

The Whidbey Examiner

News from the Heart of Whidbey Island

[Subscribe](#) | [Advertise](#) | [Submit News](#) | [Submit Letters](#) | [About](#)



[news](#)

[obituaries](#)

[events](#)

[special sections](#)

[photo galleries](#)

[classifieds & public notices](#)



[Advanced Search](#)

search...

[search](#)

search sponsored by

[Dining Guide](#)

[home](#) : [top stories](#) : [top stories](#)

[Share](#)

September 15, 2011

8/28/2011 8:15:00 AM

Ala Spit open house focuses on salmon restoration project

A project aimed at reducing erosion and loss of habitat at Island County's Ala Spit Park will get under way in mid-September, with a temporary park closure planned as workers complete the job.

Workers are to remove a riprap revetment made up of large boulders and concrete structures that was installed at the Spit in the 1960s. The Island County Health Department project, which is being paid for through a state grant, is designed to protect long-term public access to the spit and restore juvenile salmon habitat.

An open house is planned from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. Saturday, Sept. 17 at Ala Spit, which is located just off Jones Road in North Whidbey. Nearby residents, fishers, beach walkers, bird watchers and other park visitors are invited to come and learn about the project.

Construction is to take place from Sept. 19 through Oct. 31. Permits obtained for the project require all work below the high-water mark to be completed by Oct. 14. The park will be closed during the construction period.

The restoration project is the second phase of work at Ala Spit. The first phase, which also was funded by a grant from the Washington State Salmon Recovery Funding Board, encompassed a two-year scientific assessment by Herrera Environmental Consultants. Herrera conducted a review of historic information and photographs; geomorphic shoreline changes; beach substrate; sediment development; aquatic habitat; fish habitat and use; the role of Ala Spit's riparian vegetation, dune plants and driftwood; and watershed characterization.

A copy of the report and project plans for restoration can be found at islandcountyeh.org/Projects.

The Ala Spit restoration project underwent a rigorous local, regional and then statewide evaluation process, intended to identify the most effective and scientifically sound proposals to benefit salmonids listed as threatened or endangered with extinction under the federal Endangered Species Act. Island County is located in the migration corridors used by most Puget Sound juvenile and adult salmon and trout populations. The near-shore and coastal estuaries of sites such as Ala Spit have been documented to provide critical shelter, food and refuge for these fish.

Ala Spit, located off Jones road on Skagit Bay, is 5 miles from the mouth of the Skagit River and is home to Chinook salmon and other important fish stocks. The park comprises four acres of uplands, 5,000 linear feet of beach and tidelands, plus the 8-acre sand and gravel spit that supports forage fish and juvenile salmon as they migrate from the Skagit to the ocean.

Ala Spit Island County Park was established in 1995. Its purchase was made possible by grants from the Washington Recreation and Conservation Office and the county's Conservation Futures fund.



Article Comment Submission Form

Please feel free to submit your comments.

Article comments are not posted immediately to the Web site. Each submission must be approved by the Web site editor, who may edit content for appropriateness. There may be a delay of 24-48 hours for any submission while the web site editor reviews and approves and posts it.

Note: All information on this form is required. Your telephone number is for our use only, and will not be attached to your comment.

Submit an Article Comment

First Name:

Required

Last Name:

Required

Telephone:

Required

Email:

Required

Comment:

Required