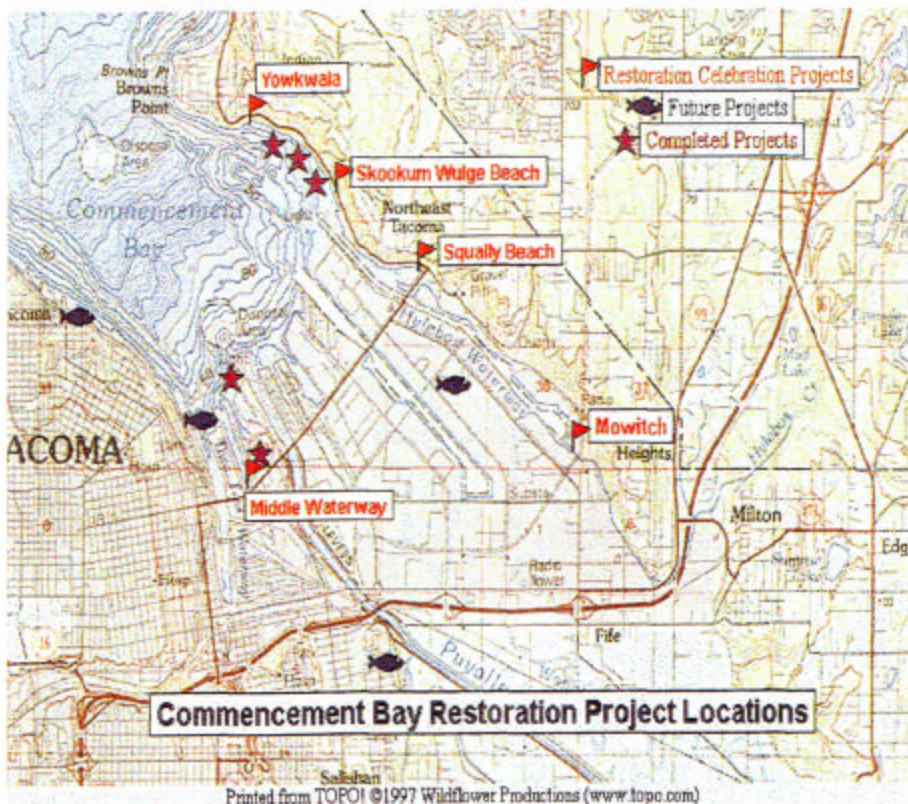


AN INVITATION TO CELEBRATE RESTORATION IN COMMENCEMENT BAY

THE COMMENCEMENT BAY NATURAL RESOURCE TRUSTEES



THE NATIONAL OCEANIC
AND ATMOSPHERIC
ADMINISTRATION

THE U.S. FISH AND
WILDLIFE SERVICE

THE MUCKLESHOOT
INDIAN TRIBE

THE PUYALLUP TRIBE
OF INDIANS

THE STATE OF
WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF
ECOLOGY

THE STATE OF
WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF FISH
AND WILDLIFE

THE STATE OF
WASHINGTON
DEPARTMENT OF
NATURAL RESOURCES

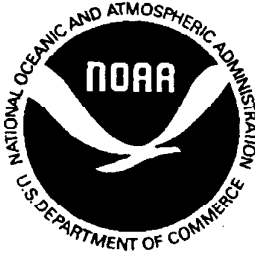
TOGETHER WITH THE CITY OF TACOMA AND THE PORT OF TACOMA
request the honor of your presence

WEDNESDAY OCTOBER 11, 2000
AT THE MIDDLE WATERWAY RESTORATION PROJECT SITE (SEE MAP)

10:30 - 11:30 Speakers and Dedication Ceremony
11:30 - 12:30 Tree Planting and Refreshments

This public event celebrates several significant natural habitat restoration projects by the Commencement Bay Natural Resource Trustees and dedicated partners. This is an opportunity to illuminate major accomplishments toward restoring essential estuarine habitat in Commencement Bay.

