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State of Restoration in the Lower Duwamish River

Duwamish River Restoration Symposium: Building on *another* 10 Years of Lessons Learned

Jen Steger and Terill Hollweg, NOAA Restoration Center

February 24th, 2026

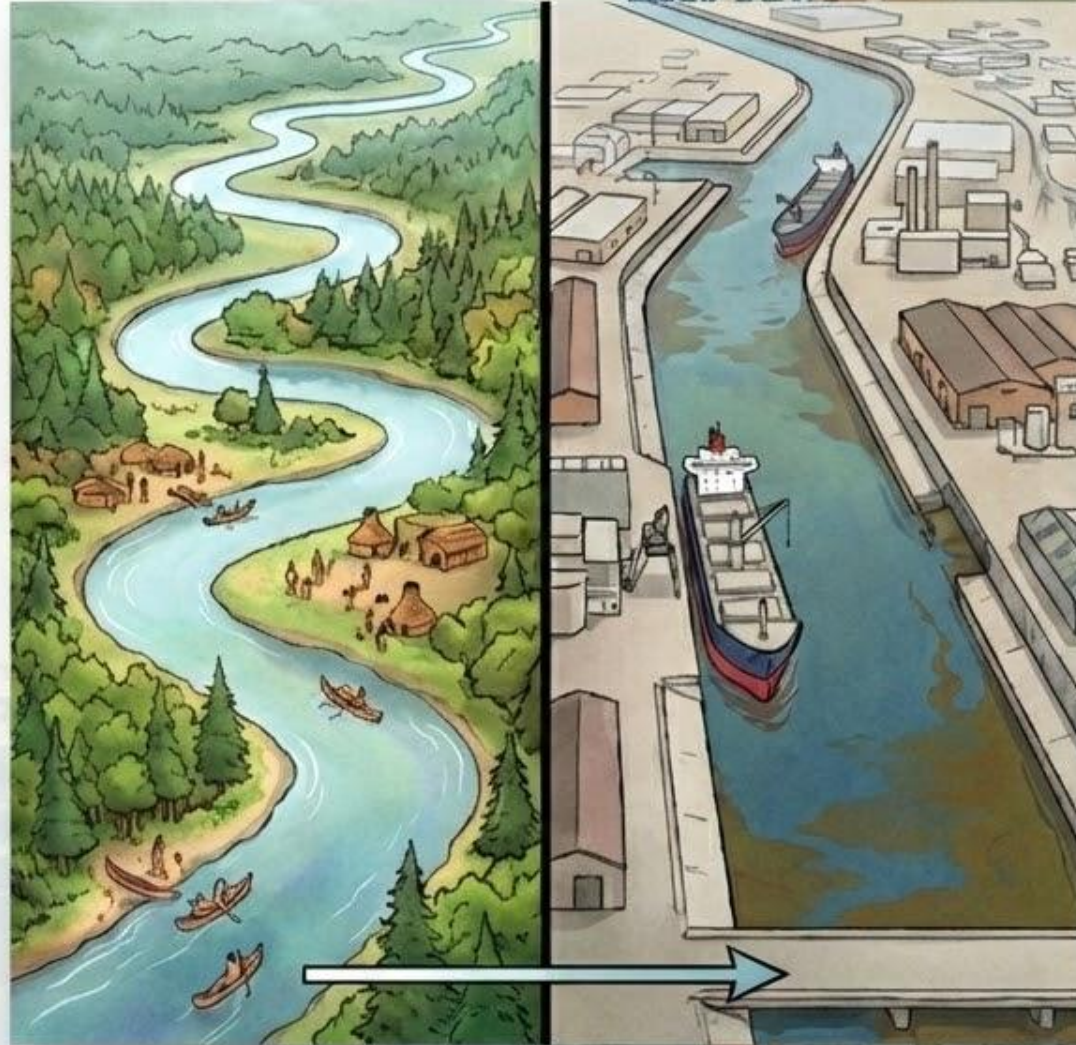
straightened



developed



industrialized



contaminated



lost natural
function



lost services
to people

DURING THE EVENT: Active Damage




Fire is put out, but services are lost.


AFTER THE EVENT: Residual Harm




Left with a soggy mess, diminished services.

Welcome Back


 2015 workshop focused on lessons learned from specific NRDA restoration projects in the Duwamish.

 The restoration community, number of projects, funders, and project complexity have increased since then.

 Collaboration, innovative solutions, and community engagement are cornerstones of success, inspiring hope for the Duwamish's future.




