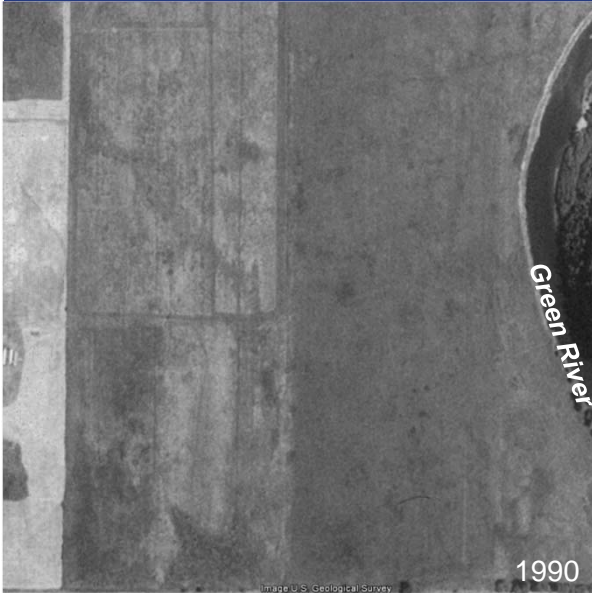


## Site History



The Auburn mitigation site lies in what was a historically agricultural area in the Green River floodplain. The City of Auburn rezoned the area for residential development, allowed construction of single family subdivisions to the north and south, and is planning commercial development to the west. Flood management regulations required the City to preserve floodplain capacity, so to support redevelopment the City negotiated with the Port to create 45 acre-feet of new floodplain storage at the mitigation site.

Prior to restoration, the site had lain fallow and converted to predominately reed canary grass field with isolated stands of blackberry.

## Constructed Mitigation



### Designed Wetland Communities

- Oregon ash / sedge
- Black Cottonwood / willow
- Red Alder / salmonberry
- Willow / dogwood
- Western Red Cedar
- Sedge / rush
- Bulrush / smartweed
- Open water



# Restoration Walks 2013



## Auburn Mitigation Site Forested & Emergent Wetlands

Saturday October 12<sup>th</sup> 10am – 12pm

Walk led by: Chipper Maney



*Society for Ecological Restoration  
Northwest Chapter*

# Auburn Mitigation Site

## Mitigation Concept

To mitigate for natural resource impacts from the Seattle-Tacoma International Airport's third runway construction, the Port of Seattle agreed to construct 180 acres of wetland habitat, 2 miles of stream habitat, and provide low flow augmentation in two Puget Sound tributaries. The airport must limit hazards to airplanes from waterfowl and passerine birds, so it mitigated for lost waterfowl functions off-site, in the City of Auburn and the Green River floodplain.

The 80-acre Auburn site is a complex of emergent, scrub-shrub, and forested

wetlands that provide 40 acre-feet of floodplain storage for the Green River, which backwaters into the site at stream flows greater than 8000 cfs. The site includes both existing enhanced and created wetlands, although all emergent wetland habitat was created. In addition, there are three wetland forest community types corresponding to elevation and hydrology, emergent wetlands with seasonal and perennial inundation, and areas of permanent open water to encourage waterfowl use. The site also provides open space in the city and lies adjacent to King County's planned recreational trail along the Green River levee.

## **Performance To Date**

The Port is currently in Year 6 of a 15-year monitoring program and monitors performance by community and mitigation type (enhanced, created). The site underwent survival monitoring the first four years, and all monitoring zones achieved final survival standard due to significant additional planting in Year 3. In Year 4, cover and density monitoring have replaced survival as performance indicators. Most forested communities have already achieved final standards for woody cover. Shrub and tree density remains below the *final* performance standard, but results indicate all zones are successfully maturing. Invasive cover was initially high due to reed canary grass establishment from existing seed sources, but early cut-and-spray removal allowed woody plants to establish and eventually shade out the canary grass. Emergent zones were infested with cattail early on, but a significant investment in cattail removal allowed planted species to adequately establish over time, and performance standards have been met every year.



Photo Credits: Chipper Maney

Restoration Walks is an initiative launched to celebrate SERNW's 20th Anniversary across the Cascadia bioregion. To register an event or for a list of Restoration Walks across the Northwest, see [sernw.org](http://sernw.org)