Contact: Jennifer Steger, Restoration Case Manager,
NOAA/DARC/NW 7600 Sand Point Way NE Seattle, WA 98115
phone: (206) 526-4363 e-mail: jennifer.steger@noaa.gov



National Marine Fisheries Service Northwest Region NEWS RELEASE

Contact: Brian Gorman, 206-526-6613
Janet Sears, 206-526-6172

For Immediate Release
October 11, 2000

COMMENCEMENT BAY TRUSTEES AND PARTNERS CELEBRATE HABITAT RESTORATION PROJECTS

NOAA today joined regional tribes, state agencies and other federal natural resource agencies to celebrate almost a decade of progress to restore habitat in Tacoma's Commencement Bay.

The event, hosted by the city of Tacoma and its port, highlighted four habitat restoration projects designed to restore critical urban marsh around the bay. The marshes provide critical habitat and migration areas for many marine species, including young salmon. These projects are part of the larger, ongoing natural resource damage assessment and restoration process taking place in the bay.

Officials at the event highlighted the challenges faced by the Natural Resource Trustees in restoring habitat around the bay, one of the most highly industrialized waterway's in the nation. Officials also stressed the high level of cooperation among the partners.

"This restoration work has been truly remarkable, even in a state as well known for its environmental ethic as Washington," said NOAA Fisheries Director Penny Dalton. "It is a pleasure to join in recognizing all of the excellent restoration work that is being conducted as a result of the actions of the Natural Resources Trustees and their partners."

"I am particularly pleased that each of the projects that we dedicate today will help recover significant fishery habitats vital to the marine species that call Commencement Bay and Puget Sound their home," Dalton added.

In addition to NOAA, the Natural Resource Trustees for Commencement Bay are the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, the State of Washington through its departments of Ecology, Natural Resources, and Fish and Wildlife, the Puyallup Tribe of Indians and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe. The trustees work to address adverse effects to marine and coastal resources from the release of hazardous substances into the bay.

(more)

Today's event highlighted the following projects:

Middle Waterway: Nearly two acres of intertidal marsh and riparian buffer along one of the few remaining original mudflats within Commencement Bay is re-established by the excavation and regrading of the southwest shore of the waterway. This project recreates historic habitats, enhances existing habitats, and provides public access for education and passive recreation in a major focal area for restoration.

Yowkwala and Skookum-Wulge Beach: These two projects along Marine View Drive preserve and enhance intertidal and shallow subtidal and protective riparian habitats for salmonid, benthic and wildlife resources. They provide important links for an unobstructed migration corridor along the shoreline. These two projects include acquisition and primary restoration of a 13-acre parcel at Brown's Point, and preservation of a one-acre parcel of upland and mudflat adjacent to a previously acquired WDNR restoration site.

Squally Beach: The Trustees are currently establishing an intertidal plant nursery at the Puyallup Tribe of Indians' Conservancy Area in order to increase the estuarine habitats in Commencement Bay and to provide native plants for use in other restoration projects. This one acre site on the Hylebos Waterway is a portion of a much larger relic mudflat.

Mowitch: This project recreates and restores 2.5 acres of estuarine habitat along Hylebos Creek where it meets the Hylebos Waterway. The project features a series of backwater sloughs and a second connection to the waterway, significantly increasing the intertidal area and habitat value.

Commencement Bay, the harbor for Tacoma, is a deep-water embayment at the southern end of Puget Sound. Beginning in the early 1900s, intertidal areas and tide flats of the Puyallup River delta were filled in, and meandering streams were channelized into the eight waterways of today. A wide range of industrial and commercial activities has impacted the waterways that flow into the bay, including pulp and lumber mills, shipbuilding and ship repair facilities, marinas and chlorine and chemical production.

In 1991, NOAA's National Ocean Service formally initiated the damage assessment process. Since then, the trustees have been compiling existing data, conducting studies of injuries to natural resources resulting from exposure to hazardous substances. In 1997, NOAA Fisheries, the trustees and other partners began implementing projects to restore injured resources and habitats.

For more information on the projects see: www.darcnw.noaa.gov/cb.htm.

