

**Pilot Point**  
**Kitsap County Parks & Recreation**

**Stewardship Plan**

**Salmon**  
**Funding Recovery Board**  
**RCO-SRFB/PSAR # 07-1766**



## **1. Introduction**

**The Pilot Point Stewardship Plan identifies and defines the maintenance and monitoring planned for the acquired site until 2020.**

### **a. Background**

Pilot Point is a 34.5-acre parcel located in the northern portion of the Kitsap Peninsula. The site with 1,100 feet of shoreline, is along the eastern shoreline of the Puget Sound. The property has forested intact uplands with a perennial stream and four acres of tidelands with native eelgrass beds. Pilot Point is a key feature of the eastern portion of Kitsap County's marine riparian habitat.

Kitsap County Parks and Recreation in partnership with The Trust for Public Lands (TPL) secured the site through matching grants from the Coastal Estuarine Land Conservation Program (CELCP) / USFW Grant administered through Washington Department of Ecology. Additionally acquisition match grant funds were secured through the Recreation and Conservation Office (RCO) under the Salmon Recovery Funding Board PSAR funds. The RCO project number is SRFB / PSAR 07-1766A (also referenced as PSNER 07-1029). The parcel is known as Government Lot 3 Section 27, Township 28N, Range 2 East; Tax Account No. 272802-4-003-2000; Latitude/Longitude 44.444N,-108.3333W. Pilot Point lies within the West Sound Watershed formally called Water Resource Inventory Area (WRIA) 15.

### **b. Land Use History**

Pilot Point is a marine riparian forest with intact habitat from upland to intertidal zones. It was privately owned and is one of the last large undeveloped uplands and shoreline areas in Kitsap County. The site has had minimal disturbance. The ecological function with maritime-forested riparian habitat with a healthy nearshore environment has minimal surface flow that has preserved the stream, wetland and beach natural processes. Protected salmon species are found at or near the site which have benefited from the natural 1,100 foot stretch of shoreline along the property. The site has no bulkhead or beach armoring.

## **2. Purpose-Landowner's goals**

The acquisition of the Pilot Point site provides the opportunity for proactive habitat protection of shoreline identified as the highest quality salmonid refugia for Kitsap County. The acquisition purpose is to maintain the conservation values for which the land was protected. Kitsap County Parks and Recreation will be responsible for stewardship of the entire property and manage the site to sustain the naturally occurring functions. Monitoring of the nearshore and intertidal areas at the property will

be preserved and protected to retain the current processes where the large eelgrass meadow provides a staging area for salmon smolts that are moving into the marine environments. Retain the natural site continues to provide a haven for migratory shorebirds and shellfish. Kitsap County will protect the existing feeding grounds for endangered species including several salmon species, brown pelicans and orca whales. Essential to this marine environment is the protection of the coastal bluffs and associated wetlands which facilitate groundwater seepage for an important cycling of nutrients into the nearshore and intertidal zones. Protection of the high quality estuarine, riverine and palustrine wetlands are a priority. The Hansville Greenway Association in partnership with Kitsap County Parks and Recreation creates low-impact compatible preservation corridors throughout the northern Kitsap Peninsula which results in the provision of a wider habitat range for birds, mammals and amphibians by preserving natural spaces. The goal of the creation of the parks' Hansville Greenway Trail system is to provide a public accessible non-motorized trail connecting Hood Canal to Puget Sound. Pilot Point provides a trail connection on the Sound.

### **3. Relationship to other actions and plans**

Acquisition of Pilot Point provided the opportunity for proactive habitat protection of the shoreline identified in the 2003 Kitsap Salmonid Refugia Report by May and Peterson ([http://www.kitsapgov.com/dcd/nr/refugia/executive\\_summary.pdf](http://www.kitsapgov.com/dcd/nr/refugia/executive_summary.pdf)).

The site links the interconnecting low-impact recreational trails and corridors which are identified as the highest priority in the 2006 Kitsap County Parks and Recreation Comprehensive Plan.