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NOAA's Damage Assessment, Remediation, and Restoration Program (DARRP) is made up of three offices within NOAA. DARRP staff include scientists, economists, restoration experts, and attorneys. This multidisciplinary team works closely with other agencies, industry, and citizens to protect coastal and marine resources, respond to pollution incidents, assess risk and injuries, and restore natural resources.

www.darrp.noaa.gov




Habitat Restoration in an Urban Waterway: Lessons Learned from the Lower Duwamish River

November 19, 2015 Workshop Report

John Kerw, Laurel Irminger, and Lauren Senkyr
NOAA Restoration Center

Baksczs Ilotf
NOAA Assessment and Restoration Division

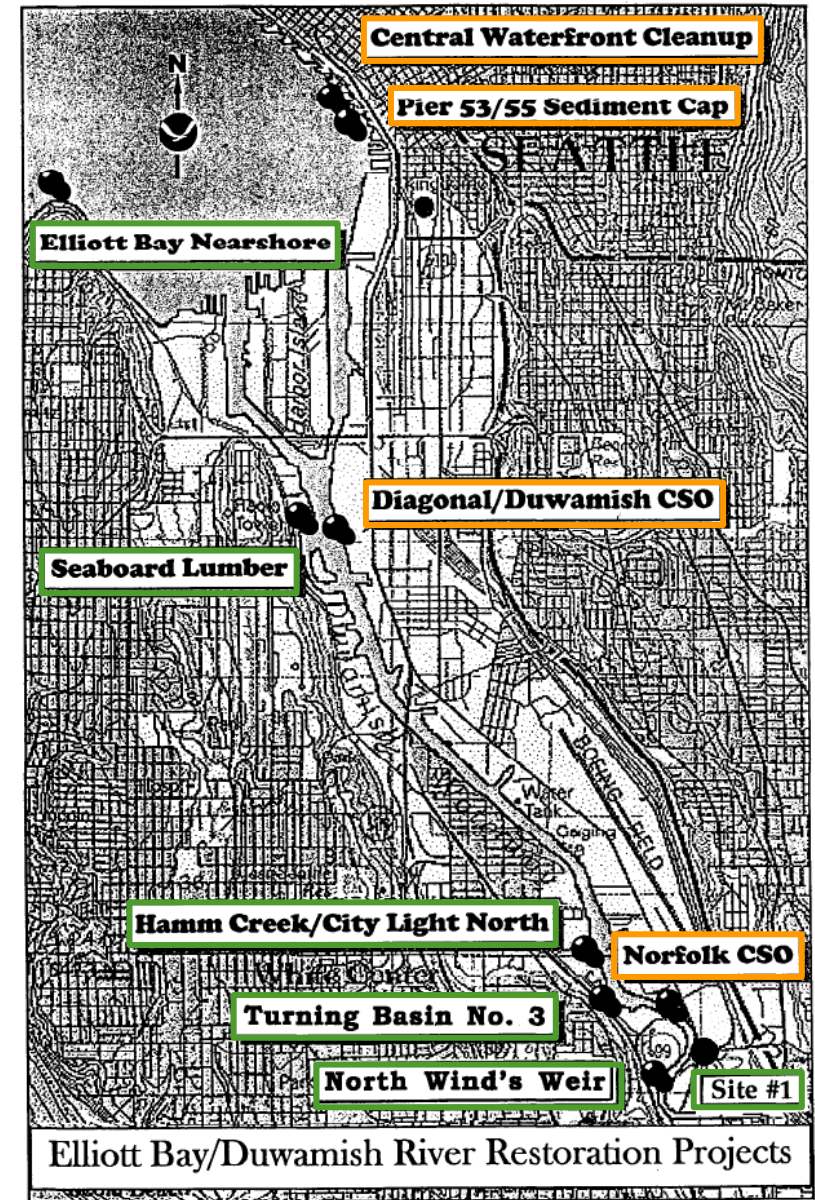


Volunteers help restore the Duwamish River by planting native vegetation at an Earth Day event hosted at Conditia Park, April 2015.

U.S. Department of Commerce | National Oceanic and Atmospheric Administration | NOAA Fisheries

Elliott Bay Panel

- NRDA Settlement in 1991
 - Between NOAA, DOI, Washington Department of Ecology, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and Suquamish Tribe; and
 - The City of Seattle and Municipality of Metropolitan Seattle (King County)
- Created the Elliott Bay/Duwamish Restoration Program Panel (Elliott Bay Panel)
- Provided funds, in-kind services, and land acquisition for habitat development projects
 - Constructed in late 1990s / early 2000s
 - 10 years of maintenance and monitoring
 - Currently in stewardship phase
- Also included source control and sediment remediation projects



