

Clark County Clean Water Program Curtin Creek Enhancement Project

July 2012

Location: NE 99th St. between NE 82nd and NE 87th Ave.

Project Type: Creek restoration and habitat enhancement

Budget: \$3,642,500

Funding: Clark County Clean Water and Road Funds

Why did Clark County complete this project?

The Curtin Creek Enhancement project is strategically located at the headwaters of Curtin Creek in the Salmon Creek watershed. This 36-acre site is situated in a residential area, northeast of Vancouver. The project was developed as a portion of a large mitigation project for two major road improvement efforts that required mitigation for storm water control and wetland/habitat impacts. Historically, many acres of wetlands in the area were drained for agricultural production. The resulting creek was channelized with muck soils and high groundwater. Channelization and continued urban growth had resulted in increased flows to the creek which resulted in low habitat value, limited wildlife and potential for flooding downstream. Water quality was of fair quality with sluggish flow and very limited pool-riffle structure, yet the water had a high mineral content and cool water temperatures due in part to the groundwater influence.

What is the scope of the project?

The improvement project carries stormwater from within a half-mile of the enhancement area where it is treated and controlled. The overall project goals are to increase water storage capacity. Forty percent of Curtin Creek watershed drains to the project area.

(continued on reverse side)

Project location



By providing added storage area, the site would attenuate downstream flooding potential. The runoff retention would also improve water quality, reduce downstream erosion, enhance wetland functions, and create ponding to increase wildlife habitat. The new creek channel meanders through the site and the adjacent land area was lowered to increase flooding potential within the floodplain. The area was stabilized and planted with a variety of trees, shrubs and plants that would thrive in these conditions while providing significant habitat value for a wide range of wildlife. Eventually shade will cover the creek to help protect water temperatures. Numerous habitat structures, such as logs and root wads were also added to increase habitat value.

Other design considerations included aesthetic and recreational opportunities. This project area is in the backyards of dozens of homes and adjacent to several neighborhoods. The goal was to create a community asset that is beautiful to look at as well as use. Future regional trails will allow residents to enjoy passive hiking and wildlife watching in the greenway corridor.

Project facts:

- Construction was completed in 2009
- There are more than 52,000 plantings throughout the site
- The final channel meander is now over 3,500 lineal feet
- The new channel connects to over 1,500 lineal feet of restored channel to the north and will connect to a restored channel to the south by the end of 2013
- Numerous species have now been spotted in the site including bald eagles, osprey and Canada goose, as well as numerous waterfowl, amphibians and mammals such as beaver
- The site collects runoff from approximately 4.5 square miles
- Total wetlands creation is 3.9 acres and wetland enhancement is approximately 20.2 acres
- This site is central to a regional greenway system for Curtin Creek



Clark County Environmental Services
P.O. Box 9810
Vancouver, WA 98660

(360) 397-2121
www.clark.wa.gov/environment