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**COMMENCEMENT BAY HABITAT RESTORATION
CELEBRATION & DEDICATION
OCTOBER 11, 2000**

Welcome	Craig O'Connor, NOAA
Blessing	Tribal Representative(s)
Project Map Unveiling	Brian Ebersole, Mayor, City of Tacoma
Speakers:	
NOAA/NMFS	Penny Dalton, Administrator, NMFS
USFWS	Anne Badgley, Regional Director
State of Washington	Tom Fitzsimmons, Director, Dept. of Ecology
State of Washington	Jennifer Belcher, Commissioner of Public Lands, Dept. of Natural Resources
State of Washington	Jeff Koenings, Director, Dept. of Fish & Wildlife
Other Introductions & Thanks	Craig O'Connor (VIPs attending but not speaking *)
Transition to Tree Plantings	Dr. Sheri Tonn, Citizens for a Healthy Bay
Tree Plantings	College Students & VIPs
Media Availabilities	All

Former Names of Restoration Projects	New Name	Salish Translation
Oline Parcel (aka Parcel O)	YOWKWALA (yowk*wa*la)	Eagle
Puyallup Nursery	SQUALLY Beach	Grasses
Meeker Parcel (aka Parcel A)	SKOOKUM WULGE	Powerful Salt Water
Wasser-Winters	MOWITCH	Deer
City Middle Waterway Project	Middle Waterway Estuarine Natural Resources Restoration project City of Tacoma Translation: "Project between other two waterways"	

COMMENCEMENT BAY NRDA RESTORATION

Fact Sheet 2

VISION

Working Draft October 11, 2000

The current status of certain habitat components of the Commencement Bay ecosystem is limiting to fish and wildlife populations. For example, it is estimated that approximately 2,100 acres of intertidal mudflat and about 4,000 acres of intertidal emergent marsh were located in the Commencement Bay study area prior to 1877. Less than 2% of these special aquatic sites currently exist in Commencement Bay (U.S. Army Corps of Engineers et al. 1993).

The goals of the trustees are to: (1) Meet statutory objective of restoring, replacing, rehabilitating, or acquiring the equivalent of natural resources and/or their services injured or destroyed as a result of the release of hazardous substances or a discharge of oil; (2) Provide alternatives for those natural resources that will not recover without efforts above and beyond regulatory requirements for source control, sediment cleanup, and habitat restoration (e.g., certain fish and wildlife species, water quality); and (3) Provide a diversity of sustainable habitat types and species within the Commencement Bay ecosystem to enhance fish and wildlife resources.

The Trustees' vision focuses on restoring the various habitat components of the Commencement Bay ecosystem, such as vegetated shallows, mudflats/salt marshes, off-channel sloughs and lagoons, tidal creeks, freshwater marshes, adjacent well-stratified upland buffers, and naturalized creek and river channels and corridors. The vision places emphasis on baywide restoration through an ecosystem or landscape approach rather than creating isolated fragments of habitats. Each element is intended to function in concert with other elements.

Elements of Restoration

1. **Waterways**

Restoring habitat in the waterways will entail creating or enhancing habitats large enough to provide ecological benefits to fish and wildlife. Fringing salt marshes and low gradient mudflats were once extensive in the Bay and provided habitat for bottom dwelling organisms that are important to the food chain, especially for juvenile salmonids and shorebirds. Shorelines inside and peninsulas between several of the waterways offer opportunities for mudflat and salt marsh restoration and/or enhancement.

Creating off-channel sloughs, lagoons, and dendritic channels will also provide important refuge and acclimation areas for outmigrating salmon, and feeding, loafing, and isolated refuge areas for migratory and resident waterfowl and shorebirds. The scarcity of these habitat features is a limiting factor in maintaining or increasing fish and avian populations. Creating viable habitat corridors along the waterways will provide the necessary biological requirements for fish and wildlife utilizing the waterways, the Bay and Puget Sound. Design changes and upgrading existing artificial structures (e.g., pilings, piers, etc.) provides additional opportunities to enhance habitat values for fish and wildlife in the waterways.

