

La Center Wetlands Floodplain Restoration Project

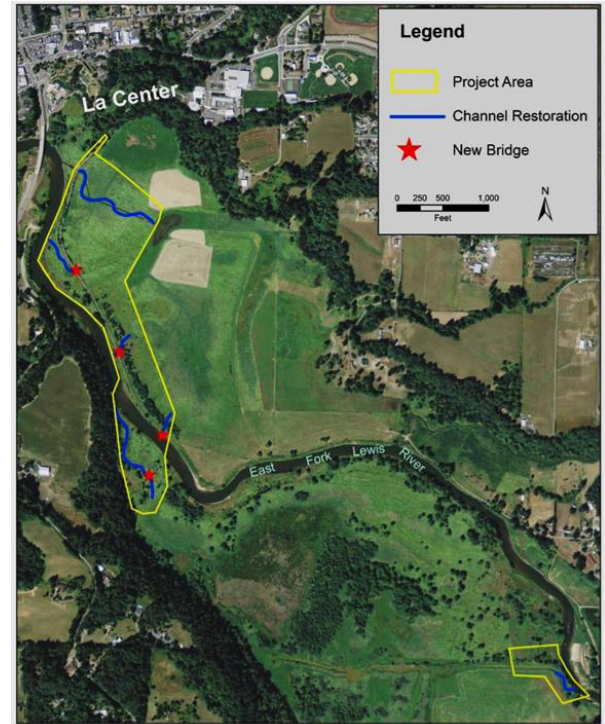
Restoring Fish & Wildlife Habitat of the East Fork Lewis River Floodplains

The **Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership**, a non-profit National Estuary Program, is coordinating a habitat restoration project in the La Center wetlands during September-October 2015. The project will consist of the following elements:

- Creating *four new connection points* between the East Fork Lewis River and the La Center wetlands.
- Installing *four new pedestrian/equestrian bridges* over the new connections.
- Creating *new channels* from the connections into the wetlands.
- Removing an existing weir and culvert.
- Planting *more than 60,000 trees and shrubs* across thirty acres.
- Engaging *La Center students and community members* in field trips and community events to plant more than 4,000 trees and shrubs along Breeze Creek.

Project Purpose:

The project will restore fish and wildlife habitat along the East Fork Lewis River just upstream of La Center. The Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership is a non-profit that focuses on protecting and improving fish and wildlife habitat and water quality in the lower Columbia River, from Bonneville Dam down to the ocean, including the tidally influenced tributaries. Clark County acquired a great deal of high quality floodplain wetland habitat along the East Fork Lewis River through its Legacy Lands program, with the purpose of conserving natural resources as well as providing recreational access to the public. Because the Estuary Partnership and County both have goals for habitat protection in these areas, and because the East Fork Lewis River is a high priority river for salmon and steelhead, the two organizations formed a partnership that resulted in this project.



Project map



Channel habitat to be enhanced by adding logs and repairing banks.

What to Expect:

Trail Closed Through October:

The La Center Bottoms trail will be temporarily closed at the Breeze Creek Bridge to all uses during September and October this year. Signs will be posted at the trailhead and in other locations. As part of the project, three new bridges will be installed along the trail and sections of it improved to ensure the trail continues to be accessible for many years.

Heavy Equipment in the Wetlands:

Contractors from Aquatic Contracting and Kynsi Construction will construct the project. They will be using large excavators, dump trucks and other machinery to move dirt, create channels, add logs and install the trail bridges. This equipment will be readily visible from various

viewpoints. Contractor staff, as well as staff from the Estuary Partnership and the Project Engineer (Inter-Fluve, Inc.) will be on site during days the construction is ongoing and will lead occasional project tours for permitting and funding agencies.

Fencing, Safety Signage, and Heavy Equipment Mobilization at the La Center Schools:

The contractors will move large equipment to the site through a road that is accessed through the La Center School Elementary and Middle School campus. Prior to any equipment mobilization, the contractors will install safety fencing and signage on certain areas of the school grounds – primarily the maintenance garage and the fenced field at the rear of the school. Large equipment will be unloaded either before or after school hours and driven down to the site. The La Center School District, La Center Elementary School, La Center Middle School, the Estuary Partnership, and the contractors have prioritized student and staff safety in developing an access plan to the site that minimizes any impact on the schools or students. As the project moves forward, additional staging work may take place on school grounds.

Project Funding:

Funding for the project comes from the Bonneville Power Administration as part of their Fish and Wildlife Program, which particularly emphasizes restoring floodplain habitat for threatened and endangered juvenile salmon species. Additional funding comes from the Washington Department of Ecology as part of the support the Environmental Protection Agency provides to Washington State to implement its state nonpoint source management program developed under the Clean Water Act. This “319 funding” will support the student and community involvement and riparian plantings across the site.



Site 43B culvert to be replaced with bridge.

Project Partners:

- Lower Columbia Estuary Partnership
- Clark County
- Washington Department of Ecology
- Bonneville Power Administration
- Lower Columbia Fish Recovery Board

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