Pilot Point is a key feature of the eastern portion of Kitsap County's marine riparian habitat. Securing the site fulfills the WRIA's goal to preserve a natural shoreline, prevent shoreline armoring and protect wetland degradation and pollution as identified as a high priority habitat area in WRIA-15's Landscape Assessment and Conservation Prioritization of Freshwater and Nearshore Salmonid Habitat in Kitsap County.

The Puget Sound Shared Strategy Regional Nearshore Chapter (PSSRP) recommends protection of the site drift cell to "maintain the structure and improve the function of this shoreline as it is critical for the outmigration of many populations of Chinook..and..Hood Canal summer chum".

The site is supported for protection and preservation by the Alliance for Puget Sound, The Nature Conservancy and People for Puget Sound

### **4. Current conditions (i.e. post project completion)**

#### **A. Fish use and habitat**

Chinook Salmon (*Oncorhynchus tshawytscha*); Bull Trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*); Hood Canal Summer-run Chum Salmon (*Oncorhynchus keta*); and Puget Sound

Steelhead (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) are all found at or near Pilot Point therefore protected through acquisition. The site, with high quality upland habitat, creates a link for preservation from the forest to deepwater. The nearshore habitat and four acres of eelgrass beds contribute to various salmonid life cycle stages. These beds are especially important to foster juvenile salmon growth and survival for out-migration. The forested shoreline habitat provides shade and water temperature regulation for salmon that migrate and return on pathways close to the shoreline.

The existing marine shoreline has an abundance of eelgrass which is used for refuge, rearing and provides food source for juvenile salmon. The beds are continuous along the length of the property and are approximately four-acres in size.

## **B. Riparian**

The site has high-quality nearshore, bluff, forest and riparian habitats. Pilot Point has minimal invasive or exotic species. The un-disturbed native riparian area supports habitat and wildlife protection. The site supports migratory and resident bird and waterfowl usage. Bald eagles are commonly seen feeding and roosting on the property in the mature trees that scatter the upland interior and stream corridor. Adjacent landowners state the nest is just to the south of the parcel. Preservation of this habitat maintains the eagles' habitat. The attached photograph at the end of this report shows two eagles who landed in the eelgrass beds and fed together.

## **C. Relationship to other actions or plans**

The Puget Sound Partnership and Washington Department of Natural Resources have identified waters off the eastern shoreline of Kitsap Peninsula as a priority area for marine conservation.

The North American Waterfowl Management Plan, the Audubon Society, and the Pacific Coast Joint Venture Strategic Plan recommend the area be protected for the critical avian habitat it provides.

The Water Resource Inventory Areas (WRIA 15) Watershed Plan identifies the area for salmonid protection and recovery and as a high priority for habitat retention.

The WRIA 15 Landscape Assessment and Conservation Prioritization of Freshwater and Nearshore Salmonid Habitat in Kitsap County identified the area as a high priority habitat area. WRIA's goals are to preserve shoreline, prevent shoreline armoring, accompanying sediment alternations, and wetland degradation as well as pollution that frequently accompany residential development.

The Washington State Conservation Commission's Salmon Habitat Limiting Factors for WRIA 15 identifies the area as important habitat for five salmonid species, at least two of which are listed as federally endangered species.

The 1,100 foot stretch of shoreline along the property is one of the last privately held large undeveloped shoreline areas in Kitsap County. The Kitsap County Comprehensive Plan identifies the project site necessary for habitat and wildlife protection and lists water access acquisition as the highest priority.

#### **D. Soils and soil stability**

Pilot Point supports over 30 acres of a unique coastal bluff forest community that is becoming rare in western Washington. The coastal bluffs above the property shoreline support a mixed forest dominated by alder and bigleaf maple. The branches of these trees shade a portion of the intertidal zone, and extend out over the water at average and higher high tides.