2. **Creek and River Systems**

Historically, there were many off-river habitats, such as sloughs, small streams, and connected wetlands, in the Commencement Bay area. These habitats allowed for easier downstream migration of salmon by providing staging areas for acclimation, feeding, and refuge from large predators. They also provided feeding, loafing, and isolated refuge for birds, provided wildlife access to water, and provided overall habitat for a more diverse assemblage of species. Tidal creeks and rivers provided access routes for organisms using salt- and freshwater marshes as nursery and feeding areas. The upper watersheds, including the White and Carbon River, South Prairie Creek, Hylebos Creek, Wapato Creek, and other major tributaries, provided spawning sites, large organic debris input to the ecosystem, travel corridors, forage, nesting, and cover for a wide variety of fish and wildlife species.

Several opportunities exist for creek and river enhancement and connections to the shoreline approaches and waterways of Commencement Bay. In order to reestablish successful salmon runs in these systems and improve overwinter survival, removal of barriers to fish passage, and preservation and enhancement of the watershed are necessary. Upper watershed enhancement activities would include creating well-stratified riparian corridors and buffers, augmenting instream flows to benefit fish movement, creating off-river habitat, and providing spawning gravels. In addition, reconnecting old oxbows and creating other off-river sloughs designed with a variety of habitat features, such as those established at the Gog-le-hi-te wetland, will help provide some of the necessary habitat components currently limiting enhancement efforts for fish and wildlife species in the Commencement Bay watershed.

3. Shoreline Approaches

Shoreline approaches include primarily the shoreline between Dash Point and the Hylebos Waterway and between Point Defiance and the Thea Foss Waterway, and secondarily, Dash Point to Dumas Bay, the south facing shores of Maury and Vashon Island, and from Point Defiance to the railroad tunnel alongside the Tacoma Narrows. These shorelines are narrow intertidal and shallow subtidal margins around a relatively deep urban bay. The nearshore margins are important migratory routes for salmon, waterfowl, and shorebirds and should be protected and enhanced to provide connections between other habitat components. Although existing habitat in these areas is relatively intact, the potential exists for additional enhancement efforts, including creek cleanup activities, establishing nest boxes, reestablishing fringing marsh, planting eel grass, developing kelp beds, and providing deeper water artificial reefs (substrate enhancement) for intertidal spawning. Substrate enhancement for intertidal spawning and artificial reefs would be separate actions to achieve different objectives.

Restoration Implementation

A restoration case manager (RCM) serves as the point of contact and manage the implementation of restoration projects on behalf of the Trustees. In coordination with the Trustees' technical staff, the RCM will oversee and monitor the implementation of the CB/NRDA Restoration Plan.

The CB/NRDA Trustees hold quarterly public meetings. If you have questions or would like to be on a mailing list to receive notice of opportunities to participate please contact:

