Seattle Public Utilities

North Thornton Natural Drainage Systems
FACT SHEET

Improving Our Communities with Natural Drainage Systems

The North Thornton Natural Drainage Systems Project is coming to north Lake City neighborhoods!

SPU is working on a project to improve creek water quality, reduce flooding, and bring other community benefits to your neighborhood.

PROJECT BACKGROUND

Water that falls on the roofs, streets, and parking lots in your neighborhood runs into the north branch of Thornton Creek, which flows into Lake Washington. It's estimated that more than 12 million pounds of pollution are carried into our water bodies through stormwater runoff each year. The pollutants can harm fish, wildlife, and our ecosystems.

This project is part of the Natural Drainage Systems Partnering Program in the *Plan to Protect Seattle's Waterways*, an initiative that aims to:

- Reduce pollution in Thornton Creek and Lake Washington and help manage stormwater by constructing natural drainage systems in your neighborhood.
- Provide other community benefits, which include reduction of street flooding, traffic calming, trees, and added landscaping.

A completed natural drainage system on a residential street.

WHAT ARE NATURAL DRAINAGE SYSTEMS?

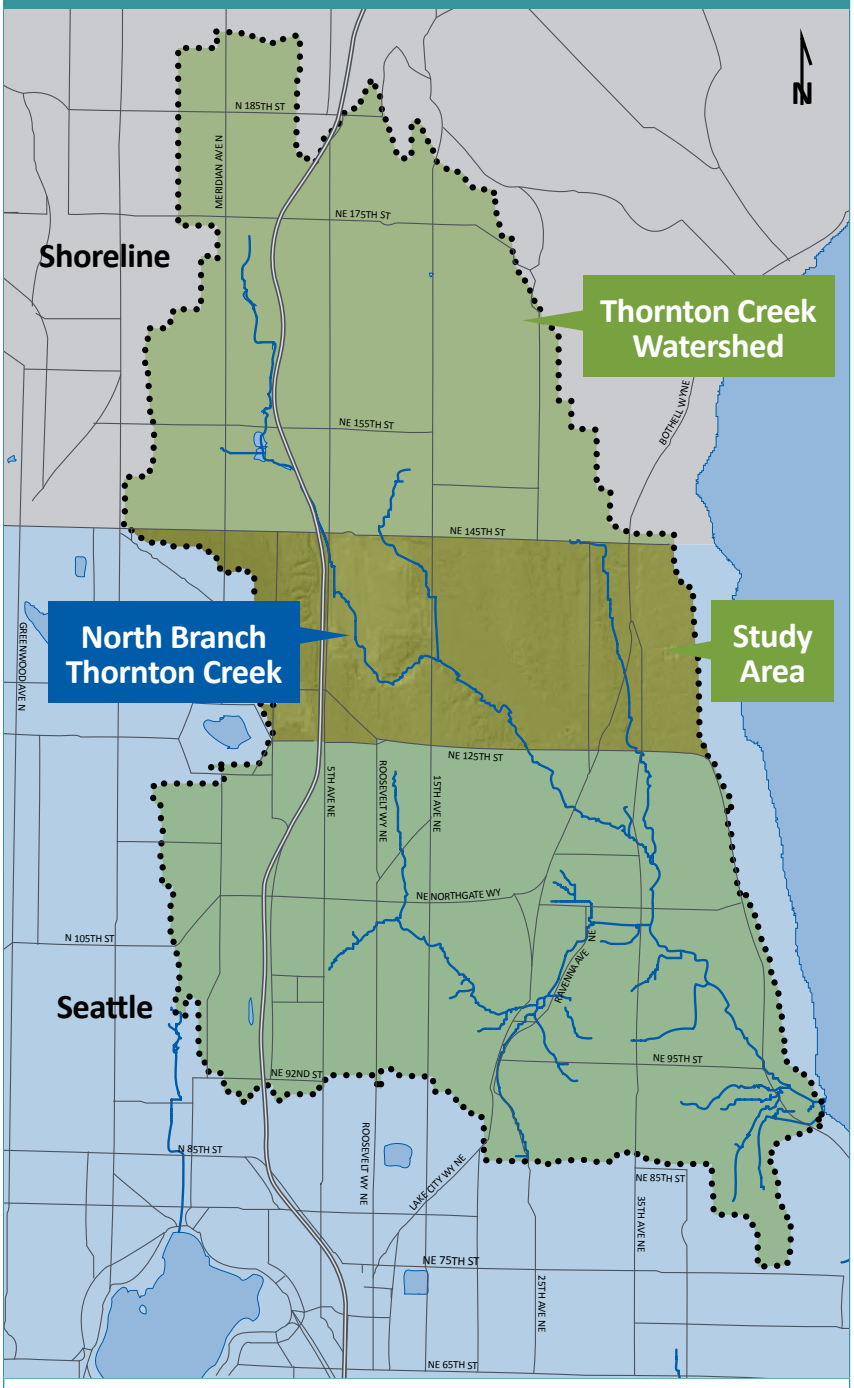
Natural drainage systems are built in the roadway shoulder (the space between the street edge and property line) and are filled with deep-rooted plants and spongy soils that temporarily hold and clean polluted stormwater from streets.

HOW DO NATURAL DRAINAGE SYSTEMS WORK?

Natural drainage systems capture and filter out pollutants before they reach Thornton Creek and Lake Washington:

- After rainwater washes from the impervious (hard) surfaces in your neighborhood, it is captured in the natural drainage systems.
- A layer of plants and soils filter the pollutants.
- The filtered stormwater may seep into the ground or to a downstream drainage system.
- The system is designed for all water to flow out within 24 hours.

PROJECT MAP



SPU is currently working on NDS projects in several urban watersheds throughout Seattle. The study area for this project reflects the boundary of the north Thornton Creek watershed.

COMMUNITY BENEFITS

Natural drainage systems offer multiple benefits to local neighborhoods and ecosystems, including:

- Increased landscaping
- Lower risk of flooding
- Creation of habitat along our streets
- Healthier creek ecosystems
- Traffic calming
- More street trees

PROJECT SCHEDULE

This project is currently in the early planning stages as we determine where it is technically feasible to build natural drainage systems in your neighborhood. In early 2021, we will finalize locations and the project will move into the design phase. We anticipate construction to begin in 2022 and last through 2023.

If you need this information translated, please call 206-733-9934.

如需口譯服務請電 206-733-9934。

통역 서비스를 원하시면 206-733-9934 번으로 전화해 주십시오.

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Questions? Contact Seattle Public Utilities

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Learn more and sign up for project updates at:
www.seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/north-thornton-natural-drainage-systems

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