



Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society

&

Semiahmoo First Nation



Little Campbell River Estuary Restoration Project

The Little Campbell River (TAT-A-LU) shows incredible potential for rehabilitation & protection if given the necessary resources & community attention. It offers habitat to many species of salmon & trout, birds, mammals, amphibians & native plants. Some species found here are Species at Risk and listed as threatened or endangered. The river is a focal point in the communities it crosses & offers extensive opportunities for wildlife appreciation. In addition, the critical estuary area, home to the Semiahmoo First Nation, is a unique habitat linking fresh & saltwater environments & is the area of our estuary project focus.



Spawning Salmon Roy Thomson



Red-legged Frog Jared Hobbs



Green Heron Chiu-wen (Hank) Tseng

The Little Campbell Estuary on the Semiahmoo First Nation Reserve was the site of the Campbell River Mill that operated from 1913-1927. The sawmill building straddled the estuary & the beach was used as a log sort. In later years long after the mill closed the site was used for intense human recreational activity such as parking vehicles, boat launch, dogs off leash & aquatic access. Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society & Grand Chief Bernard Charles recognized the site was in dire need of rehabilitation & hoped the project would promote community knowledge, awareness & reverence for the river's history & natural features.

In August of 2001 over 100 volunteers planted the banks of the Little Campbell River Estuary with 1387 native plants covering approximately 3000 m² of riparian estuarine habitat. Site preparation included over 55 hours of machine work to place over 855 yards of composted green waste; the replacement of 800' of water service line & the moving of a dozen concrete barriers. Project Partners contributions made all the difference in accomplishing this goal. Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society received an Honourable Mention by the BC Landscapers and Nursery Association Awards Committee in 2001.



left: Post industrial condition of project site; subject to intense human & pet disturbance, centre: greenwaste placed; right: digging test hole



The initial planting & celebration event on August 11, 2001 included a public awareness aspect with speeches by a number of high profile dignitaries at that time including a Federal MP, Provincial MLA, Semiahmoo First Nation Grand Chief Bernard Charles, City of Surrey Councillor, City of White Rock Mayor & four Councillors. There were also speeches by other Project Partner representatives such as the Department of Fisheries and Oceans & the Semiahmoo Fish and Game Club.



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Volunteers in action, August 11, 2001



Planting celebration August 11, 2001



Estuary restoration site on event day

Issues of disturbance continue to affect the site & the water quality of the river. At one point after a number of fires, herbicide spraying, increased dogs off leash & vandalism of the planted trees, volunteers were compelled to salvage the remaining plants from the south & west areas of the pathways to be replanted behind an installed deer fence on the east side. The eastern section of the site had to be fenced to protect the restoration project & riparian area.

Despite ongoing incidents of vandalism, volunteers contributed further machine work to place additional soil, remove persistent invasives & plant an additional 2500 native plants, increasing biomass to over 5000 native plants. Friends of Semiahmoo Bay's ongoing work with community volunteers, A Rocha Canada volunteers & Surrey's SHaRP team entailed hundreds of hours of further invasive plant removal, planting, mulching & monitoring. Together they also conducted a pilot forage fish spawn habitat restoration project closer to the mouth of the estuary that included planting 500 trees & shrubs and the placement of spawning gravels.



Volunteers planting and removing invasive non native plant species at the Little Campbell Estuary



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Installing further deer fencing

FoSBS also installed Purple Martin nest boxes & monitoring of the site has included plant & bird surveys with A Rocha Canada. Friends of Semiahmoo Bay Society funded & installed three large interpretive signs focused on culture & history, natural features of the river & the 'Celebrating Partnerships' Project acknowledging Funders and Project Partners. Dogs on leash, a closure to fishing and enforcement of bylaws & conservation regulations would be positive actions to enhance conservation of the site. In recent years Project Partner A Rocha Canada have taken the lead on monitoring and maintenance of the site with FoSBS and the Semiahmoo First Nation.

Grateful appreciation to funders & participating project partners: Semiahmoo First Nation; David Riley, Independent House Diagnosis Ltd (1976); BC Ministry of the Environment Public Conservation Assistance Fund; Nature Canada; Wildlife Habitat Canada, BC Nature, Federation of BC Naturalists; City of Surrey, SHaRP & SNAP; Epcor Water Services Ltd; A Rocha Canada; Langley Environmental Partners Society; Little Campbell Watershed Society, TD Friends of the Environment Foundation; Pacific Custom Brokers Ltd; Hazelmere Golf & Country Club; Peace Portal Golf Course; Ducks Unlimited Canada; Gordon Marasco; Tom Kendall; EMCO Limited; City of White Rock; Pacific Initiatives; T. Buck Suzuki Native Plant Nursery; Fisheries and Oceans Canada; Semiahmoo Fish and Game Club; White Rock and Surrey Naturalists; Butterfly Garden Group; Green Waste Recycling Ltd.; Washington Avenue Grill; Charlie Don't Surf; B&B Contracting Ltd.; N.A.T.S. Nursery Ltd.; Homelife Benchmark Realty Corp.; Ted Brown; Canada World Youth & our Community Volunteers!