#### **E. Upland**

There is no bulkhead or beach armoring and the site has intact habitat from upland to intertidal zones. The uplands support a variety of wetlands, forested understory, vegetated coastal bluffs and serves as a marine forested riparian habitat. The site is undeveloped and supports maintenance of naturally occurring sediment deposition and erosion processes.

#### **F. Public Use**

The Hansville Greenway Association and Kitsap County Parks and Recreation currently provide outreach and education to the public. On the existing portions of the Hansville Greenway Trail system, which connects to Pilot Point, the Association erected kiosks with public information regarding their efforts and the habitat along its trails. Currently along the trail, volunteers annually walk the trails with local 5<sup>th</sup> grade classes as a part of their science curriculum. Additionally, the Association has plant lists, animal lists and other interpretive materials on their website that are specific to the northern Kitsap Peninsula region.

#### **G. Cultural and Historic resources**

On July 30, 2008 Cultural Resources Consultants, INC. (CRC) completed a review in accordance with Section 106 of the National Historical Preservation Act (NHPA). The assessment [CRC Project #0805J / Technical Report #351] included a review of relevant background literature and maps, review of archaeological and historic site records on file at the Washington Department of Archaeology and Historic Preservation (DAHP), correspondence with cultural resources personnel of affected Tribes, and an archaeological reconnaissance survey.

No recorded archaeological or historic sites are present within the Pilot Point site or immediate vicinity. Background research identified ethnographically recorded place names in the vicinity of the project, but survey did not identify any potentially significant cultural materials. No historic properties were identified in the APE. The project is not anticipated to affect any archaeological or historic sites and no further cultural resources investigations were recommended.

## **5. Desired conditions**

Pilot Point is a conservation area that contributes to the maintenance of ecological diversity and prevention of habitat degradation in Puget Sound. Retention of the vitality of this identified conservation area is the targeted condition outcome. The monitoring of the upland and shoreline portions of the site is designed to maintain the ecological processes supported by the property and the larger regional goals.

### **A. Fish use and habitat**

Further study of the large, intact eelgrass beds could provide more information on the presence of forage fish and salmonid species use in this area. Protection of the shoreline provides for retention of the structure and improves the function which is critical for the out-migration of many populations of Chinook within the Puget Sound. The site is used by out-migrating Hood Canal summer chum (PSSRP Nearshore Appendix E). High quality estuarine intertidal emergent wetlands (native species of eelgrass beds) are present in the shallow intertidal flats. They serve as high productive habitat nursery areas for numerous species, including federal and state-listed juvenile salmon species, Dungeness crab and other species.

Protection of the shoreline vegetation will contribute to the retention of the current nutrient and detritus which is sustaining the food web that salmon depend on. Retaining the conifer and deciduous vegetation along the 1,100 feet of shoreline will retain the excellent existing condition.

Preserving the eelgrass beds will continue to provide existing rearing grounds for forage fish which is a vital food source for multiple life stages of Puget Sound salmon.

### **B. Riparian**

Protection of the nearshore and intertidal areas at and adjacent to the property will continue to support a large eelgrass meadow and retain the site as a haven for migratory shorebirds. This type of marine riparian forest is very rare in the Western Washington shoreline due to extensive urban development therefore it is vitally important to preserve and protect.

### **C. Hydrologic**

The hydrology of Pilot Point is unique to Puget Sound because water sources are from precipitation and groundwater only; there is no glacial melt to feed the stream on the property.

The site has a significant effect on sustaining the drift cell in the area which is identified as central Puget Sound drift cell #2. It is not armored or overly constrained as compared to those to the north and the south. Protecting drift cell function retains the

naturally occurring sediment deposition and erosion process naturally occurring at the site. The streams onsite are void of nutrient loading or potential loading of contaminants and toxicants as the site does not receive storm water runoff from urban development.

#### **D. Soils and soil stability**

There are a number of high quality estuarine, riverine, and palustrine wetlands on the site. Steep-sided narrow riverines on the uplands are associated with the perennial streams on site. Palustrine wetlands on site are also associated with the steep ravines and are slope hydrogeomorphic (HGM) type wetlands associated with hillside seep. Some shallow-seated landslides have occurred in some of these areas where the overlying soils had sloughed off at the contact with the underlying glaciolacustrine silt and clay deposits.

