

SHELL CREEK-FRONTAL PUGET SOUND (171100190203), 08/04/23

Current Status: Accepted

Inspection Details

Inspection Type: Final
Inspected By: EButler
Inspection Method: Field Review
Inspection Date & Time: 08/04/23 10:00 AM
Data Sources: Site visit with Rachel Dotson and Rob Marshan.
Inspection Reference #: 3683
Compliance Area: Shell Creek-Frontal Puget Sound (171100190203)
Inspection Note:

Worksites Inspected

Snohomish County

Project # Proj Type	Project Name WorkSite Name	Status	Primary Pgm
18-1259 Dev,Rest	Meadowdale Beach Park & Estuary Restoration #1 Meadowdale Beach Park	Active	ALEA

Sponsor Contacts

Snohomish County

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Questions

Salmon Restoration projects

#1: Was the project implemented as designed and scoped?

Yes. A major draw for visitors is the natural landscape, including the forested hike-in only access, the wildlife, and the beach. This project seeks to demonstrate a healthy coastal ecosystem can co-exist with critical transportation infrastructure. The project also increases eco-based recreational and educational experiences for 65,000 annual visitors, addresses public safety, and provides ADA access to 1 of only 3 County Puget Sound shoreline parks.

Acquisition and Restoration Projects

#1: If funding acknowledgement signs are required, are they installed?

Yes. Signs are mounted into the downstream most pedestrian bridge, crossing the creek. See photos in final inspection PowerPoint.

#2: Site Visit Summary

Inspection complete. The Lund's Gulch Creek estuary restoration is complete with ample room for natural shoreline habitat-forming processes now that the 5-span BNRR bridge is in place (funded with federal grants not within the RCO funding scope of work). The project increased the channel meander width from 6 feet (through the culvert) to 90 feet wide, improving sediment delivery to the beach and helping to dissipate floodwaters. It restored a tidal marsh pocket estuary, which involved improving groundwater and subsurface conditions, planting native plants, placing large woody debris, and working around the existing wetland. The county also enhanced and restored the nearshore and stream riparian buffers and in-stream habitat.

To make room for the pocket estuary, the county relocated recreational infrastructure and amenities inland, including a restroom enclosure and a large picnic shelter to match the architectural style of the existing ranger house. The rerouted pedestrian circulation through the site includes a new pedestrian bridge stream crossing, and a raised boardwalk over the eastern edge of the estuary and existing wetland. The new paths include 7 picnic table or bench viewpoints and enhanced picnic areas, seating, and ADA accessible parking and pathways. Four interpretive signs educate visitors about the habitat they experience at Meadowdale Park.

#3: Are there any observable concerns regarding this project that should be noted? If yes, please describe:

No. However, visitors appear to be constructing small recreational dams across the creek on the beach. Snohomish County will monitor for potential impact to fish access, as included in the stewardship plan.

#4: Is this project being monitored by a statewide, IMW, or other effectiveness monitoring program? If yes, please describe:

Yes. Tulalip Tribes will be monitoring the habitat. See the Stewardship and Monitoring plan for additional information.

Accessibility

#1: Are there accessible routes of travel to developed site features?

Yes. The driveway down from the gate leads to ADA parking. The path and trails, picnic tables, signage design and location, and water fountain were designed to meet ADA requirements.

Recreational water access enhancements include constructing a 9-foot-wide concrete, ADA accessible path adjacent to the south bridge abutment and a viewing platform on the beach. The new ADA accessible concrete path crosses under the railroad bridge and terminates at one of the park's 7 viewpoints. This path increases safety for pedestrians accessing the beach. The new ADA compliant path allows year-round access to the beach. Prior to this project, the undersized culvert was often flooded and impassible. At times, people would cross over the railroad which was a dangerous situation and others needing ADA access could not access the beach at all.

During construction, a community member wrote to the County requesting an accessible beach mat be added to the project. Her son uses a wheelchair and this type of beach mat will allow him and others to have increased access out to the beach. The newly installed mat reaches 50' out to the beach and will simplify access for people using wheelchairs, mobility devices, and strollers. Per WDFW requirements, the mat will be installed only between May 15th and September 30th of each year.

#2: Are enough developed features ADA accessible?

Yes. Through this project restoration and redevelopment, the primary recreation opportunity achieved was providing safe, year-round, ADA access to the beach.

#3: Are ADA improvements adequately signed?

Yes. There is a phone number posted at the upper gate inviting visitors than need ADA access to call for the access code.

Administrative

#1: Does the original file name match the name at the site? If no, what is the new name of the site:

Yes.

