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November 2, 2022

RE: Urban Forestry Commission response to Taylor Creek Restoration Project process update

Dear friends at Seattle Public Utilities,

The Urban Forestry Commission (UFC) thanks Cody Nelson, Betsy Lyons, and Katherine Lynch for their October 19, 2022 presentation on the Taylor Creek and Deadhorse Canyon Restoration Project.

The UFC recognizes that thorough and inclusive project planning does not occur overnight and commends Cody, Betsy, Katherine, and the rest of the team at SPU for the time and effort put into developing stream improvement concepts since 2010.

Commented [1]: I think this is when the project started, found on the website https://www.seattle.gov/utilities/neighborhood-projects/taylor-creek

The UFC appreciates that the project design has been paused to evaluate additional, less impactful sediment management options and allow space for community engagement and transparency. This work towards reestablishing trust with the community is vital to the success of the project.

The UFC recommends that SPU:

- Prioritize the management of stormwater before it flows into Deadhorse Canyon through Best Management Practices such as constructed wetlands, detention basins, or swales. Taylor Creek is one part of a larger watershed, and a holistic outlook towards hydrology will lead to the most successful restoration of the site.
- Consider approaches targeting the sediment source/upstream sediment trapping. Sediment accumulated within placed large woody material (LWM) will eventually surpass the storage capabilities of the structures, leading to stream bank erosion within Deadhorse Canyon and destabilization of the surrounding ecosystem and neighborhood.
- Plant more climate adapted and evergreen trees. Deadhorse Canyon is a thriving ecosystem within a dense urban setting. The trees in this space provide important habitat value, erosion control measures, and other ecological functions. This project is an opportunity to understand what Deadhorse Canyon looked like before it was logged and developed decades ago, and to create a vision of how it can be restored to something more sustainable for the future.
- Consider breaking up the project into smaller pilot projects or phases to reduce the overall impact. Explore options for alternate sediment capturing materials and methods that can be assembled by human hands in place and not require removal of trees. Some examples include: wattles, silt fences
- Consider a hybrid approach of no change within the canyon coupled with one of the above suggestions. Landslides are inevitable given the steep slope of the canyon. Existing trees will

be knocked down and create natural large woody debris structures. Focus restoration efforts outside of the canyon.

The UFC remains curious to know:

- What outreach has been done to indigenous tribes? What has SPU learned through this process?
- What long term maintenance strategies does SPU foresee engaging in Taylor Creek? If installed, will the LWM require consistent upkeep? How often will sediment need to be removed from the LWM structures?
- We would like to know what SPU's plan is for maintaining the sewer line that runs through the canyon.
- We would like more information on the trees that would be removed with the project options.

Thanks again to Cody, Betsy, Katherine, and the many others working to manage sediment build-up and protect salmon recovery in Taylor Creek and Lake Washington. We look forward to an ongoing and interactive relationship with your team and the Deadhorse Canyon community as this project develops.

Sincerely,