#### **E. Upland**

Pilot Point contains a diverse mosaic of seep and intertidal wetlands, vegetated coastal bluffs, shoreline habitat and marine forested riparian habitat. The relationship of the pristine upland portions of Pilot Point can be a reference site for restoration along the east Kitsap County shoreline as the upland provides freshwater inflows from upland streams and the upland water retention and percolation supports ecological functions.

#### **F. Public Use**

Pilot Point Park is within two miles of the Kitsap County Parks and Recreation Point-No-Point natural area and the Norwegian Point shoreline public park with five hundred linear feet of waterfront and tidal lands with eelgrass meadows. Pilot Point will be conserved for public enjoyment as a natural conservation area.

This site links to the two waterfront park sites and also serves as a Puget Sound link to the Hansville Greenway upland trail to the Hood Canal. The Pilot Point site is an integral part of the inter-connected Hansville Greenway Trail system. Monitoring activities with assistance from the Kitsap County Parks Stewardship program and the Hansville Greenway Association will be used for numerous public education programs about the benefits of protecting Puget Sound and its marine and nearshore habitats.

Pilot Point is situated along the Cascadia Marine Trail, a Washington Water Trails Association waterway and is publicized as a resting point along this well traveled water route.

#### **G. Cultural and Historic resources**

Refer to Cultural Resources Consultants Technical Report #351. No further cultural resources investigations were recommended.

## 6. Maintenance and Monitoring schedule

### A. Planned activities (by season and year)

Maintenance & Monitoring Activities	Timing	Lead
Assess fish usage / nearshore and intertidal areas	Once	Lead Entity WRIA 15 as funds are available
Monitor ecosystem health	Every five years	Lead Entity WRIA 15
Periodic documentation of bird / waterfowl usage & bald eagle usage	Annually / seasonally	WRIA 15 and Park Stewardship Coordinator working in partnership with the Audubon Society
Assess benefits for Hood Canal summer chum / other salmonids	Once	Lead Entity WRIA 15 as funds are available
Work with environmental educators to provide study, data collection/assessment opportunities	On-going when agreements / work study can be approved	Lead Entity WRIA 15 in partnership with Kitsap County Parks and Recreation Administration and local Universities
Maintenance Activities: <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <li>▪ Site Stewardship</li> <li>▪ Photo Documentation</li> <li>▪ Site Visits</li> <li>▪ Invasive Species Control</li>   <li>▪ Flora, Fauna &amp; Tree Inventory</li>   <li>▪ Tideland Property Survey</li> </ul>	Semi-annually  Annually or as needed  Quarterly  As-need   On 10-year timeframe  Once	Kitsap County Parks Stewardship Coordinator Kitsap County Pk Superintendent Kitsap County Pk Superintendent Kitsap County Parks Stewardship Group; Kitsap County WSU Noxious Weed Control Coordinator; Boy Scout Eagle Scout Project & Haysville Greenway Association Kitsap County Parks Contract Services Kitsap County Parks Contract Services

## **B. Effectiveness review**

Securing Pilot Point through acquisition was the most essential goal that retains and protects an intact upland and nearshore undeveloped natural site. Funding through the RCO SRFB/PSAR program with match grant funds through the CELCP/USFW administered by the Department of Ecology and the generous private match from the Trust for Public Lands allowed for this vital purchase to come to fruition. The lead monitoring will be through the WRIA 15 with site maintenance and stewardship through the Kitsap County Parks and Recreation Department. The public acquisition maintains the integrity of 1100 feet of saltwater shoreline and protects the parcel's high quality of wetlands and shoreline features thus minimizing maintenance needs and sustaining nearshore functions.

## **7. Adaptive management Plan**

The Adaptive Management Plan for the Puget Sound Salmon Recovery Plan includes this site.

