

# East Delta Park Pond, Phase I

*by Shelley Matthews*

YEAR  
5

in Portland, off I5 exit 306b, at the intersection of N. Denver Ave. and Martin Luther King Jr. Blvd.



## BEFORE

*Lack of structure  
and vegetative  
species diversity*

## AFTER

*Restored native  
vegetation enhances  
habitat and wildlife  
diversity*



This project involves a riparian restoration around one of two ponds (the northern pond) located on the west edge of East Delta Park in north Portland. East Delta Park is a sports center for organized sports and other activities, which draws tens of thousands of people annually. The ponds on the west edge of the park are a remnant of, and a link with, the natural environment. They are a home for waterfowl and other wildlife. The northernmost pond was selected for this restoration effort because it is more accessible to the public and is most in need of improvement. The restoration site is located along a 750 ft. section of the pond's bank.

Prior to this project, the ponds were surrounded by blackberries and reed canary grass, with little vegetative species diversity. A number of large poplars, willows, and other trees were adjacent to the ponds. The ponds are in a passive recreation area, with picnic tables nearby and play equipment not far away. The ponds have some through flow, but are also fed by ground water, run-off from I5, and storm sewer lines. They act to contain floodwater and have filled in with silt over the last several years.

Restoration efforts included controlling the existing invasive vegetation, preparing the site, and planting it with appropriate plant material. The planting was multi-layered and included the use of many shade producing canopy trees, which historically dominated in the Columbia Slough. The area was also heavily planted with fast growing shrubs that could successfully compete with the blackberry and reed canary grass until the canopy trees became established. Vine maple, red flowering currant and other plant varieties were added for the benefit of wildlife and for aesthetic appeal. In addition, the area was seeded with a native grass mix to compete with weedy grasses and to slow the re-establishment of blackberry. The mix had some true wildflowers to attract butterflies. Plants were mulched to retain water and contribute to soil fertility.

The pond is located at the Urban Forestry Division offices of Portland Parks and Recreation, simplifying monitoring efforts. Long-term maintenance activities include monitoring soil moisture and invasive weeds, watering plants, tree care, protecting vegetation from animals, mulching, and replacing plants as needed.

### **Benefits**

- Diversified vegetation and improved habitat diversity and health for both resident and migratory birds and other animal species.
- Provided a valuable example of good land management and increased public awareness.
- Enhanced aesthetic value of the property.
- Due to the location, the site can be used as an interpretive center for both Portland Parks and the proposed Native American Cultural Center.

### **Budget**

Total Proposed – \$24,450

Total Actual – \$25,486

Metro/U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grant award – \$13,000

Grant Dollars Spent - \$12,511

## Helpful Hints – what worked, what didn't

- 80% survival rate for plantings. Replaced lost trees and added more.
- Morning Glory invaded area after the blackberry was removed. We put down a layer of mulch about 6 inches deep to help control this invasive weed.

## Partners

ACS

Bureau of Environmental Services, Youth Environmental Action Team

EnviroCorps

Portland Parks and Recreation, Urban forestry Division and Horticultural Services Unit

Wetlands Conservancy, Corps Restoring the Urban Environment

## Contact

Charley Davis, Portland Parks and Recreation, Urban Forestry Division (503) 823-4523

### Timeline and Tasks

May 1996	Removed blackberry, prepped site, and planted
June 1996	Completed second phase of planting
July 1996	Maintained new plantings, including watering
August - November 1996	Continued maintenance and manual weed control
January 1997	Controlled weeds and replaced non-surviving plants
March 1997	Controlled weeds and spread mulch
April 1997	Filled-in plant material
May 1997	Removed blackberry
June 1997	Controlled weeds and brush