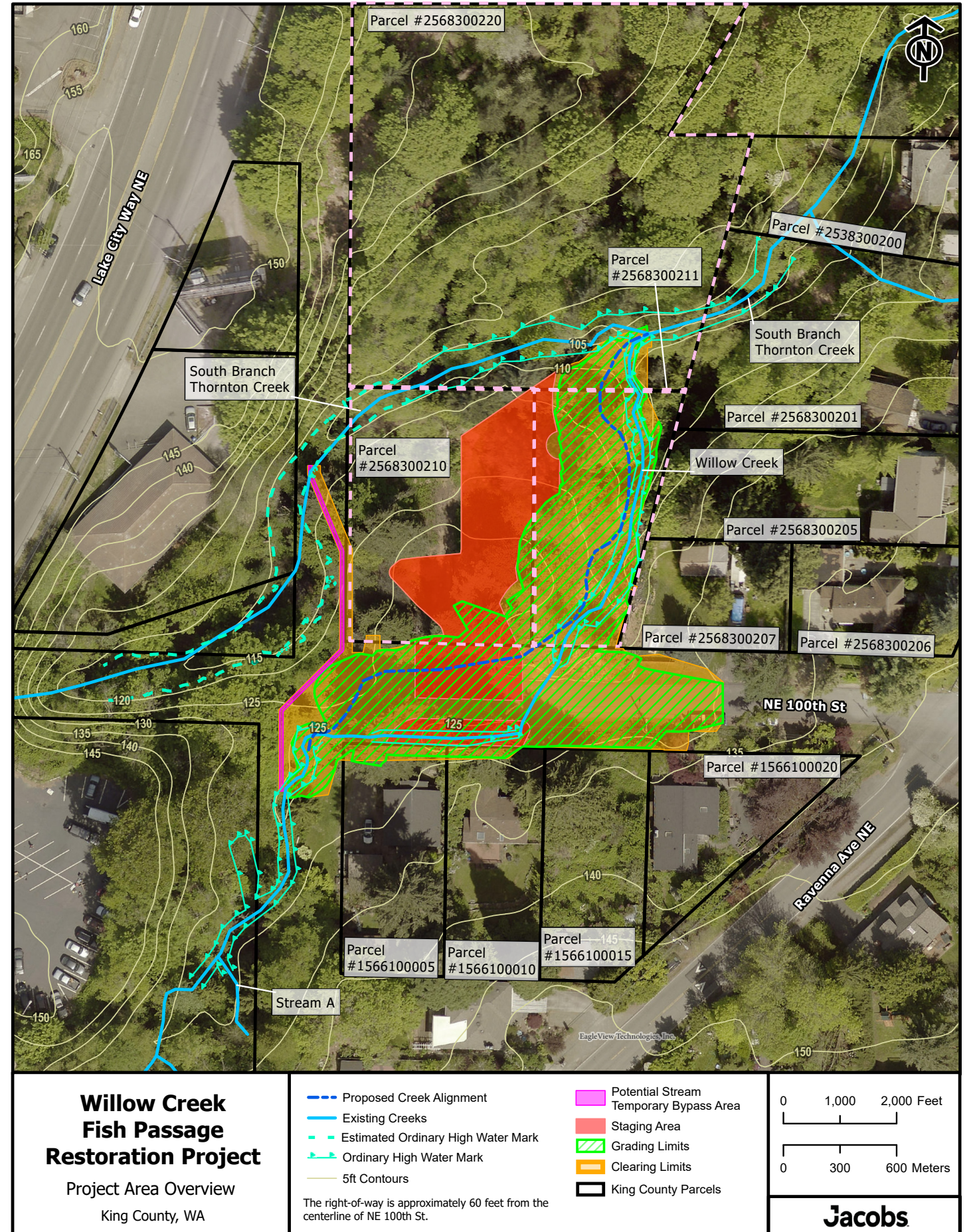


Seattle Department of Transportation

Willow Creek Fish Passage Restoration Project



Project Background

In summer of 2021, The Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) completed construction of the Northgate Pedestrian and Bicycle Bridge over I-5 in the Northgate neighborhood of North Seattle. The Bridge runs over and through the North Watercourse, which is a tributary to the South Branch of Thornton Creek. The Bridge project has impacted the North Watercourse by decreasing habitat and retaining the barrier to fish passage.