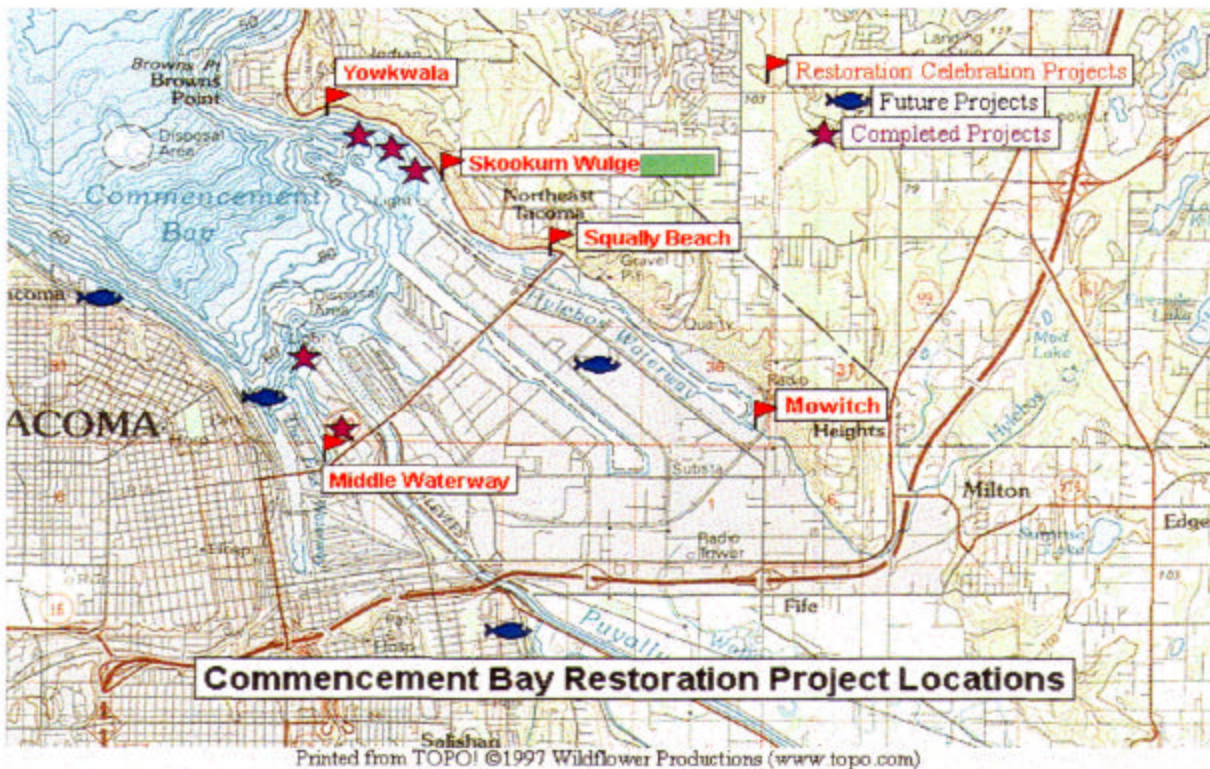
Jennifer Steger, Restoration Case Manager
NOAA Damage Assessment and Restoration Center NW
7600 Sand Point Way NE 98115
Seattle, WA 98115-0070
phone: (206) 526-4363
fax: (206) 526-6665
e-mail: jennifer.steger@noaa.gov

Public notices, meetings, and other restoration planning information will also be announced at <http://www.darcnw.noaa.gov/cb.htm>.

SOURCES: CB/NRDA Final Restoration Plan, 10/97.

U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service, and the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration. 1993. Commencement Bay Cumulative Impact Study. Volumes 1 (Assessment of Impacts) and 2 (Restoration Options).

NEW RESTORATION PROJECTS IN COMMENCEMENT BAY !



Middle Waterway: Nearly two acres of intertidal marsh and riparian buffer are being created on vacant property located between the Thea Foss and St. Paul Waterways, along one of the few remaining mudflats in Commencement Bay. Restoration efforts reconstruct fringing salt marsh habitat by excavating and regrading of the southwest shore of the waterway. The project recreates historic habitats, enhances existing habitats, and provides public access for education and passive recreation in a major focal area for restoration. This fall, volunteers will plant native upland vegetation to facilitate the development of habitat functions at the site.

Yowkwala and Skookum-Wulge: These two projects along Marine View Drive preserve and enhance intertidal, shallow subtidal, and protective riparian habitats for salmonid, benthic and wildlife resources. They provide an important link for an unobstructed migration corridor along the shoreline. These two projects include acquisition and primary restoration of a 13-acre parcel at Brown's Point and preservation of a one-acre parcel of upland and mudflat adjacent to a previously acquired WDNR restoration site.

Squally Beach: The Trustees are currently establishing an intertidal plant nursery at the Puyallup Tribe of Indians' Conservancy Area in order to increase the estuarine habitats in Commencement Bay and to provide native plants for use in other restoration projects. This one acre site on the Hylebos Waterway is adjacent to a much larger relic mudflat. This fall and again in the spring, volunteers will help plant native vegetation at the Squally Beach and Mowitch Restoration Project Sites.

Mowitch: This project recreates and restores 2.5-acres of estuarine creek mouth habitat along Hylebos Creek where it meets the Hylebos Waterway. The project features a series of backwater sloughs and a second connection to the waterway significantly increasing the intertidal area and habitat value.

