

Harper Estuary Restoration Project Phase 1: Addendum (SEPA #16-010)

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife

The Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) received the following comments during the SEPA addendum review period from March 17 – April 1, 2016:

While I do not have a small trailerable boat, some do in our community of Harper. The Addendum 16010 to DNS 15-056 Harper Estuary Restoration Project appears to no longer have a small trailerable boat access. It appears that small hand launched craft , kayaks and canoes etc could use the proposed stairs, via a cross walk from Harper Park.

This concern of having a small boat launch so close to Southworth Drive was expressed to me early on in this project and I was in favor a small launch elsewhere. Is it feasible to have a small trailerable boat launch at the east end of the 120 foot proposed bridge across the estuary?

While this design will most likely satisfy the purist for total estuary restoration I am sure that smaller trailer boats users will have an opposition to this plan.

I would like to express my concern about learning that the Harper boat launch is slated to be removed. As a local resident that is disabled with Parkinson's it is an area that gives those of with disabilities relatively easy access to the beach without having to try and climb down the rocks and risking injury. I would like to know what is going to be done to keep this beach open for us that rely on the ADA and the access it provides.

The estuary project is a valuable and important improvement to Puget Sound, one the we support 100%. However, the addendum removes an important traditional use of the project area; the small boat access. This is used daily to launch small boats, kayaks, dinghy's, and rafts. It is an important launching point for fisherman, campers to Blake Island, and general small craft use. The community made this use clear at the beginning of the project, and it was promised during the design process.

I would volunteer to talk with the design team to make sure they understand the criteria. This does not need to be "over thought". It can be relatively modest; a firm gravel bank to a tide level of 6' would suffice. Improvements do not need to be made to Harper park parking.

In any event, someone needs to rethink the construction of stairs. No matter the rise and run, these will become a tremendous liability to everyone involved as they become slippery. Carrying small boats down stairways is not a great idea.

I have attached a solution, understanding that I have no knowledge of the environmental criteria which needs to be followed. That has to be a solution that would provide for the access. I do not have access to the full design concept.

P. S. To my knowledge, the community to date has never seen a conceptual plan of the proposed design. This does not seem to go along with the "inclusive" design process advertised.

This is not acceptable!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!!

We live here... the launch is used for more than small boats. It is used for families with children who run, wade and play, for pet owners whose pets run and play, by kayakers, rubber boater, first time boat owners, fisher men and families, photographers, and me I throw rocks when I'm angry and need some kind of relief, people from all over not just local residents. I realize that I will still be able to throw rocks but I'm 70 and stairs simply will not work, neither will removal of the boat launch recreation area. Where in the heck are your brains? I would rather you leave well enough alone, go away and take your money with you to ruin another community. We didn't need you before and we certainly don't need you now. Nature has long ago adapted to the existing situation leave it alone. We, citizens, of Kitsap county have seen too many small out of the way entrances to the Sound deleted for "our safety" concerns for public safety, required maintenance, traffic. There has NEVER been a concern for these items. Why now? Because you have some money burning in your pockets???? I am so angry over this. I supported you up to this point but will now fight tooth and nail over the launch. If you can't fix it leave it alone. I guarantee you that I am not alone and that this issue will not go away.

We live in the neighborhood and have supported the project throughout its development. The deletion of a boat access is unacceptable. This is a critical part of the nature and normal use of this area. We will not accept this design and intend to do all we can to stop the project until it is resolved.

Hello, I am a resident of the community (live up at the top of Scatterwood Lane). I understand the current boat launch will be discontinued. I agree with this decision. It will make the estuary a more natural area for fish and wildlife and we don't have enough of those areas. Currently, I see trash left by the boaters, stirring up of the sediment, and cars stuck when the tide comes in and the boaters had not thought through where they parked. Just wanted to give you some positive feedback on this decision.

Relating to SEPA No 16010 , The Addendum 16010 to DNS 15-056 Harper Estuary Restoration Project

I respectfully request that the Comment deadline be extended beyond 04/01/2016.