## **8. Roles, Responsibilities, and Funding**

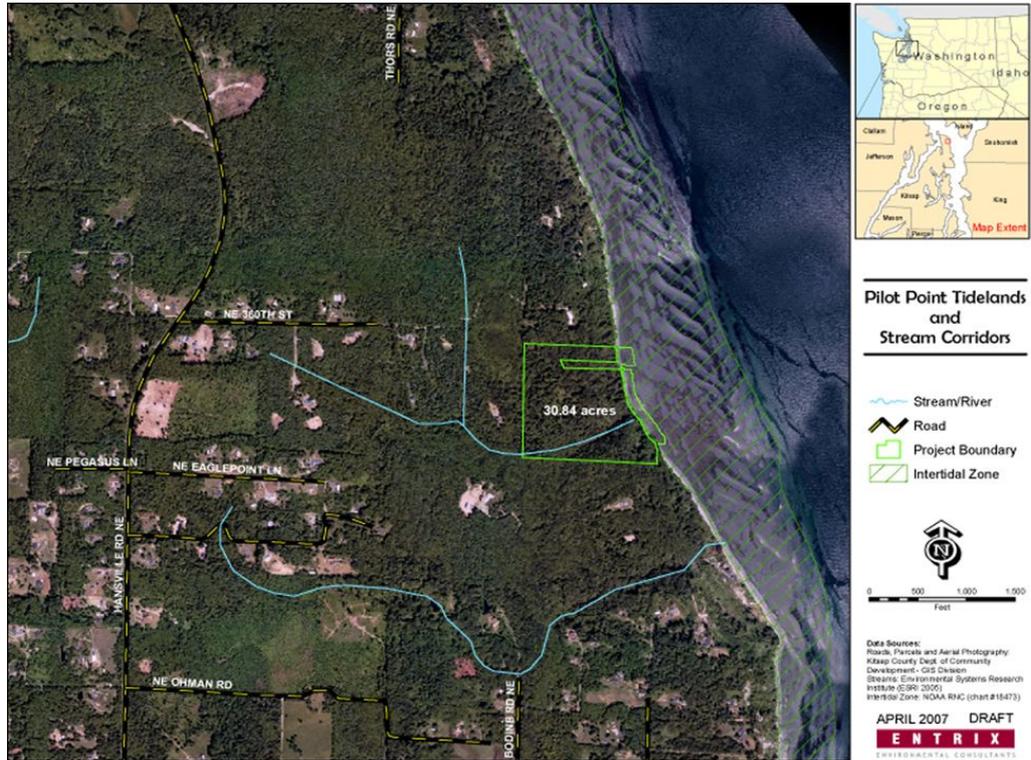
Kitsap County Parks and Recreation is responsible for the protection, preservation and stewardship of entire property. East Kitsap WRIA 15 has extensive experience monitoring the conservation values for which the land was protected. Working with a commitment from East Kitsap WRIA 15 and in cooperation with other conservation management planners monitoring will be supported.

## **9. Constraints and uncertainties**

Pilot Point has one private land in-holding. Concerns for protection from and to private property continue. A cooperative working relationship with the private property will continue to be a high priority for management of the site.

10. Attachments:

Vicinity map



Kitsap County Parks and Rec; Pilot Point Fee Acquisition (#07-1766)  
Attachment #9, PilotPoint\_07-1766\_VicinityParcelMap