COMMENCEMENT BAY NRDA RESTORATION

Working Draft October 1, 2000

Fact Sheet MWW-1

Waterway-Wide Vision

CB/NRDA TRUSTEE OVERVIEW VISION FOR THE MIDDLE WATERWAY

Trustee Vision for Commencement Baywide Restoration:

The Trustees' vision focuses on restoring the various habitat components of the Commencement Bay ecosystem, such as vegetated shallows, mudflats/salt marshes, off-channel sloughs and lagoons, tidal creeks, freshwater marshes, adjacent well-stratified upland buffers, and naturalized creek and river channels and corridors. The vision places emphasis on baywide restoration through an ecosystem or landscape approach rather than creating isolated fragments of habitats. Each element is intended to function in concert with other elements.

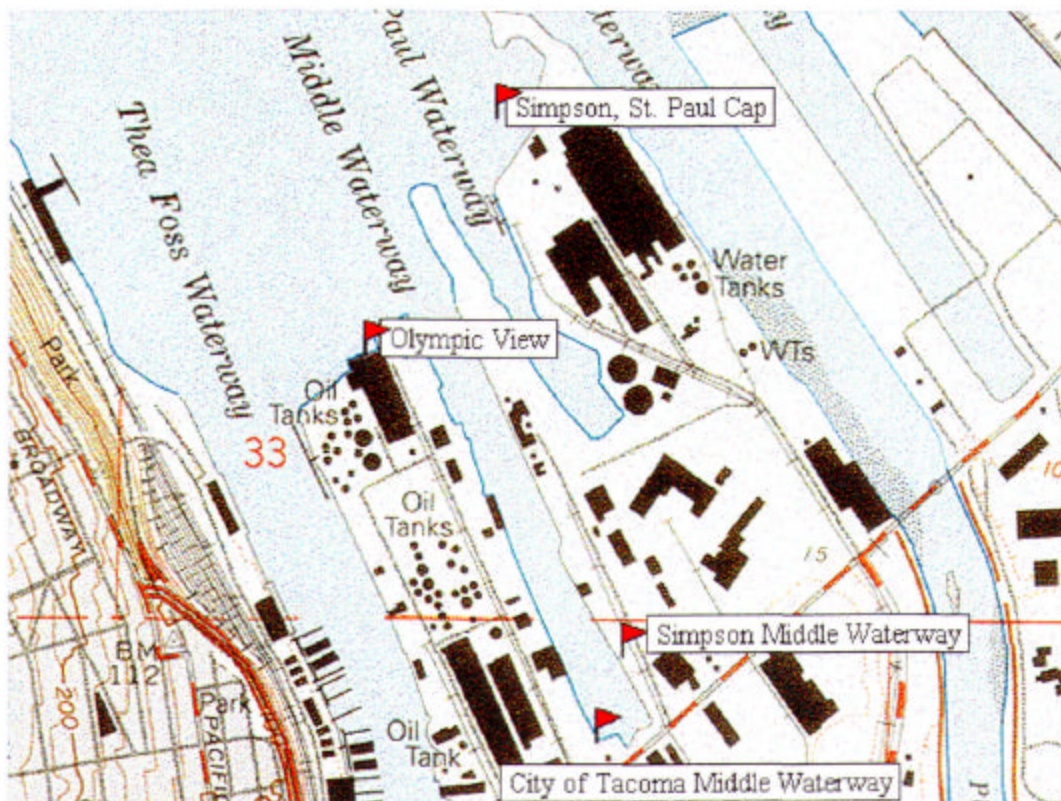
MIDDLE WATERWAY-WIDE GOAL:

Maintain and increase the amount of intertidal marsh and mudflat habitats and their functions throughout the Middle Waterway and its approaches.

OBJECTIVES:

1. Protect, in perpetuity, the habitat functions of the City and Trustee Olympic View, City Of Tacoma Middle Waterway, Simpson Tacoma Kraft Middle Waterway Shore, and St. Paul sediment cap habitat restoration projects.
2. Provide an unobstructed corridor of water parallel to the shoreline and encompassing a width that reaches from the upper intertidal to at least - 10 feet (MLLW) for migratory salmonid fish passage.
3. Provide intertidal habitat suitable for resident (bait) fish spawning.
4. Provide additional intertidal marsh habitat.

