

**COMMENCEMENT BAY NATURAL RESOURCE TRUSTEE
LONG TERM SITE STEWARDSHIP PROJECT**

MONTHLY PROGRESS REPORT – NOVEMBER 10, 2010

As required under Task 2 of the Commencement Bay Natural Resource Trustee Long Term Site Stewardship Project, this memorandum reports on the progress of the project for the previous month. This project was undertaken in connection with the settlement of an enforcement action taken by the United States Environmental Protection Agency for violations of CERCLA.

I. GENERAL SITE OBSERVATIONS

DESCRIPTION OF ACTIONS TAKEN AT EACH SITE DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

Per the scope of work, the City coordinated work with both the WCC and CHB. In accordance with the project schedule, monthly site monitoring visits were conducted in October with one being completed by City staff on October 27, and the remainder performed by CHB staff and/or volunteer site stewards. Specific observations or other actions taken at each site during the reporting period are noted below.

Yowkwala:

- Site visit conducted: October 24 (CHB).
- The City continued to have limited access on this site through October since the access agreement with the Puyallup Tribe had yet to be executed. The agreement was executed on November 1.
- Re-growth of blackberry was noted.
- The new plantings were observed to be doing well.
- CHB conducted a volunteer invasive removal event at the trail/backshore area on October 2. A group of PLU students and their friends and family removed approximately 100 pounds of invasive plants and moved them, as well as previously removed plant materials to the compost pile near the entrance to the site. In addition, CHB conducted a volunteer planting event at the site on October 9. Eight volunteers and an EarthCorps crew planted 121 trees and shrubs, and 293 emergent plants in the trail/backshore area. Site history, restoration principles, and planting techniques were discussed with the volunteers at both events as well as future opportunities to participate in restoration activities in Commencement Bay.

Skookum Wulge:

- Site visit conducted: October 19 (CHB).
- The City continued to have limited access on this site through October since the access agreement with the Puyallup Tribe had yet to be executed. The agreement was executed on November 1.
- Some invasives were identified in the north uplands, including Scot's broom, blackberry, white sweet clover, and wild pea.
- A small patch of knotweed and some wild peas were noted in the south uplands.
- 85 to 90 percent survival of the most recent planting in the north uplands was estimated.
- Continued erosion of the embankment was identified.
- Silt fence removal is needed and can be accomplished now that access for the WCC has been authorized.

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- CHB conducted a volunteer invasive removal event on the south uplands October 14. Ivy was removed from an area measuring approximately 408 square feet and was stockpiled in the parking turnout. In addition, CHB conducted a volunteer planting event on October 30, where 164 trees and shrubs were installed in the recently cleared portion of the south uplands. Ivy roots were also grubbed from a 3' by 10' area adjacent to the planting area, and invasives were removed from the north uplands during this event. Site history, restoration principles, and planting techniques were discussed with the volunteers as well as future opportunities to participate in restoration activities in Commencement Bay.

Squally Beach:

- Site visit conducted: October 20 (CHB).
- The City continued to have limited access on this site through October since the access agreement with the Puyallup Tribe had yet to be executed. The agreement was executed on November 1.
- Overall, vegetation in both the marsh and the riparian area were doing very well.
- Some invasive removal is needed for blackberry and knotweed.
- A few more cordgrass plants were removed by the Department of Agriculture crew when found during the bay-wide *Spartina* survey. The crew will continue to monitor this site and report any re-growth.

Mowitch:

- Site visit conducted: October 29 (CHB).
- Invasive species noted include thistle, wild fennel, and blackberry. In addition, some re-growth of the phragmites was noted. Removal of invasives at this site is ongoing and continues to be a primary concern at this site.
- Generally, plants in both the riparian area and in the marsh are doing well.

Jordan/Lower Hylebos Marsh:

- Site visit conducted: October 27 (City).
- Invasive species noted include blackberry, reed canary grass, and Scot's Broom.
- Overall, the vegetation was noted to be in good condition, with big leaf maple and possibly madrone volunteering.
- In response to the significant alder thinning/cutting identified in the previous report, and at the request of the Trustees, the City prepared and submitted a map of the site indicating where various categories of work had been done by Restoration Logistics and where different sizes of trees had been cut. The Trustees will review the map and identify next steps.
- The WCC worked on removal and chipping of the alder slash, as well as cutting the stumps to ground level.

