



Spring Valley Ranch / Hylebos Creek Fact Sheet

Today's Event:

Sixth graders from Federal Way Public Academy, a college prep academy within the Federal Way School District, will release salmon smolts into Hylebos Creek to commemorate the planned restoration of the creek on what is known as the Spring Valley Ranch property. The fish are provided by the Puyallup Tribe of Indians Fisheries Department, which also will release approximately 10,000 smolts into the creek.

The Project:

Future Chinook salmon that make the trip from Hylebos Creek to Commencement Bay and eventually, the Pacific Ocean, will find the going a bit easier thanks to a cooperative effort between the Washington State Department of Transportation and Friends of the Hylebos Wetlands. As mitigation for the I-5 High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) lane construction project from Port of Tacoma Road to the King-Pierce County Line, WSDOT purchased the Spring Valley Ranch property for \$1.75 million from a private landowner.

Running through the 27-acre property is Hylebos Creek, a location Friends of the Hylebos Wetlands describes as excellent spawning habitat for endangered Chinook salmon. Spring Valley Ranch includes about 20 acres of stream and wetland. The shallow stream grade and the presence of gravel contribute to the great spawning habitat for Chinook, chum and Coho salmon. The project will also benefit steelhead and cutthroat trout's development and migration to the Pacific Ocean through Commencement Bay.

Restoration will include returning that section—approximately 1,400 feet of degraded Hylebos Creek spawning habitat and pasture land—to its natural state by realigning the stream and adding shading such as trees and plants. The creek now runs straight and the surrounding land is cleared with only grass for vegetation.

The HOV Program:

The Port of Tacoma Road to the King-Pierce County Line construction project is one stage of the Tacoma/Pierce County Core High Occupancy Vehicle (HOV) Program. It also is one in a series of highway projects that will improve traffic flow on I-5.

HOV lanes assure that transit buses, vanpools and carpools can move as rapidly as possible, even when traffic is congested in the adjoining general purpose lanes. This increases the number of riders in multi-passenger vehicles and thereby helps ease demand in the general-purpose lanes, making the highway system work more efficiently for everyone. The legislature appropriated \$33.6 million for construction, which is scheduled

to begin in 2009. Learn more information about the Pierce County HOV project at the following website: www.wsdot.wa.gov/projects/PiercecountyHOV/.

Who Is Involved?

WSDOT has worked closely on this project with Friends of the Hylebos Wetlands and the City of Federal Way.

For More Information:

Contact Lloyd Brown, WSDOT Olympic Region communication manager, (360) 357-2789.

Learn more about Friends of the Hylebos Wetlands at the group's website, www.hylebos.org.