EB/DRP 2000 Annual Report

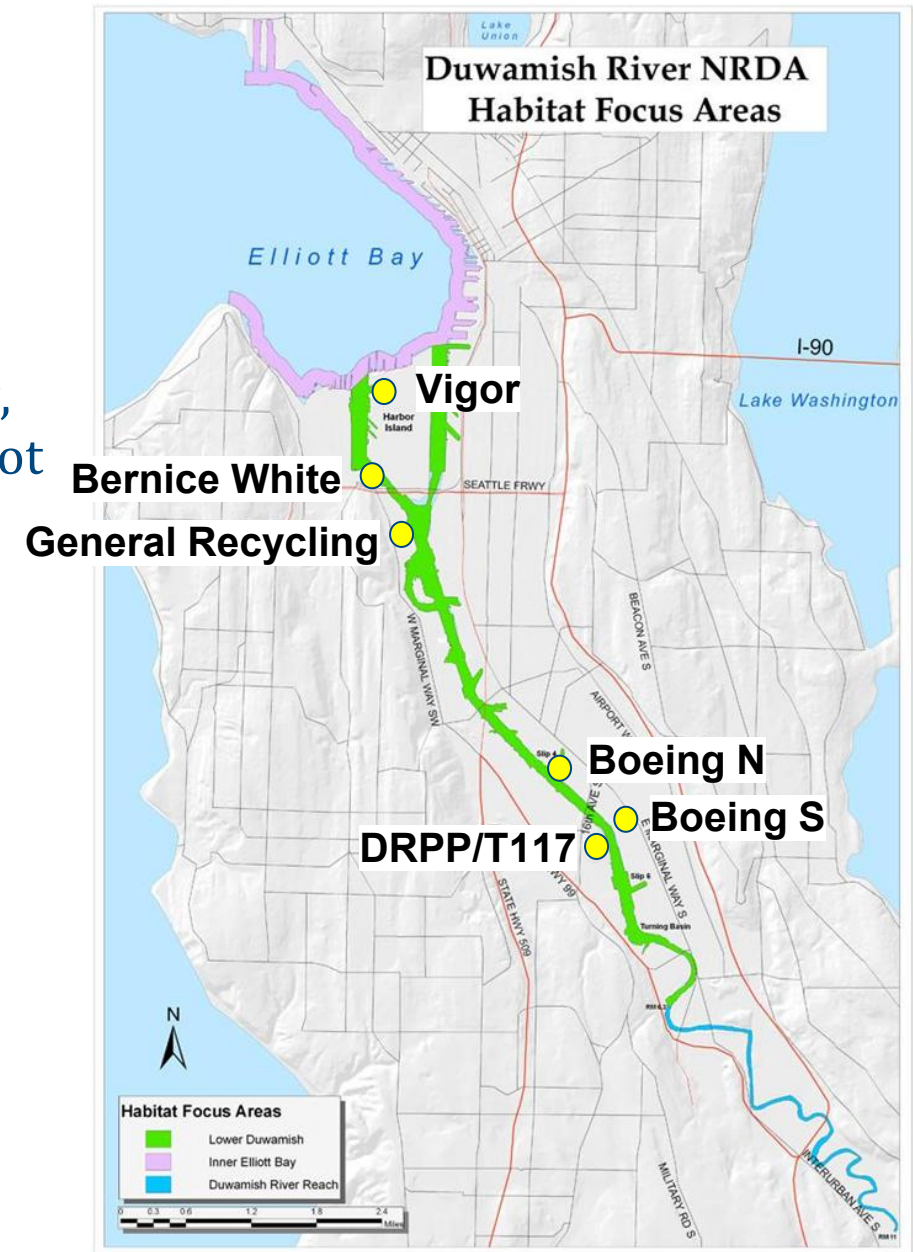
(<https://www.diver.orr.noaa.gov/web/guest/diver-admin-record/7720>)



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Elliott Bay Trustee Council

- Formed by MOA in 2005
- Includes NOAA, DOI, Washington Department of Ecology, Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife, Muckleshoot Indian Tribe, and Suquamish Tribe
- 10 NRDA settlements to date
- Restoration projects/banks:
 - Boeing Plant 2 North and South
 - Tribal Elder Bernice White Place (Bluefield Site 1)
 - Duwamish River People's Park (T117)
 - Vigor Shipyards
 - General Recycling



Other Projects

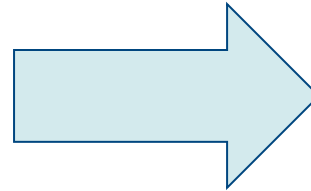
- Many more projects by the Port of Seattle
- Most recent projects include:
 - Duwamish Gardens - City of Tukwila
 - Chinook Wind Mitigation Project - King County



