

Headache Creek

in Vancouver at the northwest part of Bagley Community Park; part of the Burnt Bridge Creek watershed



AFTER

In the past, Headache Creek, along with adjoining wetlands, was channeled to provide additional farmland. The land also had unrestricted grazing, which severely impacted the site. The site was inundated with non-native vegetation such as Himalayan blackberry, English hawthorn, poplars, non-native maples and reed canary grass. The project eradicated all non-native plant species and replanted the area with flora indigenous to the area.

A portion of the wetland was deepened to allow for more water retention. The channeled stream was altered to create a meandering, natural pattern. A large number of woody plant species were used to create cover and assist in eliminating reed canary grass by shading the species out. Those areas with reed canary grass were planted with Oregon ash and hardhack. Cattails and bulrush were planted in the existing pond and seeds of wapato, bulrush, eleocharis and beggars-tick were also planted. The higher, drier sites were planted with cascara, Douglas fir and big leaf maples.



BEFORE

Survival rates for red osier dogwood and ninebark have been low for some unknown reason. Blackberry removal changed the hydrology of the area. At least one area is now lower than the creek bed and has apparently become a permanent wetland. Other areas along the stream no longer receive the water flow they had previously. Due to disturbance and removal of cover, these former wet areas turn hard when it had been dry for any period of time. Public access to the site has been a problem with destruction of plantings, littering and abandonment of vehicles. Access to the site has been reduced to help alleviate problems until plants become better established.

Timeline and tasks

August -

October 1994 Removal of blackberries
and other non-natives

September 1994 -

January 1995 Site re-vegetation

Monthly, as

needed to 1998 Blackberry removal

Present to 2000 Monitoring

Benefits

Restoration of the site improved water quality, increased detention capacity of the wetland area, increased plant diversity, enhanced wildlife habitat and provided passive recreation and educational opportunities.

Budget

Proposed – \$49,760

Actual – \$50,488

Metro/US Fish and Wildlife grant award – \$10,000

Helpful hints – what worked, what didn't

- Have a clear idea of exactly what you want to achieve.
- Avoid generalities such as improve habitat, remove blackberries, etc.
- Expect delays and allow for them.
- If an educational component is desired, be sure the school group is committed to the project.
- Make certain that the elevations are correctly constructed, as elevation is the key to wetland restoration success.

Partners

NatureScaping SW Washington

Vancouver Audubon

Sierra Club

Master Gardeners

Cub Scout Pack 435

Bagley Downs Neighborhood Association

Shumway Junior High School

Evergreen High School

Columbia River High School

AmeriCorps

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