



Rinearson Creek confluence with the Willamette River after initial construction of the restoration project was completed in 2017.

Rinearson Natural Area Restoration Project

Creating habitat for fish and wildlife injured by hazardous releases in the Portland Harbor Superfund site

The Rinearson Natural Area restoration project will provide habitat for salmon, lamprey, mink, bald eagle, osprey, and other native fish and wildlife.

The project was completed in 2017 and 2018 by Falling Springs, a habitat development company. The restoration included:

- Removing an earthen dam that blocked salmon, lamprey, and other fish from swimming up Rinearson Creek
- Reducing the size of the pond to cool water temperatures while maintaining habitat for western pond turtles
- Planting thousands of native plants and removing invasive vegetation throughout the project area
- Placing large wood in the stream for small fish to hide, rock piles in the uplands for mink to den, and snags for bald eagles and other birds to perch and hunt
- Protecting the site from human disturbance by only allowing recreational access on defined trails

Site Background

The Rinearson Natural Area project is located on the Willamette River at Meldrum Bar Park in Gladstone, Oregon. The project area includes part of Meldrum Bar Park as well as two privately owned properties on the north bank of Rinearson Creek. A habitat development company called Falling Springs manages the project. Falling Springs intends to sell natural resource “credits” from the project to potentially responsible parties to help those parties meet their obligations for environmental damages resulting from hazardous releases in the Superfund site.

Portland Harbor was designated as a national Superfund site in 2000. The U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) and Oregon Department of Environmental Quality are working with potentially responsible parties to clean up contaminated sediment and control sources of additional contamination. Cleaning up Portland Harbor is vitally important, but it doesn't cover everything. Cleanup does not completely restore natural resources or compensate the public for their inability to fully use those resources in the past and going forward into the future; that's the purpose of restoration.

The Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council (Trustee Council) is leading restoration efforts in Portland Harbor. In 2002, the Trustee Council formed to develop and coordinate natural resource damage assessment (NRDA) activities at Portland Harbor and to plan restoration of injured natural resources. The NRDA process is separate from the EPA clean-up activities. The Trustee Council is evaluating how natural resources - such as salmon, lamprey, mink, and bald eagle- were harmed by contamination over time, and is planning restoration to compensate the public for those losses.

As part of their restoration planning efforts, the Trustee Council identified numerous projects that could restore natural resources that were injured at Portland Harbor. Rinearson Natural Area is one of those projects. This project is not located within the Superfund site, but is within the broader focus area that the Trustee Council identified for ecological restoration. The Trustee Council worked closely with Falling Springs on the planning and design for the Rinearson Natural Area project to make sure that the benefits to Portland Harbor's injured resources are maximized.

For more information

To learn more about the Rinearson Natural Area restoration project, restoration planning, and the Portland Harbor Superfund site, please visit the following websites:

- Portland Harbor Natural Resource Trustee Council
www.fws.gov/oregonfwo/contaminants/portlandharbor/
- Falling Springs
www.fallingspringsllc.com/rinearson-natural-area-restoration-project
- Environmental Protection Agency's Portland Harbor website
www.epa.gov/superfund/portland-harbor



Map showing Rinearson Natural Area project location within the Broader Focus Area for Portland Harbor restoration.



Mink, one of several potentially injured fish and wildlife species that will benefit from the Rinearson Natural Area project. (Photo credit: Roy W. Lowe)