Upon completion of this project, we agreed to mitigate for these impacts off-site at Willow Creek, which is located at NE 100th Street near Lake City Way. The proposed changes consist of re-routing the creek and removing two culverts, one of which is currently a partial blockage to fish passage.

Stay Connected

This project is in the early design phase and construction is planned to begin as soon as 2024.

To stay up-to-date with the project progress, please visit the project website at: www.seattle.gov/transportation/WillowCreekRestoration

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Notice of Section 4(f) *de minimis* Finding

This notice serves as an opportunity to comment on the proposal described below. More information about the proposal is provided on: www.seattle.gov/transportation/WillowCreekRestoration

Project:

Willow Creek Fish Passage Restoration Project (the Project)

Applicant:

Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT)

Land Owner:

City of Seattle and owners of three private properties (2503 NE 100th Street, 2511 NE 100th Street, and 2518 NE 100th Street)

Project construction would also occur within right of way (ROW) owned by the City of Seattle and managed by SDOT, and on three adjacent private properties —2503 NE 100th Street, 2511 NE 100th Street, and 2518 NE 100th Street (King County parcels 1566100005, 1566100010, and 2568300207).

Location: The Project is located near 2500 NE 100th Street, Seattle WA

Proposal:

The Project will correct an identified barrier to fish passage by rerouting Willow Creek so that it no longer flows through the culvert that creates the fish passage barrier. To do this, the Project will reconfigure the west end of NE 100th Street as a cul de sac located to the east of the west end of the street. The Project will then reroute Willow Creek to flow north between the west end of NE 100th Street and the South Branch of Thornton Creek (SB Thornton Creek), east along the north side of NE 100th Street's current location, and then north to Willow Creek's confluence with SB Thornton Creek. The Project will improve habitat within and adjacent to the creek; plant and replace groundcover, shrubs and trees; update stormwater drainage connections in the vicinity of NE 100th Street; and install a pedestrian bridge linking the cul de sac to properties managed by Seattle Parks and Recreation (SPR) as part of the LaVilla Meadows Natural Area, thereby maintaining access to that 4(f) resource.

Section 4(f) Information:

The Federal Highways Administration proposes that this project will have a *de minimis* impact on resources qualifying for protection under Section 4(f) of the US Department of Transportation Act of 1966. Section 4(f) resources include properties eligible for listing in the National Register of Historic Places, public parks, recreation areas, and wildlife refuges. A *de minimis* impact will not adversely affect the features, attributes, or activities qualifying the properties for protection under Section 4(f). Per 23 CFR 74.5(b), this opportunity is provided to comment on the *de minimis* determination for the project described above.

Affected Section 4(f) Properties:

This Project would affect three private properties, City of Seattle right of way (ROW), and three parcels owned by the City of Seattle and managed by SPR as part of the LaVilla Meadows Natural Area. This natural area, a public park, is a 4(f) resource that provides wildlife habitat and opportunities for passive recreation, such as for recreational wildlife viewing.

Minimization Measures:

SDOT has worked throughout Project design to improve the benefit and minimize the impact the Project will have on the 4(f) resource. The LaVilla Meadows Natural Area's function of providing habitat and passive recreation will ultimately be improved by the Project's rerouting of, and improving the habitat within and adjacent to, the creek; the planting and replacing of groundcover, shrubs and trees; the updating of stormwater drainage connections; the installation of an accessible pedestrian bridge; and signage detailing park open hours and other access information. The majority of Project infrastructure improvements will be in ROW and off the three SPR parcels of the 4(f) resource, with just the pedestrian bridge having one abutment on the SPR properties. The removed vegetation will be replaced by vegetation consisting of a diverse native assemblage of riparian vegetation; all removed trees will be replaced at a greater than 2:1 ratio either within the three SPR parcels or within adjacent undeveloped portions of the ROW. The two informal parking spots along NE 100th Street adjacent to the three SPR parcels will be replaced by a reserved parking spot for SPR maintenance vehicles and street parking already existing in the neighborhood.

Comment Period:

Comments will be accepted for 21 days, through 5:00 PM (27 April 2023).

Contact:

To submit comments, contact the following:
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