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Meadowdale Beach Park & Estuary Restoration Project Wins National and Local Awards

Snohomish County is the first parks agency in Washington to win this national conservation award.

EDMONDS, Wash., June 7, 2023 – The [Meadowdale Beach Park & Estuary Restoration Project](#) was recently awarded both the National Recreation & Park Association (NRPA)'s "Innovation in Conservation Award" and the Puget Sound Regional Council (PSRC)'s "Vision 2050 Award" for the extensive restoration project. This project is regionally significant for its role in salmon recovery and Puget Sound shoreline restoration while making significant improvements to the park.

The NRPA "Innovation in Conservation Award" recognizes a park and recreation agency leading an innovative project that creates localized solutions for addressing global or regional environmental challenges. Snohomish County Parks is the first parks agency in Washington State history to win this national award.

The PSRC "VISION 2050 Awards" celebrate progress to enhance the region's communities and natural environment while advancing equity and opportunity for all. The awards recognize innovative work by jurisdictions, tribes, nonprofit organizations, businesses, and other groups in the region to create a better future for central Puget Sound. This is the first time a Snohomish County Parks project has won this award.

"Restoration of Meadowdale Beach will improve shoreline health, support Puget Sound recovery, and enhance public recreation, all of which are good for our economy and environment," said Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers. "I'm thrilled to see Snohomish County receive these well-earned local and national recognitions, and I want to thank our federal, tribal, state, and local partners who are helping create a healthy place for people and fish."

"The restoration work at Meadowdale Beach Park and estuary is truly astounding," said Tom Teigen, Director of Snohomish County Conservation and Natural Resources. "This project has taken more than 10 years of collaboration and innovation and will have significant and lasting impacts for decades to come. We couldn't be prouder of the outcome and have already heard positive feedback from the community."

"We are honored to have received these prestigious awards recognizing the importance of Puget Sound estuary restoration, habitat improvements, and public access improvements," said Sharon Swan, Director of the Snohomish County Parks & Recreation Division. "It is inspiring to see this dream come to fruition. We owe our thanks to the dedication and hard work of our parks staff and all our partners and supporters."

The Meadowdale Beach Park and Estuary Restoration Project was initiated by Snohomish County Parks and has been a successful partnership with Snohomish County Surface Water Management (SWM), BNSF Railway, Tulalip Tribes, state and federal agencies, and the local community.

This is the first Puget Sound shoreline restoration project that included enlarging a stream crossing under railroad tracks along the shoreline. The installation of a wide railroad bridge to replace the undersized culvert was critical to Snohomish County achieving its vision to convert park lawn areas to high-functioning estuarine habitat to benefit salmon. SWM and many partners have conducted habitat monitoring at Meadowdale Beach for many years and will continue to monitor the effectiveness of this project.

The Meadowdale Beach Park and Estuary Project is funded in part by the Federal Rail Administration, NOAA Fisheries, Aquatic Lands Enhancement Account, Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program, Puget Sound Acquisition & Restoration, State Salmon Recovery Grants, and Washington Wildlife and Recreation Program.

A ribbon cutting and public open house to showcase the project process and environmental benefits are being planned for fall 2023.

About Snohomish County Parks & Recreation

The Snohomish County Parks system is incredibly diverse and boasts almost 12,000 acres of parks and open space; over 120 park properties; 100s of miles of trails and access to fresh and saltwater shorelines. Major regional park assets such as the Evergreen State Fair Park, Kayak Point County Park, Lord Hill Regional Park, and the Centennial and Interurban Trail systems host local, regional, and national events that draw millions of visitors each year to Snohomish County.

About Snohomish County Conservation and Natural Resources

The Snohomish County Department of Conservation and Natural Resources (DCNR) includes the Division of Surface Water Management; the Division of Parks and Recreation; the Office of Energy and Sustainability and the Office of Agriculture. DCNR works in support of thriving communities; a clean and healthy environment to foster environmental stewardship; ensuring food security; supporting a green economy and strengthening communities by providing regional parks and infrastructure; protecting the region's water, air, land, and natural habitats; enhancing agriculture and recreation; and reducing flooding. <https://snohomishcountywa.gov/5758>.

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