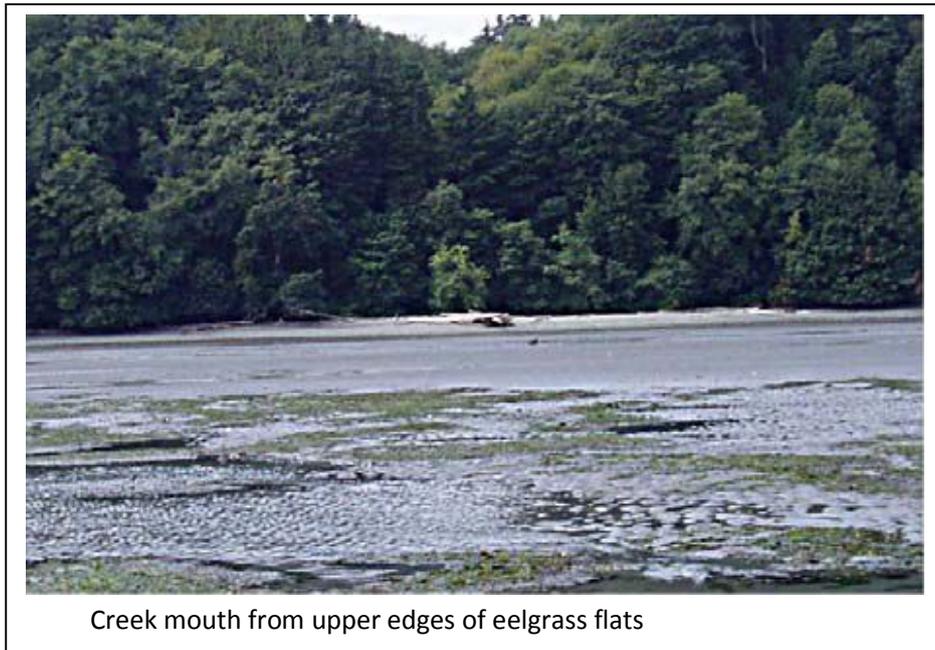
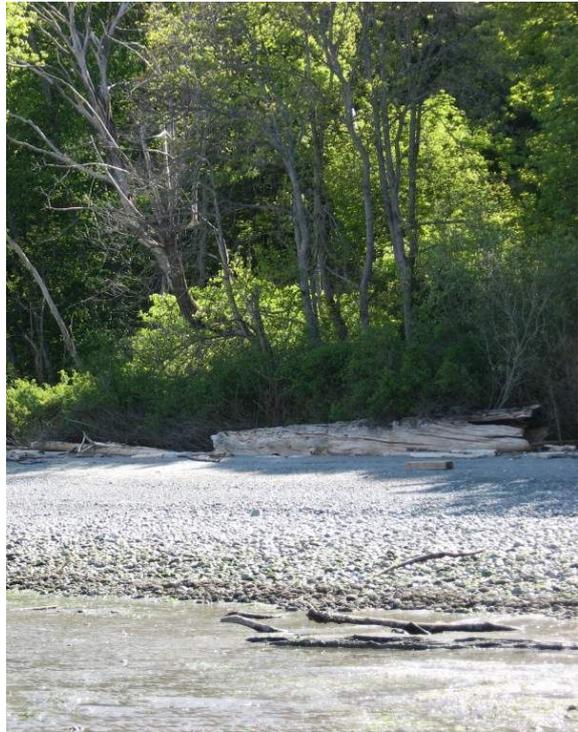


Hood Canal to Puget Sound Hansville Greenway Trail

**ii. Photos**



Intact habitat from upland to nearshore



Creek mouth from upper edges of eelgrass flats

### iii. Permit requirements

Ground disturbing activities are not anticipated as the site will be preserved in its existing condition. However, if in-stream or shoreline emergency work is necessary, development permits from Kitsap County, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Corp of Engineers and other required permits will be obtained for restoration.

### iv. Monitoring protocols

Monitoring efforts are designed to maintain the ecological processes supported by the property and the larger regional goals which will secure the protection of the site in perpetuity for the following main objectives:

- Assess fish usage of the nearshore and intertidal areas.
- Monitor ecosystem health for functionality, specifically shoreline and riparian buffer vegetation and eelgrass beds.
- Continue periodic documentation of migratory and resident bird and waterfowl usage
- Assess benefits the property provides for bald eagles nesting on adjacent properties.
- Assess benefits the property provides for Hood Canal summer chum salmon and other salmonids using the area.
- Work with environmental educators to provide study and data collection/assessment opportunities.

