

Clark County Upper Whipple Creek Floodplain Restoration Project

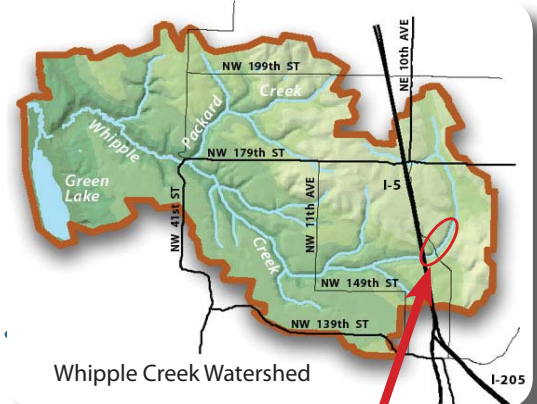
July 2012

Location: Whipple Creek mainstem near NE 22nd Ave. / NE 166th St.

Project Type: Floodplain restoration, enhancement & habitat protection

Budget: \$850,000

Funding: The American Recovery and Reinvestment Act -
50% federal grant funding and 50% long-term loan repaid
by the Clark County Clean Water Fund



Why did Clark County complete this project?

Whipple Creek needs our help. A century of development has degraded habitat in Whipple Creek and has caused severe channel instability and erosion. This project is the result of collaborative planning by numerous local stakeholders, including a citizens advisory committee, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, the Clark County Legacy Lands Program, Clark County Clean Water Program, and Vancouver-Clark Parks & Recreation Department. The county purchased a key 40-acre parcel in 2006 in the Whipple Creek priority habitat corridor in the Upper Whipple Creek subwatershed. It was identified as a high priority for protection through the County's *Conservation Areas Acquisition Plan* due to the presence of sensitive species. Improvements on this property, along with downstream improvements, stops further degradation of the Whipple Creek channel in the highly valued natural area, protecting both wetland and floodplain function while managing storm flows.

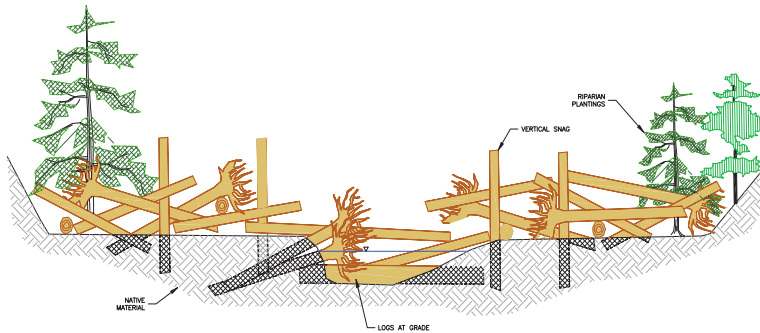
The Whipple Creek corridor includes unique habitat which is home to over 89 species of fish, wildlife and birds. The existing habitat includes large fir overstory and a diverse understory, including a several small seasonal wetland areas.



What is the scope of the project?

The project's goal to restore the floodplain and associated habitats is achieved by:

- Stabilizing the stream bed with rocks and large wood
- Installing valley-spanning log jams to slow high flows
- Restoring native vegetation in the adjacent riparian areas
- Installing wood chip trails for passive recreation
- Increasing wildlife value with restoration efforts



Typical valley-spanning log jam

What are the benefits?

The stream channel is now stabilized and will limit further damage from impending upstream development, protecting aquatic habitat and wetlands.

The project restored and enhanced over five acres of degraded wetlands and floodplain. The diverse plantings increased wildlife habitat for a number of species. A conservation covenant covering the entire parcel protects the riparian corridor. The project also includes a nature trail for use by the neighborhoods to enjoy hiking and wildlife watching. Eventually the trail will connect to a local neighborhood park to provide additional recreational amenities in the neighborhood. This project is a success story for protection of critical conservation areas within our urban community to protect water quality and habitat.



Log jam



Restored creek



Passive walking trail



Channel view looking north from trail

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