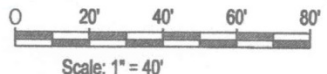
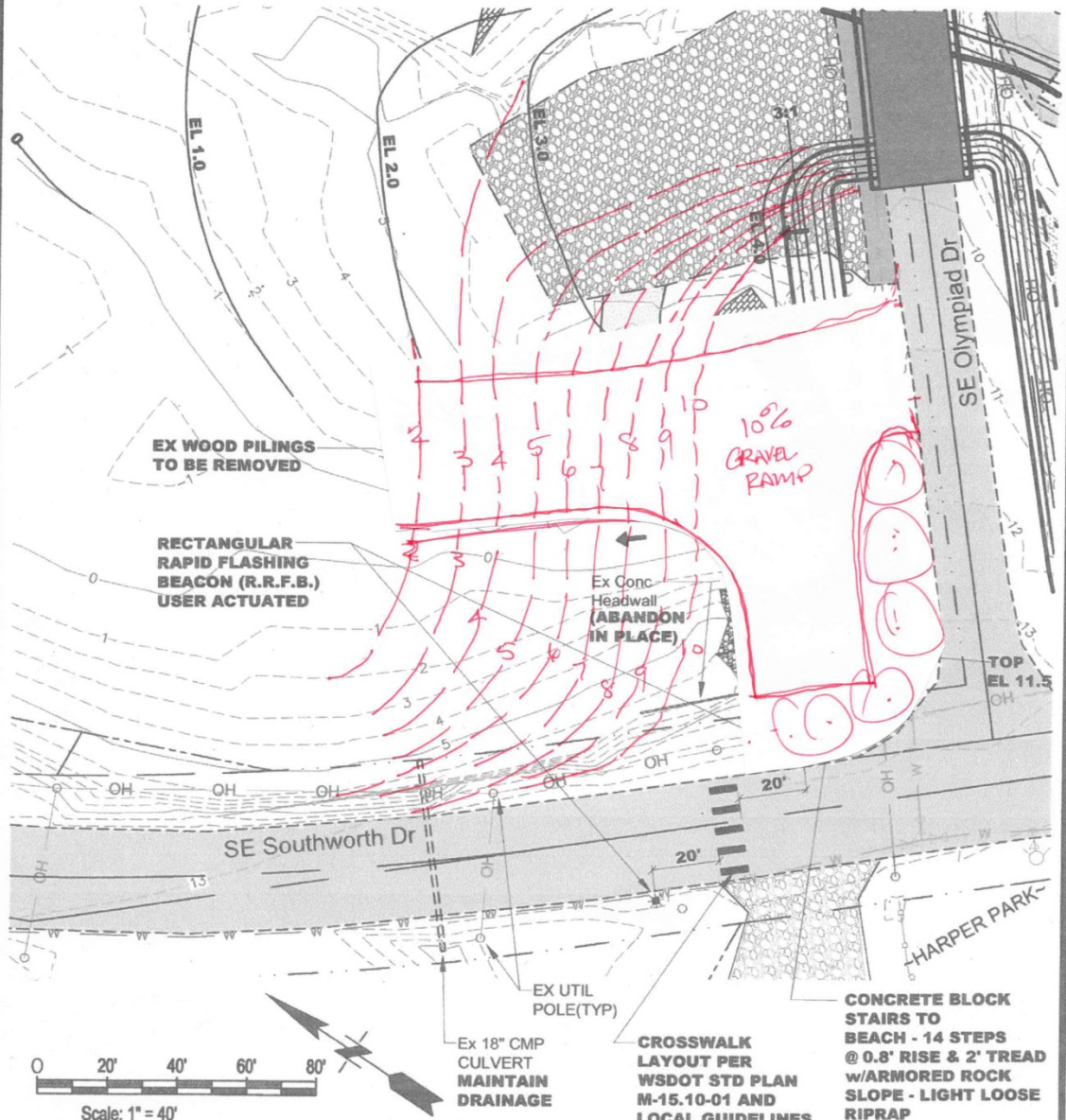
The Harper Community is holding a meeting the evening of March 30 2016 to discuss the Harper Estuary Restoration project and this SEPA Addendum 16010 to DNS 15-056 will be a subject of deep concern based on feedback from my Harper Community. I am sure there will many objections to this addendum and we need to hear the communities voice.

In addition it appears to me that positioning the 120 foot bridge to the west 60 feet would actually allow more industrial fill to be removed in total cubic yards. Then the boat launch could be placed at the east end of the bridge easily.

I would like to remove my request that the Comment deadline be extended beyond 04/01/2016 for SEPA No. 16010.

We had our Harper community meeting on 3-30-2016 regarding the Harper Estuary Restoration Project. All entities, of authority on this project, gave presentations and received questions on the project. While the community is not 100 percent behind the lack of a boat launch, the project should go forward with phase one of the two phase project.

HARPER ESTUARY - BEACH STAIRWAY



PURPOSE: RESTORE ESTUARY FUNCTIONS	REFERENCE NO:
PROPOSAL: SEE NOTE 1 SHEET 1	APPLICANT: WDFW
LOCATION: INT OF OLYMPIAD & SOUTHWORTH	COUNTY: KITSAP
DATUM: NGVD 29	NEAR: SOUTHWORTH
ADJ PROPERTY OWNERS: SEE SHEET 2	WATER BODY: YUKON HARBOR
	DATE: MARCH 2016



SHEET 8 OF 12

Suggested alternative submitted during comment period. Image altered to remove personal contact information included by author.

