



Salmon Nursery Nursed Back to Health

Tarboo Bay Restoration



Tarboo Bay within the Dabob Natural Area in Washington's Puget Sound was once a pristine salt marsh, ideal for rearing juvenile salmon. Over time, approximately 60% of the estuary has been lost due to the construction of levees and dikes, and only 10% of the salt marsh habitats remain. Despite this degradation, it is one of the largest and least developed salt marsh estuaries remaining in Puget Sound.

To protect this valuable nursery and restore natural vegetation, U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service has been working with over 40 agencies, businesses, conservation groups, tribes, and others since 2001.

"It was wonderful to see the tide come in again where it had been blocked for many decades. The salmon and other fish come in on the high tides to feed in the productive mudflats and saltmarsh of the bay."

*-Peter Bahls, Executive Director,
Northwest Watershed Institute*

Last fall, the partnership was able to take a big step in restoring nearly one-quarter mile of nearshore tidelands. After purchase of the residential property, we decommissioned a well and septic system and removed a house, 700 cubic yards of backfill and invasive ivy and Scotch broom.

Revegetation will take place in early 2015. Elimination of a 150-foot bulkhead allowed the tide to flow where it had been blocked for decades.

The newly restored parcel provides habitat for a diversity of fish species, including juvenile Hood Canal summer chum salmon and Puget Sound Chinook salmon, both federally listed as Threatened under the Endangered Species Act. The site also provides important nearshore habitat for coastal cutthroat trout, fall chum salmon, Hood Canal coho salmon (federal candidate species), and steelhead (federally Threatened) all of which return to Tarboo Bay and spawn in Tarboo Creek, the

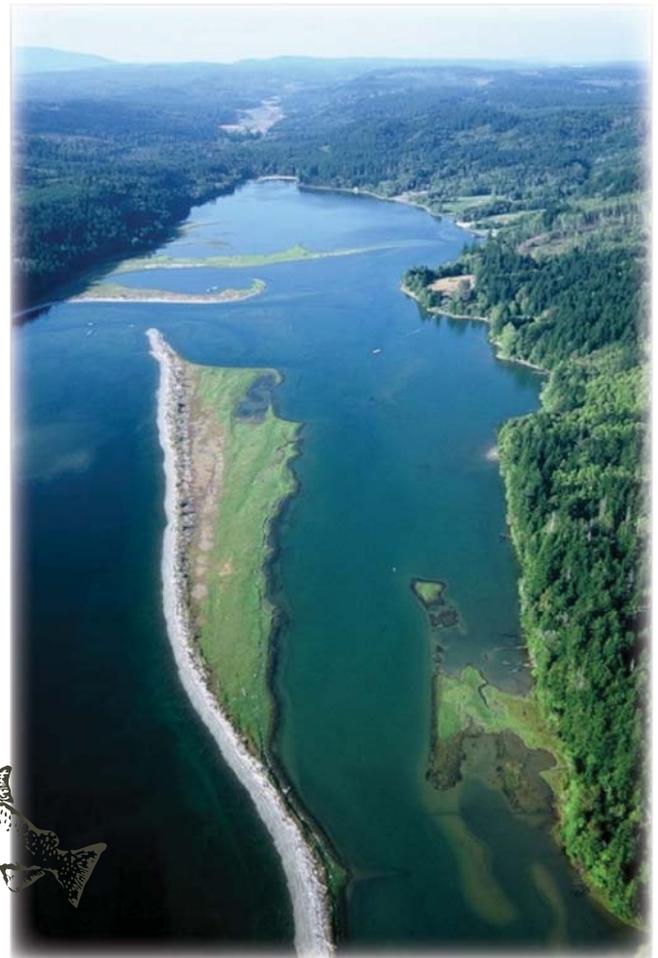


main freshwater stream that feeds Tarboo-Dabob Bay.

Surrogate species, such as threatened and endangered salmon, are the focus of these restoration efforts. In order to achieve the highest level of success, project partners are using and sharing science and tools, incorporating the biological and habitat needs of fish and wildlife species, the ecological and hydrological functioning of the bay, and the physical aspects associated with conservation restoration. The partners have

employed a learning-by-doing approach that involves biological planning, conservation design, and monitoring research.

As part of a larger 6,284 acre natural area, this project will help to ensure healthy habitat and nursery for salmonids by ensuring that the systems are intact and functioning naturally. By addressing a root cause of habitat loss and degradation, this restoration effort enhances resilience, ensuring long-term sustainability and productivity.



Lowell Jones

Tarboo-Dabob Bay, WA

Accomplishment Metrics

Species benefited

- Chinook salmon (threatened)
- Chum salmon (threatened)
- Coho salmon (candidate)
- Steelhead trout (threatened)
- Cutthroat trout

Habitat restored

- 1,200 feet of saltmarsh and forest shoreline



Project Partners

Admiralty Audubon Society
Broad Spit Oyster Company
Bullitt Foundation
Charlotte Martin Foundation
Chimacum Pi Program
Congressman Norm Dicks
Ecotrust
Hood Canal Coordinating Council
Hood Canal Environmental Council
Hood Canal Salmon Enhancement Group
Jamestown S'Klallam Tribal Council
Jefferson Community School
Jefferson County Board of County Commissioners
Jefferson County Conservation District
Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee

Jefferson Land Trust
Lower Elwha Klallam Tribal Council
Martin Miller Fund, Seattle Chapter of the Audubon Society
Mountaineers Foundation
National Fish and Wildlife Foundation
NOAA Fisheries
North Olympic Salmon Coalition
Olympic Forest Coalition
Olympic Music Festival
Pacific Coast Joint Venture
Pacific Marine and Estuarine Fish Habitat Partnership
Pacific Shellfish Growers Association
Point No Point Treaty Council
Pope Resources
Port Gamble S'Klallam Tribal Council

Port Townsend Marine Science Center
Quilcene Elementary School
Rock Point Oyster Company
Skokomish Tribal Council
State Representative Kevin VanDeWege
Sunfield School
Swan School
Taylor Shellfish Farms
The Nature Conservancy
The Rodman Foundation
USDA Natural Resources Conservation Service
Washington Department of Ecology
Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
Washington Department of Natural Resources
Washington Native Plant Society
Wildlife Forever Fund



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