Challenges and Opportunities

- Challenges

- Regulatory
- Property availability
- Contamination
- Project costs
- Long-term management / stewardship



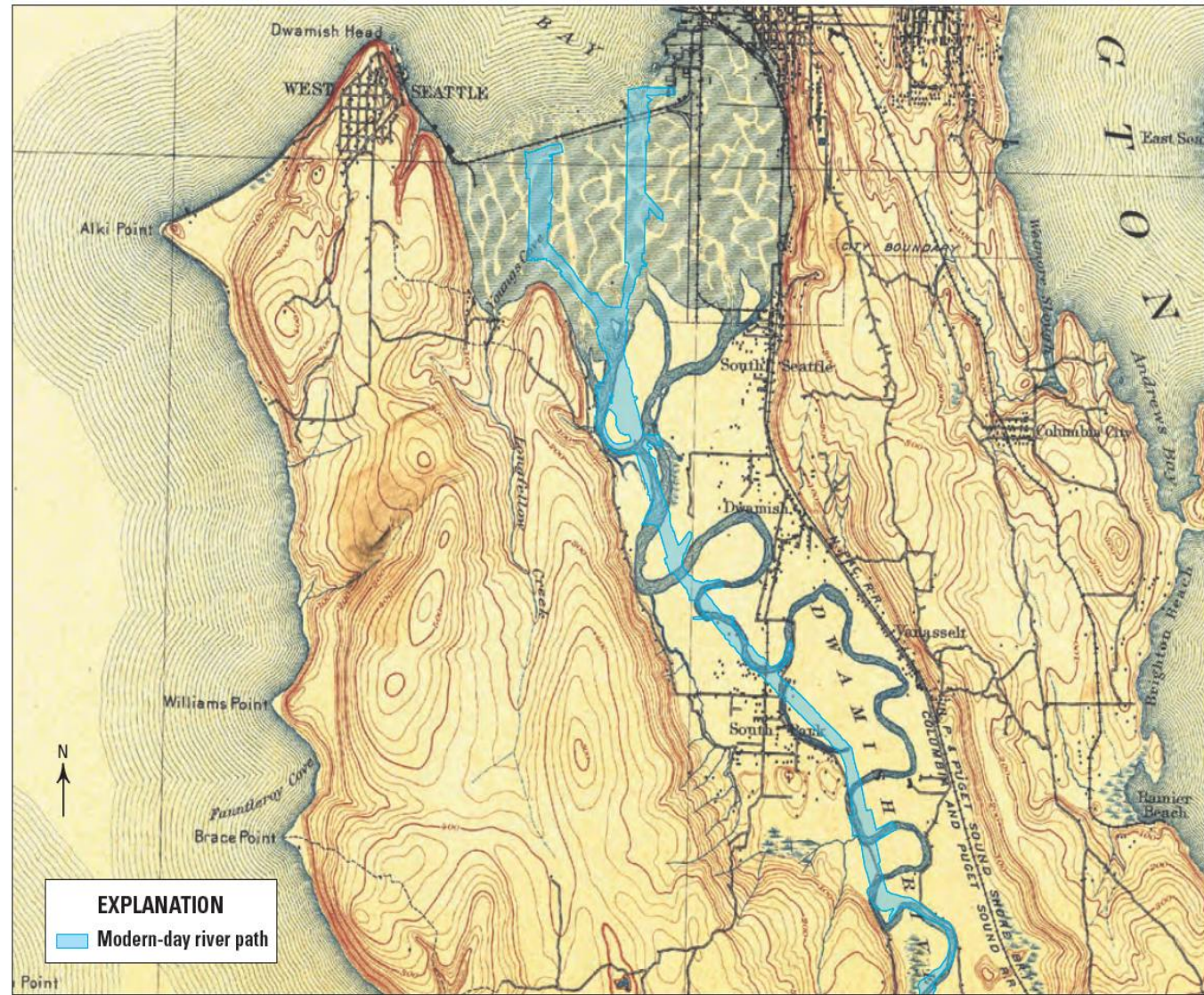
- Opportunities

- Regulatory streamlining
- Partnerships
- Working waterfronts
- Cleanup and source control progressing



Technical Questions

- Balancing marsh habitat with fish access?
- Depth and width of channel opening?
- How do we plan for climate change and sea level rise?
- How to best incorporate public access?
- How best to phase/coordinate restoration and cleanup?



<https://pubs.usgs.gov/publication/sir20245046>

Hopefully, we helped set
the stage...

...we're excited to dive in!



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Thank you! Questions?

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