RESPONSE TO COMMENTS
ADDENDUM 16-010 TO DETERMINATION OF NONSIGNIFICANCE 15-056

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife
May 31, 2016

We received eight comments during the review period of the SEPA addendum for the Harper Estuary Restoration Phase 1 (DNS 15-056 issued October 20, 2015 with Addendum issued March 17, 2016). The Addendum identified project plan changes including replacement of the existing boat landing with a public access using a stairway. In addition to written comment, WDFW participated in a Kitsap County community meeting on March 30, 2016 to further discuss the project plans with the local residents. The comments from both the community meeting and the written SEPA comments were consistent and are summarized below.

- Can the boat ramp be retained as part of the project? Can the proposed bridge location on Olympiad Drive be moved to the east and allow the existing boat landing to remain?
- Puget Sound has lost many informal boat access sites. Is it feasible to relocate the boat landing to the east end of the project? Are other alternatives available?
- The boat landing is not only used for launch of small trailerable boats, but also for water access for local residents. The community expressed value in the gentle slope of the existing boat landing to access the shoreline, while the use of the stairway may be difficult.
- The stairway will be slick and not accessible for some in the community. Can an ADA access be developed?
- Removal of the existing boat landing is beneficial to estuarine habitat protection and restoration efforts.

The objectives of the habitat restoration project at Harper Estuary are to restore natural processes (e.g. tidal influence, sediment transport) and estuarine habitat for fish and wildlife resources. During community meetings and discussions, interest in a healthy, restored estuary was high for environmental and recreational reasons, as well as an interest in retaining the function of the existing boat landing. However, the existing boat landing, in its current location, must be completely removed to achieve the habitat restoration benefits. Retaining the boat landing in its current location will:

- block the ability to replace the undersized culvert with a large bridge in order to restore estuary function and tidal exchange
- reduce sediment contaminant removal associated with the excavation project
- retain compacted gravel substrate that does not support aquatic plants or benthic organisms at the existing boat launch
- impede restoration of filled estuarine habitat and functional channel geometry

During project design, WDFW and Kitsap County reviewed several options for the Olympiad Drive bridge location, including moving the bridge to the east. Several community members suggested that a bridge to the east and re-route of Harper Creek would allow the boat landing to remain while restoring the estuary. Several factors make the suggested design problematic, including 1) the boat landing would remain and impede restoration of natural processes, 2) the road elevation would entail very high

retaining walls and difficulty to meet current road elevations at match point and 3) the natural processes at the site favor the current location for Harper Creek, such that attempts to modify bathymetry to relocate the stream within the estuary are unlikely to succeed. We are unable to move the bridge location and stream to the east and still meet habitat restoration project objectives.

WDFW and Kitsap County collaborated on a design for a relocated boat landing of similar function to the existing site, since removal was necessary for the restoration work. The options were reviewed at a community meeting on April 6, 2015 (see [website](#)), with identification of the preferred alternative and preliminary design. As part of the alternative analysis, a relocation site on the east side of the estuary was reviewed but logistics precluded additional development of a design. The east estuary site would require a long access road to the water, as well as a turn-around. Boat launch at this site was similarly restricted to high tides and would not have met environmental goals for the project. The preferred alternative relocation site was designed and reviewed but could not be completed due to concerns for public safety, required maintenance, traffic and environmental impacts.

