

## Proposed Westham Island Canoe Pass Tidal Marsh Project

### Description, location and size

The Westham Island Canoe Pass Tidal Marsh Project is a project proposed by the Vancouver Fraser Port Authority's Habitat Enhancement Program. The project would be located in Canoe Pass, near the south side of Westham Island, in Delta and would expand an existing marsh area by converting an adjacent unvegetated, low-value intertidal sandflat and mudflat into approximately four hectares of high-quality marsh habitat.

As an added community benefit, the port authority is considering using locally dredged material from a nearby navigation channel to construct the proposed tidal marsh habitat.

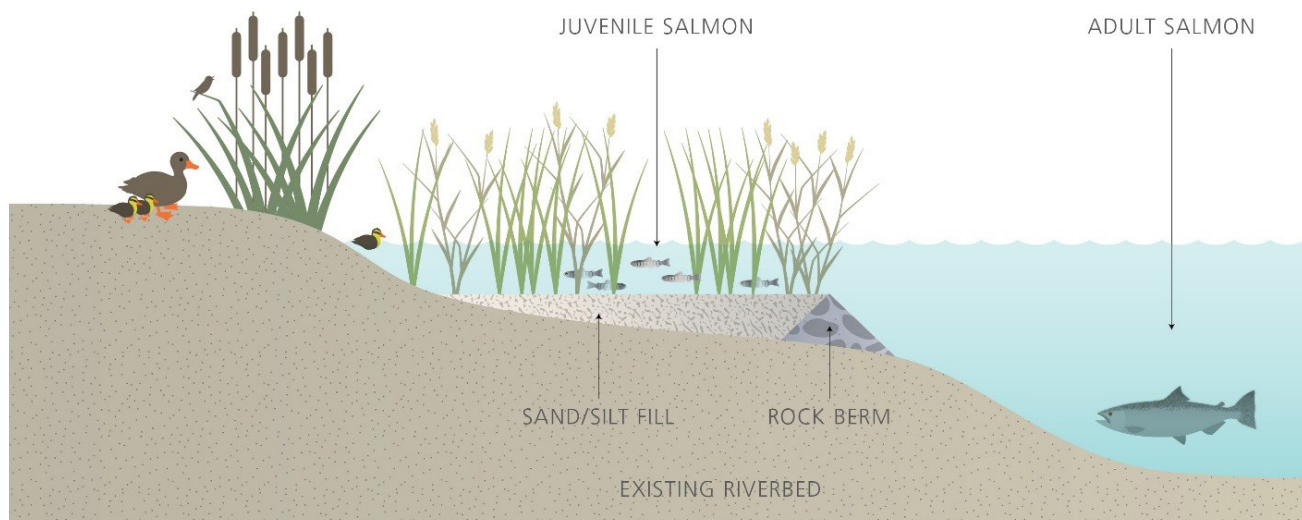
The port authority has consulted with the public and stakeholders regarding options for features related to the proposed project. This consultation has included meetings and site visits with the City of Delta, the Delta Farmers Institute and local residents.

### Rationale

The site was selected based on its potential to benefit a broad range of fish and wildlife species, and to increase the overall ecological function of the area. Tidal marshes are essential rearing areas for juvenile salmon, which helps sustain Pacific salmon stocks (see artist's illustration below).

The port authority engaged professional consultants to determine if this project, if built, would impact current farming-related infrastructure in the area. As the project site is more than 400 metres away from the nearest drainage feature, or flood box, it was determined river flows will not be altered to any significant extent, therefore impacts are not anticipated.

Furthermore, the port authority intends to engage with TransLink to identify key operational considerations and potential contingency plans for the Westham Island Bridge, should construction proceed, and will continue to review opportunities to implement additional safeguards prior to the start of any proposed work.



**FIGURE 2** Artist's cross-section illustration depicting tidal marsh habitat and some typical species that use this type of habitat.



**IMAGE 1** Current state at low tide, looking east.



**IMAGE 2** Rendering of proposed new habitat at low tide.

## Status and next steps

A land tenure application, originally submitted by the port authority in 2014, is under review by the Province of British Columbia. If approved, the Province would issue a lease for the potential project site.

At this time, the port authority is advancing this proposed project to the land tenure application stage only. If successful in securing land tenure and if the decision is made to advance to construction, the port authority is committed to continued consultation with key stakeholders on design and other project details. The port authority is also consulting Aboriginal groups through a separate process.



**FIGURE 1** Westham Island Canoe Pass Tidal Marsh Project Timeline

## For Further Information

For further information about the Habitat Enhancement Program, please visit [portvancouver.com/habitatenhancement](http://portvancouver.com/habitatenhancement) or email [habitat.enhancement@portvancouver.com](mailto:habitat.enhancement@portvancouver.com).