

Livingston Bay Nearshore Acquisition Protection

Long-term Stewardship Plan

The property to be protected is largely in a natural state, with little in the way of restoration needs. Most, if not all, of the SRFB funds are anticipated to be used in the acquisition of existing intertidal habitat in Livingston Bay. When the final boundaries of the area acquired with SRFB funds is identified along with the appropriate long-term title holder, we will develop a long-term stewardship plan based on the habitat types and site-specific stewardship issues identified during the baseline inventory phase.

Elements of stewardship that will be included in the final stewardship plan include invasive species control, long-term monitoring of biological and physical habitat parameters, and monitoring of public access and use. The Nature Conservancy, which owns approximately 4,000 acres of similar habitat adjacent to the Livingston Bay project, already has a long-term stewardship and monitoring program in place, with experienced staff dedicated to stewardship. Pending the outcome of final negotiations, stewardship of the Livingston Bay project would most likely be folded into The Nature Conservancy's existing stewardship program.

Spartina is known to occur on the Livingston tidelands in relatively low concentrations and this is believed to be the most significant stewardship concern. The Nature Conservancy has an intensive control program in the eastern half of Port Susan Bay, with a full time seasonal Spartina crew that works in close coordination with both WDFW and Island County.

Pending final negotiations, stewardship of the site will be the responsibility of The Nature Conservancy's Port Susan Bay Program whose staff includes a Program Manager, a Landscape Ecologist responsible for overseeing restoration, stewardship, and research at the Port Susan Bay Preserve, a Stewardship Manager responsible for implementing stewardship and managing public access, an Estuarine Ecologist responsible for long-term ecosystem monitoring, a crew of seasonal stewardship assistants, and a corps of regular volunteers who assist with preserve stewardship and monitoring. The Nature Conservancy has owned and managed thousands of acres of natural habitat in Washington State for more than 30 years, using a science-based approach to stewardship and is widely recognized as a model for habitat stewardship.