

From: Libby Hudson
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 12:13 PM
To: Lee Walton
Subject: Strawberry Plant Shoreline Restoration Project
Importance: High

The purpose of this email is to update the Administration and Council on new information related to the Strawberry Plant Park Shoreline Restoration Project.

Yesterday was the State's hearing on the Department of Fish and Wildlife Hydraulic Permit Approval (HPA) for the Strawberry Plant Park Shoreline Restoration Project. Just prior to the hearing, in doing research to respond to a public information request, staff learned that there was an error in statements regarding the ranking of the shoreline condition for the shoreline in which the Strawberry Plant Park is located. This error is in the project description that this shoreline is rated in the City's Nearshore Assessment as "moderate/high impact" and ranks as the 186th worst reach out of 201 reaches on Bainbridge Island.

The correct statement should be that the shoreline containing the Strawberry Plant Park is rated "low/moderate impact" and ranks as 46th out of 201 reaches and after the restoration would likely rank as the 21st best. Despite the current ranking of the shoreline in which the Strawberry Plant Park is located, the removal of the shoreline modifications as proposed in the restoration project would result in an improved project ranked at 21 out of 201.

This error resulted from using the ranking of the adjacent shoreline to the east. As best as staff can determine, the mistake probably was a result of reading the wrong line in Table E-2 of the City's Nearshore Assessment. The Nearshore Assessment looked at the condition of 201 segments or "reaches" of shoreline along the Island, and assessed and scored the existing shoreline modifications affect on shore processes or ecological functions for each shoreline reach. The Strawberry Plant Park is located in Reach # 3140, but the shoreline score for the adjacent reach (Reach 3141) was listed in documents submitted for the restoration project.

Staff notified the State of this error yesterday morning prior to the hearing on the Department of Fish & Wildlife Hydraulic Permit Approval. Although the current ranking of the shoreline containing Strawberry Plant Park was incorrectly listed in project descriptions for submittals for funding, the Elliot Bay Trustee Council did their own analysis to determine whether to fund the Strawberry Shoreline Restoration project and it's our understanding that the determination to fund this project was not dependent upon the City's shoreline ranking. Randy Carmen, Environmental Specialist for the Department of Fish and Wildlife and member of the Elliot Bay Trustee Council, testified during the hearing yesterday to this issue. I asked that Mr. Carmen to provide an email regarding the issue.

I also contacted the other funder, Salmon Recovery Funding Board (SRFB) staff member Dave Caudill, and notified him of the error. He indicated that the current ranking listed in Nearshore Assessment for the shoreline as stated in the Strawberry Plant Park Shoreline Restoration project description was not the criteria used in the SRFB approval. SRFB approval is based on whether a project will benefit salmon and the criteria assess whether there will be an improvement to the existing conditions for salmon habitat. I have also requested that Mr. Caudill to provide an email regarding any SRFB concerns regarding this issue.

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From: John Kern [mailto:John.Kern@noaa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 1:41 PM
To: Libby Hudson
Subject: Strawberry Plant Park Restoration Project Ranking

Libby,

I understand that there is some confusion about how the Trustees ranked the Strawberry Plant Park restoration project. We did an independent evaluation using NRDA screening criteria based on the regulations. We did not consider other evaluations in our decision-making process. The project got the highest ranking of all the projects evaluated. The following factors were considered::

Cost: The cost to carry out the alternative (cost effectiveness)

Goals: The extent to which each alternative is expected to meet the trustees' goals and objectives in returning the injured natural resources and services to baseline and/or compensating for interim losses (nexus: resources and location)

Success: The likelihood of success of each alternative

Injury: The extent to which each alternative will prevent future injury as a result of the incident, and avoid collateral injury as a result of implementing the alternative (risk of causing harm)

Benefits: The extent to which each alternative benefits more than one natural resource and/or service

Public: The effect of each alternative on public health and safety

We also considered timing as an additional factor.

The project is a good NRDA restoration project because it will increase the amount of functional intertidal flat, marsh, and riparian habitat. The project location now has some relatively poor quality habitat and lots of fill that has no habitat function to the resources injured by the Wyckoff releases. Shoreline armoring such as is now present at Strawberry Plant Park is actually detrimental to salmon because it increases the predation rate on juvenile salmonids (Puget Sound Nearshore Partnership Tech Report 2006-06 "Juvenile Pacific Salmon in Puget Sound"). The marsh and intertidal habitats that will be restored, in contrast, provide a refuge to juvenile salmonids from predation as well as being good places to feed because the production of juvenile salmonid prey items is high on intertidal flats and marsh. The fact that the rest of the shoreline segment that includes Strawberry Plant Park has some relatively good habitat is a plus from the Trustees' perspective.

I hope that this is helpful in clarifying the Trustees' process in selecting the Strawberry Plant Park project.

John Kern

From: Carman, Randy E (DFW) [mailto:Randy.Carman@dfw.wa.gov]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 2:29 PM
To: Libby Hudson
Cc: John Kern; Rich Brooks
Subject: RE: Strawberry HPA

Libby –

I wanted to follow up regarding the discrepancy in ranking for the Strawberry Plant shoreline segment in the Bainbridge Island Nearshore Assessment.

As noted yesterday at our Appeals Hearing for the Hydraulic Project Approval, the correct ranking for this reach is 46 out of 201, not 186. As you are aware, I corrected this inaccuracy in my written testimony yesterday during my oral testimony before the Administrative Law Judge. During my oral testimony I further noted that this does not imply that the value of this site for restoration is diminished in my mind or in the opinion of the Elliott Bay Trustee Council. To be clear, the Trustee Council did not use rankings from the BI Nearshore Assessment to evaluate potential restoration projects on Bainbridge Island. Rather, the Council developed their own matrix of factors to use in evaluating potential restoration projects. In the Trustee ranking process, the Strawberry Plant project received the maximum score for all categories, and hence an overall maximum allowable score.

I want to ensure there is a clear understanding of the process used by the Trustees in evaluating potential restoration projects on Bainbridge Island. And, I believe it is important to know that the change in score for this shoreline reach in the context of the BI Assessment does not affect the Trustee's valuation of the site, or the merits of the site to serve as an important restoration project. The Strawberry Plant restoration project, when completed, will serve to significantly improve the shoreline conditions and functions for the myriad aquatic resources that utilize Eagle Harbor.

If you have any questions or want to discuss this project further, please give me a call.

Thanks for your continued interest and support of this project – Randy

Randy Carman
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From: LHudson@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us [mailto:LHudson@ci.bainbridge-isl.wa.us]
Sent: Wednesday, April 21, 2010 9:47 AM
To: Carman, Randy E (DFW)
Subject: Strawberry HPA
Importance: High

Hi Randy,

I left you a msg. Here is my contact info if you don't have. Give me a call when you get a chance. Thanks.

Libby Hudson, Division Manager