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Middle Waterway – City of Tacoma:

- Site visit conducted: October 28 (CHB).
- Substantial re-growth of blackberry was noted throughout the riparian portion of the site.
- Other invasives identified include reed canary grass, curled dock, thistle, and St. John's Wort.
- Plants in both the riparian area and the marsh were doing well, although some were still showing signs of heat/sun stress.
- WCC removed approximately 4 cubic yards of invasives on October 4 and disposed of them offsite.
- CHB conducted a volunteer planting event on October 23. Members of AmeriCorps Northwest Leadership Foundation and others installed 241 tree and shrubs in the riparian area and 680 emergent plants in the transition zone between the marsh and riparian area. Site history, restoration principles, and planting techniques were discussed with the volunteers as well as future opportunities to participate in restoration activities in Commencement Bay.
- WCC followed up on the volunteer planting event by completing the planting of 228 remaining emergent plants.

Middle Waterway – Simpson:

- Site visit conducted: October 28 (CHB).
- Plants in both the riparian and the marsh areas are doing well, although some were still showing signs of heat/sun stress.
- Volunteer species identified include goldenrod, and at least one young garry oak.
- The mulch on the berm is getting thin and needs re-application.

Olympic View – City of Tacoma and DNR Triangle:

- Site visit conducted: October 25 (CHB).
- Most of the native species remain in good condition, although some heat stress continues to be evident.
- Approximately 40 percent of the recently planted species appear dried out and may not have survived. The lowest survival appears in the NE corner of the site.
- Minor invasive species were noted including St. Johns Wort, blackberry, tansy ragwort, and wild fennel. These invasives are located primarily around the perimeter.

Tahoma Salt Marsh:

- Site visit conducted: October 27 (CHB).
- Overall, vegetation appears to be in good condition.
- Invasive species noted include tansy ragwort, some of which was removed by the steward.
- An area of gumweed at the toe of the "Riparian East" area appears dead while that on the north side of the site is doing well.

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- Wildlife evidence at the site included a partially eaten salmon, deer tracks, and nesting/resting areas for geese.

Swan Creek:

- Site visit conducted: October 29 (CHB).
- Invasives noted on site include reed canary grass, blackberry, St. John's Wort, and wild pea.
- Overall the vegetation is looking good; however, some continuing affects of heat stress were noted.
- The debris from building demolition on the adjacent site remains, and is estimated at 10-15 cubic yards. The chain and bollard fencing was also damaged during building demolition and needs to be re-established following debris removal.
- Two live salmon were spotted in the creek.
- WCC performed invasive removal on October 4 and 6.

II. ACTIVITIES AND DELIVERABLES

DESCRIPTION OF WORK ACTIVITIES COMPLETED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

- Specific site work activities are described above in Section I.
- An ESP Coordination Meeting was held on September 7, to discuss work performed during the reporting period and that planned for the next two months.
- The access agreement with the Port of the Tacoma for the Mowitch site was executed on October 6, and the access agreement with the Puyallup Tribe for Yowkwala, Skookum Wulge, and Squally Beach was executed on November 1.
- The Year 2 Annual Report was completed and submitted on October 26. The report includes the proposed work plan for Year 3.

DESCRIPTION OF WORK ACTIVITIES PLANNED FOR THE UPCOMING REPORTING PERIOD

- ESP Coordination Meetings are scheduled with CHB and FOH on the first Tuesday of every month.
- Continue to work with CHB on plans for implementation of the annual work plan and schedule for community involvement activities.
- The next community involvement events are scheduled in November at Squally Beach to perform invasive removal and supplemental planting; November 13 at Middle Waterway – Simpson for supplemental planting and mulching; and November 20 at Mowitch to perform planting and mulching.
- Continue to complete Priority 1 tasks as identified in approved 2010 work plan (COT), and address Priority 2 tasks as time permits.
- COT to continue to coordinate WCC work including invasive and trash sweeps at all sites.
- Discuss any proposed modifications to the Year 3 work plan pending Trustee review.

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DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES SUBMITTED DURING THE REPORTING PERIOD

- Year 2 Annual Report, which included the Year 2 4th Quarter Report, was submitted on October 26.

DESCRIPTION OF DELIVERABLES PLANNED FOR THE UPCOMING REPORTING PERIOD

- The Monthly Progress Report for November is due on December 10.

PROBLEM AREAS IDENTIFIED AND PROPOSED SOLUTIONS

- No new problem areas were identified during this reporting period.

Copies submitted as follows:

Jennifer Steger, NOAA (1 via electronic mail, 1 via U.S. Mail)
Gail Siani, NOAA (1 via electronic mail)
Jeanine Riss, Citizens for a Healthy Bay (1 via electronic mail)
Lili Allala, Friends of the Hylebos (1 via electronic mail)
Kira Lynch, EPA (1 via electronic mail)
Jason Lehto, NOAA (1 via electronic mail)