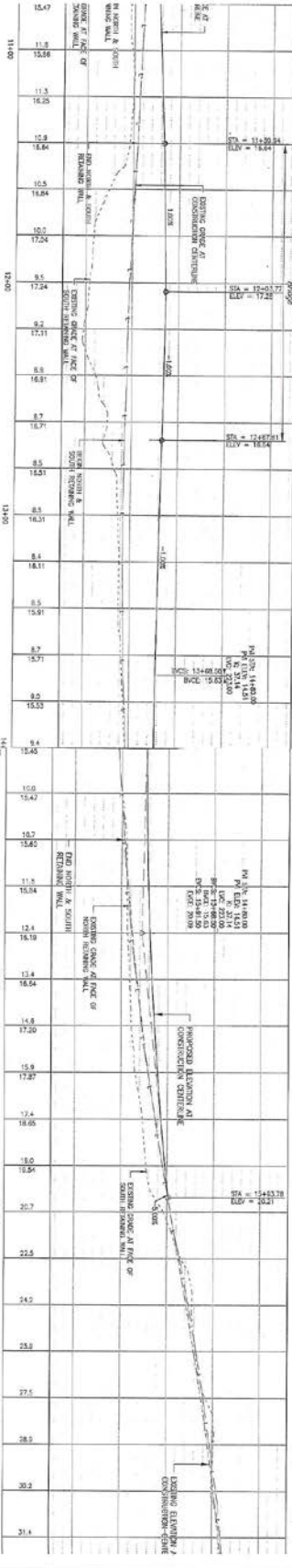
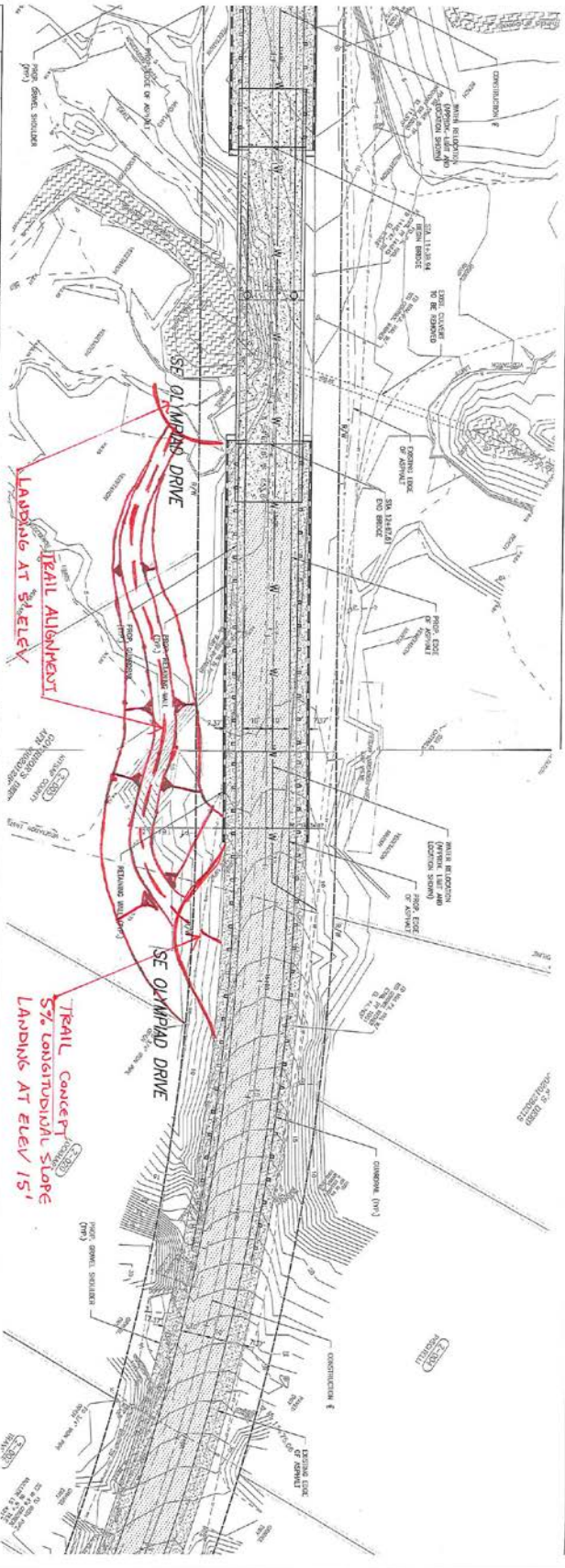
In addition, community members expressed a strong interest in the ability to access the shoreline via a gentle slope rather than a stairway. The stairway access may not meet the needs of many community members due to seasonal algal growth and difficulty with using stairs. There was also concern regarding the safety of the crosswalk, particularly for kayak transport.

At the March 30th community meeting, Kitsap County Commissioner Charlotte Garrido and staff recommended formation of a community committee to address public access concerns. Kitsap County and WDFW staff met onsite with four local residents on April 11, 2016 to review project plans and suggested alternatives they had developed in more detail. Additional work with community members will follow. We are currently working toward the following changes to address community concerns:

- WDFW will grade the slope from the road at the existing Olympiad Drive culvert at 5:1 slope to the shoreline. Although an informal access and not to ADA standards, this will provide a gentle slope to access the beach in the interim until the new bridge is constructed. However, this will not be suitable for launch of trailered boats. While there is likely to be enough room to pull a vehicle over for a short duration to unload, parking will not be available at the culvert.
- Kitsap County is working with their consultant, Otak, to include a pedestrian/hand launch pathway as part of the bridge construction. A conceptual design prepared by Kitsap County staff is included in this response. The interim informal access at the existing culvert will be removed as part of the culvert replacement and the new pedestrian/hand launch pathway will become the access point for the completed project.
- The proposed stairway will be constructed for those that would like to use it. The steps will be designed to utilize gravel for most of the step width rather than a flat concrete slab to reduce potential issues with algal growth.
- WDFW will work with Kitsap County to assess the need for a crosswalk(s) at this site.
- Kitsap County and WDFW will continue to investigate additional options for local access for small trailerable boats, but cannot include this as part of the summer 2016 construction.

We expect to continue working with the community on public access issues as the project progresses. We appreciate the community involvement at Harper Estuary and interest in this valuable habitat.

Prepared by Doris Small, WDFW 360.902.2258 doris.small@dfw.wa.gov



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