Boundaries

#1: Does it appear that the management area maps in PRISM or in the file(s) match the project boundaries of the site? If no maps, mark N/A.

Yes. The boundary map includes the access from the upper gate, along the driveway to the parking below, along with the area where the park improvements were installed and pocket estuary restoration along with the full beach, which will benefit from the natural nearshore processes restored by this project.

#2: Are park or site boundaries clearly identified?

Yes. Yes. The BNRR owns the bridge -- so that is not included in the boundary map. The cost of bridge construction was covered by federal grants and the county, so RCO did not need to contribute to that cost (or value those costs as match).

There is a short portion of the ADA trail that passes under the bridge connecting both sides. Grants Manager determined the boundary map was sufficient and confirmed thinking with OGM Dan Haas.

Current Use

#1: Are there any non-recreational uses occurring within the project boundary?

No. Snohomish County Parks and Recreation worked with BNRR to remove 130 feet of railroad embankment and an undersized box culvert, replacing them with a 5-span railroad bridge. This marks the first stream mouth restoration project along Puget Sound, representing an initial step towards strategic restoration along the over 25-mile stretch of railroad embankment from Everett to Seattle. This project offers a solution to a major stressor along a section of Puget Sound identified by PSNERP as the "most degraded," demonstrating that a healthy coastal ecosystem can coexist with critical transportation infrastructure.

#2: Do the restored features provide the habitat benefit as indicated in the project agreement?

Yes. Installing the 5-span railroad bridge solved two key issues: providing safe ADA access to the beach and restoring the estuary to reconnect Lund's Gulch Creek to Puget Sound. Replacing the embankment and undersized culvert was critical for converting the park lawn into a high-functioning estuarine habitat to benefit salmon and provide the new pedestrian underpass. Several traditional design solutions were reviewed with the public and stakeholders, such as using a railroad overpass or expanding the culvert. However, these would only solve one of the issues and not both. This marks the first stream mouth restoration project along Puget Sound, representing an initial step towards strategic restoration along the over 25-mile stretch of railroad embankment from Everett to Seattle.

#3: Are terms of the conservation easement(s) in force?

N/A.

#4: Are maps available to check easement(s)?

N/A.

Parking

#1: If parking is provided, is the minimum number of accessible van and car spaces provided? (1-25=1, 26-50=2, 51-75=3, 76-100=4, 101-150=5)

Yes. There are ADA parking spaces in the lower Meadowdale Park.

The accessible parking area was renovated to improve paving and signage. New accessible paths were constructed to connect visitors with the accessible parking area, the beach, and throughout the lower park

#2: Is there at least one 8-foot wide van accessible space with an 8-foot wide access aisle on a hard level surface with a van sign for every six accessible spaces required?

Yes.

Signs

#1: Are there signs that clearly note whether the site is a public recreation, conservation, habitat, or salmon recovery site?

Yes. Four new interpretive signs provide environmental education opportunities that focus on nearshore and creekside habitat. Signs are placed near the beach overlook and at creek overlook space at the new pedestrian bridge.

#2: Are the funding programs and partners acknowledged at the site?

Yes. Signs are mounted into the pedestrian bridge that crosses the creek. See photos in final inspection PowerPoint.

General

#1: Is the site attractive and inviting to the public?

Yes. Restoration enhances the park user experience overall through the provision of diverse natural habitat.

#2: Does the site appear to be developed in a safe and quality manner?

Yes.

#3: Are project elements and features in the agreement available for public use?

Yes. The project increases eco-based recreational and educational experiences for 65,000 annual visitors, addresses public safety concerns, and provides ADA access to one of only three County Puget Sound shoreline parks.

#4: Is the project site open to the public at reasonable hours, days, or times of the year?

Yes. Throughout the park, other recreational opportunities include picnicking and gathering spaces, outdoor learning opportunities, walking trails, and beach access. The park is used for science-based programs focusing on water quality, marine plants and animals, as well as the creek ecology.

#5: Are there restrictions that may limit public use or access to the site?

No. Habitat areas are protected, and recreation amenities direct the public to views of habitat.

Attachments

ALL PHOTOS AND FILES

Attachment Type	Title	File Name	User, Attach Date
Inspection Photos	18-	18-	ElizabethB, 11/21/2023
	1259Final.Inspctn.Meadowdale.pptx	1259Final.Inspctn.Meadowdale.pptx	

Issues/Tasks From This Inspection

#	Issue/Task Title	Type	SubType	Status	Assigned	Relationships	Sponsor
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Other Open Issues/Tasks

#	Issue/Task Title	Type	SubType	Status	Assigned	Relationships	Sponsor
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