LOCATION OF RESTORATION PROJECTS IN MIDDLE WATERWAY:



ONGOING TRUSTEE ACTIVITIES INCLUDE:

1. Provide expertise to U.S. EPA and the Washington State Department of Ecology (WDOE) for the *design, selection, and implementation of Superfund cleanup criteria and the activities at the entrance to the Waterway and on the non-navigable (tideflat) portions of the waterway.*
2. Evaluate proposed habitat mitigation projects contemplated by U.S. EPA and WDOE remedial activities which could potentially impact the waterway and its approaches.

How can the public stay informed and be involved?

Public participation is an important component of restoration planning by helping the Trustees select and shape restoration projects. You are encouraged to become involved in the restoration planning process because the natural resources in Commencement Bay are your resources. The CB/NRDA Trustees meet each month and hold quarterly public meetings. If you have questions or would like to be on a mailing list to receive notice of opportunities to participate please contact:

Jennifer Steger, Restoration Case Manager
NOAA Damage Assessment and Restoration Center NW
7600 Sand Point Way NE 98115
Seattle, WA 98115-0070
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fax: (206) 526-6665
e-mail: jennifer.steger@noaa.gov

Public notices and meetings will also be announced at <http://www.darcnw.noaa.gov/cb.htm>.

COMMENCEMENT BAY NRDA RESTORATION

Fact Sheet 1
NRDA

Working Draft October 1, 2000

Commencement Bay Natural Resource Damage Assessment (CB/NRDA)

Federal and state agencies and tribal governments are conducting an ongoing Natural Resource Damage Assessment (NRDA) and restoration planning process in Commencement Bay, Tacoma, Washington. These agencies and tribal governments, called Natural Resource Trustees (Trustees), represent the interests of the public in assessing injuries to and restoring the public's natural resources. The NRDA process is authorized under the federal Superfund law, the Oil Pollution Act of 1990, and other laws.

What is NRDA?

NRDA is a process used to examine injuries to natural resources (such as fish, wildlife, shellfish, sediments, and water) caused by releases of hazardous substances or a discharge of oil. The Trustees assign a monetary value (damages) to the injuries, and recover the damages from the parties who have caused the injuries. By law, the Trustees must use the recovered damages to restore, replace, rehabilitate, or acquire the equivalent of those injured natural resources and their services. Where appropriate the trustees may resolve natural resource damage claims by having responsible parties directly develop restoration projects. Thus, a complete NRDA process includes both damage assessment and restoration planning.

Where is Commencement Bay?

Commencement Bay is an estuarine bay in the southern part of Puget Sound in Washington State. The City of Tacoma sits along the south shore of the Bay. The Port of Tacoma and its associated industrial area occupies the Puyallup River delta at the eastern end of the Bay. The north shore is largely comprised of the residential areas of Tacoma and unincorporated Pierce County. The Bay and adjacent uplands occupy about 12 square miles.

Why is a CB/NRDA being conducted in Commencement Bay?

Nearly 300 industries produce a variety of hazardous substances which end up in the air, surface and ground water, sediments and soils of the Commencement Bay area. This contamination has impacted natural resources by directly injuring fish and wildlife or indirectly, by reducing the quality and quantity of aquatic organisms upon which fish and wildlife feed. In addition, local health authorities have issued human health consumption advisories because contaminants have been found in fish and shellfish.

Who is responsible for the CB/NRDA?

The Trustees represent the interests of the public in assessing damages and restoring the public's natural resources and their services. The Trustees for Commencement Bay are the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration; the U.S. Department of the Interior, which includes the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service and the Bureau of Indian Affairs; the State of Washington, including the Departments of Ecology (lead state trustee), Fish and Wildlife, and Natural Resources; the Puyallup Tribe of Indians; and the Muckleshoot Indian Tribe.

