Maplewood Marine Restoration Project

Description, location and size

The proposed Maplewood Marine Restoration Project is located on the north shore of Burrard Inlet, approximately two kilometres east of the Ironworkers Memorial Bridge. It lies within a large marine tidal area immediately south of a wildlife conservation area. The upland Maplewood Flats Conservation Area is managed and administered by Environment Canada and operated by the Wild Bird Trust of British Columbia.

The project site is located within a deep waterlot basin – up to nine metres deep – that was dredged in the 1940s to support a gravel extraction business and was later used as a log storage facility.

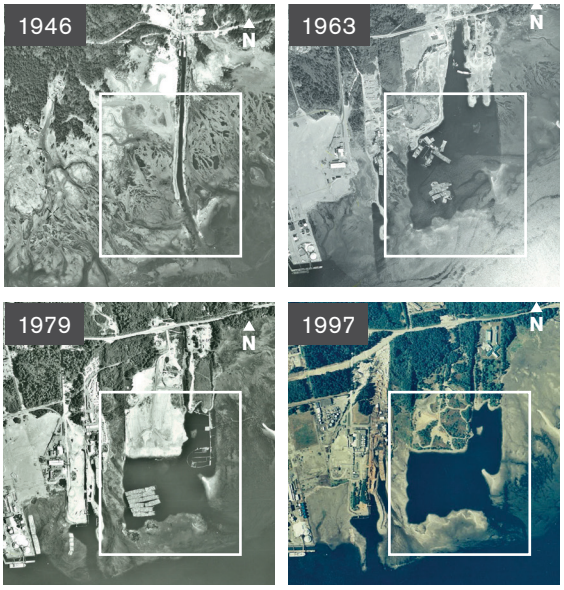

FIGURE 1 *Historical photos of the proposed Maplewood Marine Restoration Project site.*

The proposed project is anticipated to enhance approximately seven hectares of low-value, deep marine habitat into higher-value marine habitat for fish, birds and other wildlife.

Rationale

The site was selected for restoration because of its current relatively low habitat values, and based on input from Aboriginal groups. The port authority is proposing to use the Maplewood Marine Restoration Project as a fisheries habitat offsetting site for the proposed Centerm Expansion Project in Vancouver Harbour. The Centerm Expansion Project includes mitigation measures to reduce or avoid environmental effects of construction of the terminal expansion. However, where effects to fish and fish habitat cannot be avoided, the proposed Maplewood Marine Restoration Project is anticipated to provide the habitat offset by creating high-value habitat at Maplewood, upon approval from Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

The Maplewood Marine Restoration Project will be developed and delivered by the Habitat Enhancement Program, which is a port authority initiative focused on creating, restoring and enhancing fish and wildlife habitat. The restored marine habitat at Maplewood is anticipated to provide long-term benefits for fish and invertebrates that depend on marine vegetation for rearing habitat, along with other fish and wildlife species such as waterfowl and wading birds. Post-construction, the site will be monitored annually by biologists and coastal engineers, and in accordance with regulatory requirements, to ensure the biophysical objectives are met and the enhanced habitat continues to function well.

Project design

Project design continues to develop and be refined. Below is an artist's illustration that depicts the type of habitats that are being explored for enhancement at the Maplewood site. These could include an intertidal mudflat, an eelgrass bed, and subtidal rock reef habitat. The project design may evolve based on further consultation and technical input.

Status and next steps

The Maplewood Marine Restoration Project is currently in the design development and permitting and approvals phases. It's anticipated that this project will continue to proceed through permitting and approvals, including the port authority's Project and Environmental Review process, in 2018 and 2019. The Centerm Expansion Project also requires a Fisheries Act Authorization from Fisheries and Oceans Canada before in-water work can begin on the terminal expansion.

Completion of all regulatory reviews for the Maplewood Marine Restoration Project is anticipated by mid-2019.

Following completion of these regulatory reviews, the earliest that construction on the Maplewood Marine Restoration Project could start is expected to be late summer 2019, for a period of approximately eight months. To mitigate potential impacts to fish and fish habitat from construction, most work would be scheduled to occur within the annual least-risk work window for Burrard Inlet (August 16 to February 28). For any work that occurs outside of this least-risk window, appropriate mitigation measures would be put in place.

The project team is engaging and will continue to engage Aboriginal groups, stakeholders and regulators, and will notify the public of project updates, as appropriate. The project design may change based on further consultation and technical input.

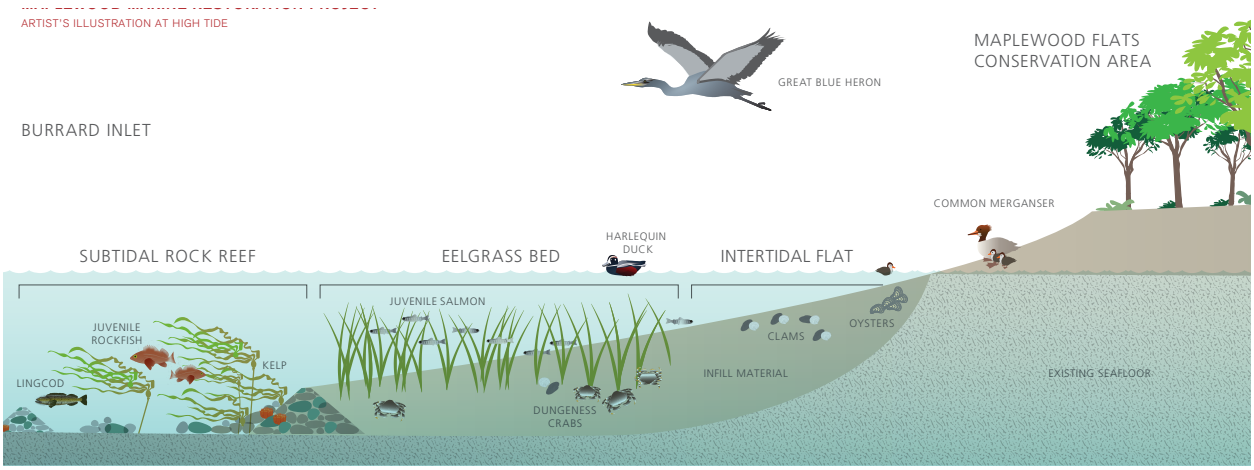

FIGURE 2 *Artist's cross-section illustration of the proposed Maplewood Marine Restoration Project.*

For Further Information

For further information about the Habitat Enhancement Program, please visit portvancouver.com/habitatenhancement or email habitat.enhancement@portvancouver.com.