattle Aquarium, and others provided instruction.



Duwamish Volunteer Restoration Recognized



Several WRIA 9 partners were among those receiving the Coastal America award at the Codiga restoration in Tukwila on April 19. Photo courtesy of DRCC.

On April 19, the Duwamish Alive! coalition of 28 groups received a Coastal America award from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. The national award recognizes outstanding efforts to involve volunteers in restoring marine resources. Duwamish Alive! began in 2006 and has organized five volunteer days on the Duwamish. People For Puget Sound, Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition, KCD, Cities of Seattle and Tukwila, King County, Port of Seattle, EarthCorps, WRIA 9, and many others worked together to make Duwamish Alive! a success.



Denny Way CSO Nearshore Habitat Restoration Completed



Beach at Myrtle Edwards Park restored as part of the sediment cleanup. Photo courtesy of King County Wastewater Treatment Division.

Nearshore water quality and fish habitat in Elliott Bay will improve substantially following King County Wastewater Treatment Division's recent completion of a \$3.6 million cleanup. More than 14,000 cubic yards of PCB, mercury, and hydrocarbon-contaminated sediment – enough to fill 1,400 dump trucks – was removed from a one acre area. The nearshore also was improved through the removal of 800 tons of concrete debris that armored the shoreline. The contaminated sediment had accumulated during decades of stormwater and sewage overflows from the Denny Way combined sewer overflow (CSO).



Middle Green River Cleaned Up By Record Numbers



One of the boats in the cleanup in the Green River Gorge. Photo courtesy of Steve Lepenske.

The Middle Green River got its 23rd annual cleanup thanks to the longtime partnership of Washington Recreational River Runners and Friends of the Green River. The Middle Green River Coalition also brought in new volunteers including leaders from communities along the Green. Strong recruiting efforts resulted in a record number of boaters and a record number of ground crews. By boat and on foot, 270 people cleaned up trash between Kanaskat and Highway 18.



Ellis Creek Estuary Planted



King County completed restoration of the Ellis Creek salt marsh on Vashon Island in March with the final planting of native salt marsh plants. The project, begun last year, improves Chinook salmon migratory rearing habitat by reconnecting a lobe of the salt marsh to the mouth of Ellis Creek. The project was largely funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

Contact the Salmon Habitat Team

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Low Impact Development Tour Deepens Understanding



Tour participants learning about LID at High Point in West Seattle.

On March 13, 40 people from across WRIA 9 heard the voice of experience on how to successfully implement low impact development (LID). WRIA 9 staff organized a tour of three LID sites in Pierce County and one in Seattle. The sites featured different types of pervious paving and rain gardens. Hosts from WSU Extension, Pierce County, and the Cities of Tacoma and Seattle shared their “lessons learned.” The tour was made possible in part thanks to the Puget Sound Watershed Protection and Restoration grant from the Department of Ecology.

New Interpretive Map Makes River More Accessible



Map unfolds to 2' x 3'. One side shows the Duwamish Estuary and the other shows the Lower Green River.

A new interpretive map has been created to draw more people to the Green/Duwamish River. The map helps people recreate on and next to the river by showing access points and explaining the natural and human history of the lower watershed. Over a year in the making, the new map was created by Cari Simson of the Duwamish River Cleanup Coalition (DRCC) and Michèle Savelle of the Environmental Coalition of South Seattle (ECOSS), with financial and editorial assistance from many others. Order your free copy: 206-296-1909.

Upcoming in Summer 2008

- June 25 Nearshore Restoration Workshop in Tukwila by the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program
- July 30 Puget Sound Partnership South Central Action Area workshop in Tukwila

Newaukum Fish Passage Survey Prioritizes Barriers for Removal



Crew surveying Newaukum Creek for barriers in December 2007. Photo courtesy of MSRFE.

Mid-Sound Regional Fisheries Enhancement Group recently completed a survey of fish passage barriers along the entire length of Newaukum Creek. Mid-Sound ranked the 20 identified barriers according to the positive impact and cost of each potential removal. A barrier culvert on private property was identified for the first retrofit/replacement. The survey was funded through a grant from the King Conservation District in partnership with the WRIA 9 Forum.

KCD Awards More Grants

The King Conservation District/WRIA 9 Forum partnership continues to improve the health of the watershed and conserve natural resources. Recent grants by KCD address key recommendations of the Salmon Habitat Plan:

- Ecological Economics Analysis: \$50,000 for a grant to the Gund Institute of Ecological Economics to build the capacity of WRIA 9 by developing an independent funding mechanism to fund the WRIA 9 Salmon Habitat Plan.
- North Wind's Weir: \$325,000 towards habitat rehabilitation within the Duwamish River transition zone. (See related article on page 1.)
- Summer Watershed Conservation Science Program: \$10,000 towards a program for Foster High School (Tukwila) students to study watershed science in the field and in the classroom. Students will learn about the Green/Duwamish watershed and will work on habitat enhancement projects at Riverbend Hill Park.
- Beaconsfield-on-the-Sound Shoreline Acquisitions: \$496,023 awarded to Cascade Land Conservancy as match to over \$900,000 in other grants to purchase approximately three acres of shoreline in Normandy Park.
- Bass/Beaver Lake Acquisition: \$41,000 combined with over \$1 million in other grants to purchase two parcels totaling 65 acres in the Bass/Beaver Lake Complex