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NAVSUP FLC Puget Sound Completes Beaver Creek Restoration Project

Story Number: NNS120128-01 Release Date: 1/28/2012 7:21:00 AM

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MANCHESTER, Wash. (NNS) -- Naval Supply Systems Command (NAVSUP) Fleet Logistics Center (FLC), Puget Sound held a ribbon cutting ceremony to celebrate the completion of the Beaver Creek Estuary Restoration Project, Jan. 26.

The Beaver Creek project began in 2003 to provide habitat and enhance fish migration for Pacific Northwest salmon along with other resident Puget Sound species.

"They had a lovely ceremony and I'm thrilled to have been here for this, to hear about the goodness it's going to do not just for the salmon, but for the Puget Sound at large," said Capt. William Power, commanding officer at NAVSUP FLC Puget Sound. "I'm as proud as I can be for the fuel department and the folks who made this happen."

Beaver Creek is an approximately five-mile long salmon-bearing stream that flows through NAVSUP FLC Puget Sound Manchester Fuel Depot into Clam Bay in the Puget Sound.

The Beaver Creek project started as a Superfund mitigation project to replace the natural habitat and be completed in four phases. The Superfund was passed by Congress in 1980 and is also known as the Comprehensive Environmental Response, Compensation and Liability Act.

"We're very proud of what happened here," said Glenn Schmitt, chief engineer and environmental director for NAVSUP FLC and Beaver Creek project manager. "This restoration was identified as a high priority in our natural resource management plan."

The project was completed in four phases to restore the habitat of Beaver Creek to its pre-World War II conditions.

During the first phase, the project was designed to facilitate salmon migration. The second involved the design of an underground utility relocation. The third phase saw the re-establishment of the estuary onto Clam Bay.

"The natural resource mitigation effort initially installed about a thousand feet of natural creek meanders, seven weirs to manage the hydraulics of the creek and approximately 10,000 yards of gravel to provide a spawning habitat for the fish," said Schmitt.

Phase four was accomplished through a close partnership between the Navy, Suquamish Tribe, Environmental Protection Agency and National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service.

Schmitt said that the final phase started in 2010 and replaced a box culvert with a 24-foot diameter open bottom metal culvert, removed the sediment pond, and restored the final channelized meander to enhance spawning habitat.

"What we've done is enhanced the ability of salmon, endangered salmon specifically Coho and Chum, to return and spawn in the lake with the installation of a natural stream meanders and creek conditions, so we can enhance their returns," said Schmitt.

This project is not only going to benefit salmon migration, but also other natural activities within the Puget Sound, like allowing nutrients to return naturally instead of being impeded.

"Some of the things that happen in the Sound is that the Sound naturally wants to receive sediments from the surrounding property," said Schmitt. "It's part of how nutrients come into the Sound."

According to Paul Dorn, senior regional scientist for the Suquamish Tribe, returning Beaver Creek to its natural state is also going to benefit fishermen, along with orcas, eagles and other wildlife in the Puget Sound.

"It's a great leadership example of the Navy restoring habitat beyond the typical paths we take," said Dorn. "From the tribes' perspective it's just a huge benefit to their culture and their economy."

Dorn described the project as a tremendous success story because Beaver Creek was changed significantly to accommodate a fire fighting training facility at Manchester, Wash. leading up to World War II.

"On behalf of the tribe, this was really a wonderful project and it's amazing that we've gotten to this point," said Dorn. "The tribe has never seen commitment from one organization in any area

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120126-N-CL698-026 MANCHESTER, Wash. (Jan. 26, 2012) Barry Pepich, from the Environmental Protection Agency, Capt. William Power, commanding officer Fleet Logistics Center (FLC) Puget Sound and Tom Flag, from the National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration Fisheries Service, cut the ribbon at a ceremony for the completion of the Beaver Creek Estuary Restoration Project at FLC Puget Sound Manchester Fuel Department. The project was started in March 2006 to provide a habitat and enhance fish migration to help Pacific Northwest salmon and other resident Puget Sound species. (U.S. Navy photo by Mass Communication Specialist 2nd Class Scott A. McCall/Released)

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that has so completely restored a habitat from an altered state."

The U.S. Army Corps of Engineers Seattle District, EPA Region 10, the EPA Laboratory, National Marine Fisheries Service, U.S. Navy Manchester Fuel Depot, Manchester State Park, Washington State Division of Fish and Wildlife, the Suquamish Tribe, and the local community contributed to the successful restoration of Beaver Creek.

NAVSUP FLC Puget Sound, one of seven fleet logistics centers under NAVSUP Global Logistics Support, provides operational logistics, business and support services to Navy, Coast Guard, Military Sealift Command, and other Joint and Allied Forces. Products and services includes contracting, defense fuels products, global logistics, hazardous material management, household goods, integrated logistics support, material management, postal, and regional transportation.

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