

Terrace Oregon White Oak Woodland Mitigation Bank

August 2, 2018

Overview

This project is a private enterprise proposing restoration, enhancement, and expansion of existing Oregon White Oak Woodlands on approximately 14 acres of farm land adjacent to the Terrace Wetland Mitigation Bank in the upper reaches of Burnt Bridge Creek. The purpose is to generate credits that can be sold to developers and land owners to mitigate for loss of Oregon White Oak Woodland Priority Habitat throughout Clark County. The location of the bank is within a band of Oregon White Oak Woodlands that extend from NE 137th Ave. east into the floodplain of Lacamas Creek.

Location

The bank site is located at the dead end of NE 152nd Ave. south of 4th Plain Blvd. in the City of Vancouver. The location of the bank is within a band of Oregon White Oak Woodlands that extend from NE 137th Ave. east into the floodplain of Lacamas Creek. The site represents a unique opportunity to preserve and enhance high value Oregon White Oak Woodlands in an urban setting.

Service Area

The bank will be certified to sell credits for Oak Woodland impacts throughout all of Clark County below the elevation of 550 ft. and outside the Columbia River Gorge National Scenic Area. Out of service area transactions may be approved on a case-by-case basis.

Parties and Roles:

Bank Sponsor:	Terrace Mitigation Bank, LLC.
Bank Administrator:	Clark County Community Development
Permitting Authority:	City of Vancouver
Advisory Team	Washington Departments of Fish and Wildlife and Natural Resources

Summary of Bank Development and Operation

- Planning and design coordinated between the Bank Sponsor, Clark County, and the Advisory Team
- Land Use and construction related permits from the City of Vancouver
- Execution of a Mitigation Bank Instrument as a contract between the County and the Bank Sponsor
- Bank operation by the Bank Sponsor
- Incremental credit release over 10 years based on bank performance
- Long term stewardship funding and obligations for the Bank Sponsor

Fiscal Impact to Clark County

Administration workload can be accommodated with existing staffing. administration expenses come from Fund 1011 within the existing budget and will be supported by revenue from fees paid by the Bank Sponsor (annual monitoring) and applicants purchasing credits (development and building permit fees).

Benefits to Clark County

- Conservation of high value Oregon White Oak Woodland habitat in an urban context
- Facilitation of development on lands with Oregon White Oak Woodland habitat within the UGA to better meet conflicting Comprehensive Planning goals
- More flexibility for land owners with Oregon White Oak Woodland habitat
- Statewide leadership in Priority Habitat banking

Next Steps

County Manager signature of the MBI pending final legal review.

Ecology Wetland Buffer Guideline Updates

August 2, 2018

News for local governments about Ecology's CAO guidance

If you are a local government planner or consultant working on updating a local jurisdiction's Critical Areas Ordinance (CAO), the following information is likely important to your work.

The Washington Department of Ecology (Ecology) modified the habitat ranges in our wetland buffer tables. We also made minor text changes to ensure consistency.

- *Wetland Guidance for CAO Updates: Western Washington Version.* See [July 2018 modified sections XX.040 and XX.050 - Western Washington](#).
- *Wetland Guidance for CAO Updates: Eastern Washington Version.* See [July 2018 modified sections XX.040 and XX.050 - Eastern Washington](#).
- *Wetlands in Washington State – Volume 2: Guidance for Protecting and Managing Wetlands.*
 - See [July 2018 Appendix 8-C with modified habitat score ranges](#).
 - See [July 2018 Appendix 8-D with modified habitat score ranges](#).

The changes are also posted on our [local wetland regulations web page](#).

Why were the changes made?

We made the change based on public feedback and our review of the reference wetland data used to calibrate the rating system. Our preference is to maintain similar distributions between the 2004 and 2014 versions of the Washington State Wetland Rating System.

In our previous wetland buffer tables, low habitat function was represented by a score of 3 or 4 points and moderate habitat function by a score of 5 to 7 points.

However, after we conducted a detailed analysis of habitat scores for the 211 reference wetlands used to calibrate the rating system, we found that wetlands scoring 3, 4, or 5 points for habitat are more similarly distributed to those scoring ≤ 19 points in the 2004 version.

This information prompted us to adjust the habitat score break points in the current wetland buffer tables. The modified tables now group habitat scores of 3 to 5 into low habitat function and scores of 6 and 7 into moderate habitat function.

More information

If you have questions about these wetland buffer table modifications, please contact Donna Bunten at donna.bunten@ecy.wa.gov or 360-407-7172.

Ecology's [wetland guidance for local governments](#) may also be useful.

County Response

There is no requirement for County action until the 2024 CAO update. Due to the benefit of implementing these changes sooner, we are considering updating the buffer tables in 40.450 in the Fall Biannual Code update, however there is a risk that Ecology could push for updates to other buffer standards that do not meet their current guidelines in such a way that could require a full CAO update process.

We have reached out to the consultant community regarding the benefits of updating the buffer tables to meet these new guidelines and received positive feedback so far.