

Blue Heron Slough Conservation Bank Snohomish County, Washington

In 2006 Wildlands entered into a unique partnership with the Port of Everett to develop the Blue Heron Slough Conservation Bank ("Bank"). The Bank is located in the lower Snohomish River Estuary, near the mouth of the Snohomish River. The 344-acre site is located on land that was historically part of an extensive estuary complex that was supported by daily flooding from Possession Sound and intermittent flooding from the Snohomish River. In the 1900s, the area was cleared, diked, and drained for agriculture.

The ecological goal for this site is to restore 344 acres of estuarine complex by creating a mosaic of channels, marsh, mud flat, and riparian habitats which will be reconnected to riverine and tidal influence by breaching an existing dike in three locations. The proposed restoration activities on the Bank will increase the tidally-influenced acreage in the Snohomish River Estuary by approximately 13 percent. The Bank's restored habitats will provide habitat for, and assist in the recovery of the Puget Sound Chinook Salmon and bull trout. During the summer of 2008, six percent of the interior pilot channels were constructed and the channel berms were planted with native trees and shrubs.



Interior Pilot Channels



Site located in Snohomish Estuary

The Bank site was identified as one of the key locations for salmon recovery in the 2005 Snohomish River Basin Salmon Conservation Plan. The Bank was approved in 2008 by NMFS as a conservation bank with conservation credits for listed salmonids. Wildlands is currently engaged in the formal mitigation banking process with the Interagency Review Team ("IRT"), comprised of numerous agencies including the USACE, EPA, Washington Department of Ecology, and various local agencies to obtain freshwater and estuarine wetland mitigation credits on the site.