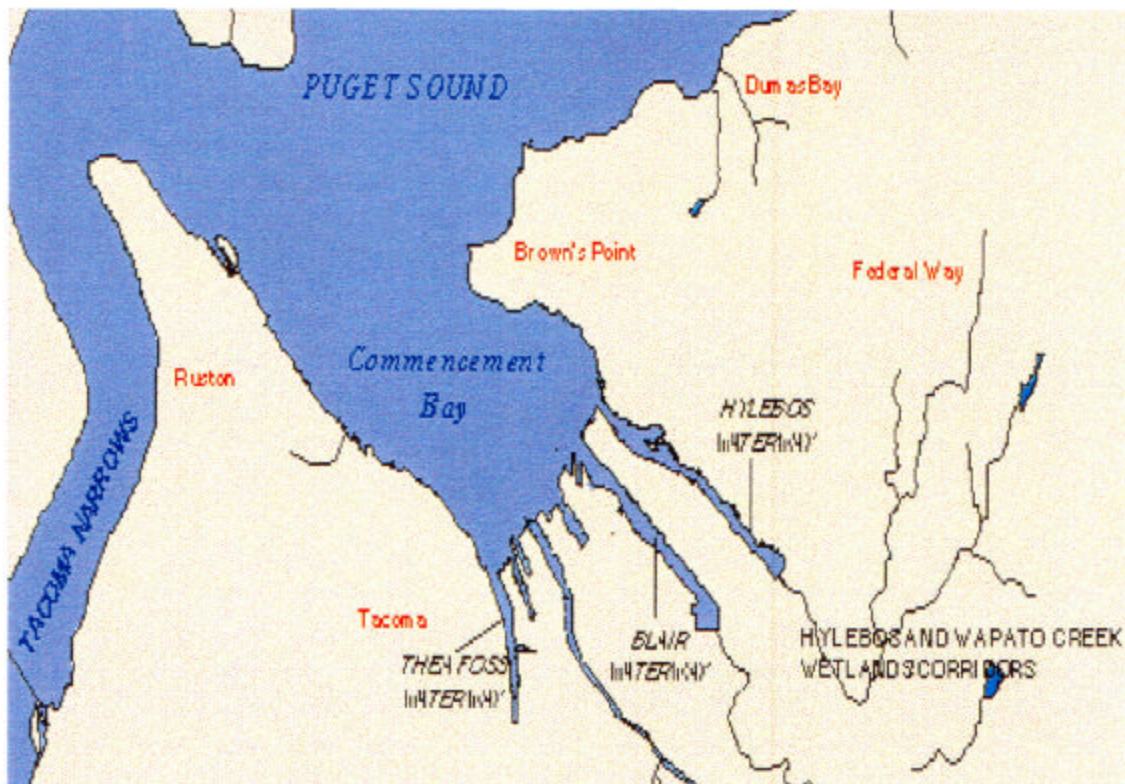
How do these activities relate to the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency's (EPA) Superfund cleanup activities?

The CB/NRDA process complements the EPA's Superfund cleanup actions in Commencement Bay. The EPA is cleaning up contaminated sediments in the Commencement Bay Nearshore/Tideflats Superfund site. EPA's cleanup actions include a goal of habitat enhancement. To avoid duplication of effort, the Trustees have an agreement with EPA to coordinate pollution source control, sediment cleanup and restoration activities. In addition, the CB/NRDA process will examine any natural resource injuries that remain after cleanup efforts have been completed. Questions on Superfund cleanup activities can be directed to Ms. Jeanne O'Dell, EPA's Community Relations Coordinator at 206/553-6919 or 1-800-424-4EPA (4372).

How can the public stay informed and be involved?

Public participation is an important component of restoration planning by helping the Trustees select and shape restoration projects. You are encouraged to become involved in the restoration planning process because the natural resources in Commencement Bay are your resources. The CB/NRDA Trustees hold quarterly public meetings. If you have questions or would like to be on a mailing list to receive notice of opportunities to participate please contact:

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SOURCE: CB/NRDA Final Restoration Plan, 10/97.
