

DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE RCW 197-11-970

Project Name: Parcel 14 Grading and Habitat Restoration Projects

Description of proposal: The proposal consists of two primary projects being developed simultaneously to reduce costs. The first project is the Parcel 14 Grading & Drainage District 23 (DD 23) Ditch Alterations Project (Grading Project) proposed on the eastern portion of the site. The second project is the Lower Wapato Advanced Mitigation Project (Habitat Restoration Project) which is proposed on the western portion of the site. The Habitat Restoration Project will provide advance mitigation for future Port development projects.

The Grading Project consists of grading a large vacant land area owned by the Port of Tacoma in preparation for marketing and future development by others. In addition, the Grading Project will include the construction of a culvert across DD 23 Ditch and fill of 8th Street East road-side ditches to provide site access at 8th Street East, and the excavation of a stormwater storage basin on the left bank of DD 23 Ditch to provide additional stormwater storage capacity in the ditch for future development of the property.

The Habitat Restoration Project consists of two primary habitat elements: 1) replacement of twin 45-foot-long, 50-inch-diameter culverts carrying Wapato Creek under 12th Street East with a single, 80-foot-long, 19-foot-wide bottomless culvert; and 2) relocation of Wapato Creek from a ditch into a longer, sinuous stream channel (net gain of 1,097 linear feet of stream channel) and mud flat area (2.4 acres) with a variety of associated estuarine/wetland habitats (5.15 acres of palustrine forested wetlands and 2.23 acres of estuarine emergent wetland), and a forested upland buffer (7.22 acres) to provide an increase in the quantity and quality of fish and wildlife habitat and flood control capacity. The Habitat Restoration Project is anticipated to yield approximately 245 advance mitigation credits in the form of Discounted Service Acre Years (DSAYs). Refer to the attached Table 1 for a summary of the change in habitat areas and associated change in mitigation credits (DSAYs) from the existing site conditions to the designed/constructed habitat conditions. Table 1 is subject to change dependent on agency review and negotiations.

Proponent: Port of Tacoma

Location of proposal, including street address, if any: The project will be generally located at 1131 E Alexander Avenue, 5201 8th Street E, and 5002 Marshall Avenue, Tacoma, WA 98421, Pierce County. It is situated in Section 01 of Township 20N, Range 03E of the Willamette Meridian.

Lead agency: Port of Tacoma

The lead agency for this proposal has determined that the project does not have a probable significant adverse impact on the environment. An environmental impact statement (EIS) is not required under Revised Code of Washington (RCW) 43.21C.030(2)(c). This decision was made after review of a completed environmental checklist and other information on file with the lead agency. Additional project and/or State Environmental Policy Act (SEPA) information is available upon request at the Port of Tacoma's Administrative building, located at One Sitcum Plaza, Tacoma, WA 98421 or at the Port's website at <http://www.portoftacoma.com/sepa>.

Comments and Request for Reconsideration: This determination of nonsignificance (DNS) is issued under Chapter 197-11-340(2) Washington Administrative Code (WAC). Pursuant to Port policy, all interested parties shall have 14 calendar days to comment on the proposed SEPA threshold determination. Only those who commented within the 14 day comment period shall have standing to file a Request for Reconsideration. Any challenge to a SEPA threshold determination shall be initiated by filing a Request for Reconsideration with the Responsible Official or designee no later than seven calendar days following the end of the 14 day comment period for the SEPA determination. The lead agency will not act on this proposal for 14 days from the start date of the comment period described below. Comments shall be submitted to the Port of Tacoma, Environmental Programs, C/O Matoya Darby at One Sitcum Plaza, Tacoma, WA 98421 or at the Port's website at <http://www.portoftacoma.com/sepa>.

Responsible official: Sue Mauermann

Position/title: Chief Facilities Development Officer

Signature:  **Date:** 1/3/2013

Comment Start Date: 1/5/2013

Comment End Date: 1/18/2013

Request for Reconsideration End Date: 1/25/2013

Table 1. Advance Mitigation (Change in habitat areas and associated change in DSAYS)

EXISTING		PROPOSED FUTURE HABITAT TYPES (Acres)								Acres Totals
HABITAT	Acres	Fully Functioning Channel	*Fully Functioning Mudflat	Wetland Emergent	Wetland Forested	Riparian Forested	Upland Fill	Upland Fill	Acres Totals	
Upland Invasive	11.17	0.96	0.13	1.66	4.19	4.17	0.06	0.06	11.17	
Upland Forested	0.67	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.67	NA	NA	0.67	
Riparian Invasive	4.80	0.45	0.65	0.57	0.96	2.08	0.09	0.09	4.80	
Riparian Forested	0.28	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.28	NA	NA	0.28	
Baseline Channel	0.72	0.15	0.07	0.00	0.00	0.24	0.27	0.27	0.73	
Riprap channel	0.03	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.01	0.03	0.03	0.03	
Ditch	1.01	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	1.01	1.01	1.01	
Total Area	18.68	1.560	0.845	2.225	5.150	7.446	1.458	1.458	18.68	

DSAY Yield Matrix

EXISTING HABITAT	RESULTING DSAY INCREASE FOR PROPOSED FUTURE HABITAT TYPES								DSAY Totals
	Fully Functioning Channel	Fully Functioning Mudflat	Wetland Emergent	Wetland Forested	Riparian Forested	Upland Fill	Upland Fill	DSAY Totals	
Upland Invasive	11.04	2.99	36.29	62.07	38.79	-0.18	-0.18	150.99	
Upland Forested	NA	NA	NA	NA	6.23	NA	NA	6.23	
Riparian Invasive	5.18	14.95	12.46	14.22	19.35	-0.27	-0.27	65.88	
Riparian Forested	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.00	NA	NA	0.00	
Baseline Channel	0.99	0.46	NA	NA	1.05	-1.85	0.64	0.64	
Riprap channel	NA	NA	NA	NA	0.08	-0.10	-0.03	-0.03	
Ditch	NA	NA	NA	NA	NA	-3.43	-3.43	-3.43	
Total Habitat DSAYS	17.20	18.40	48.75	76.29	65.49	-5.84	-5.84	220.29	
Habitat DSAYS per acre of wetland (220.29 DSAYS / 9.78 wetland acres) = 22.5 DSAYS per wetland acre									
Additional DSAYS generated from culvert replacement ¹ 25									
Total DSAYS generated from Lower Wapato Combined Habitat Project 245.29									

¹ Culvert replacement DSAYS are in addition to habitat DSAYS, and culvert DSAYS will not be included in a conversion to wetland acres.