MEMORANDUM

DATE: April 6, 2005

TO: Mr. Alex Shkerich, Atelier ps

FROM: Linda Krippner

CC: Lizzie Zemke

RE: Burke-Gilman Trail - Wildlife Study, Log Boom Park (Tracy Owen Station) to NE 145 Street, Lake Forest Park and Kenmore, Washington

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Environmental Solutions

Introduction

Adolfson Associates, Inc. (Adolfson) conducted a wildlife habitat study along a section of the Burke-Gilman Trail at the request of Atelier ps (Atelier) on behalf of King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks, Parks and Recreation Division in support of proposed trail improvements. The study area extended along the trail from Log Boom Park (Tracy Owen Station) to NE 145th Street in Lake Forest Park and Kenmore, Washington (Figure 1).

Methods

This study included a review of Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) priority habitat and species data and a field survey. Habitat conditions and wildlife observations were recorded during the walking survey of the section of trail indicated in Figure 1.

Findings

Adolfson scientists Linda Krippner and Dan Ehreth conducted the field survey on April 4, 2005. Habitat features, wildlife observations, and habitat for priority species are described in the following sections.

Habitat Description

Land use along the trail varies from developed parkland to residential and commercial zones. Native forest and shrub habitats are sparse along the trail.

Most of the study area is characterized by residential land uses. Photo 1 shows the developed landscape and lack of native habitat areas typically surrounding the trail from Ballinger Way NE to NE 147th Street. Home construction activities are also evident adjacent to the trail (Photo 2).

Narrow strips of native forest and shrub habitats are found along the trail from Log Boom Park to Ballinger Way and from NE 147th Street to NE 145th Street. Habitat conditions vary in these sections. Large trees including black cottonwood (Photo 3) and Lombardi poplars (Photo 4) provide habitat in these sections, but understory vegetation is mostly dominated by non-native, invasive plant species such as Himalayan blackberry and English ivy (Photo 3).

Lake Washington located immediately east of the trail (Photo 5) and two named streams (Lyon and McAleer) (Photo 6) flowing beneath the trail at two locations provide aquatic habitat for many fish and wildlife species.

Wildlife Observations

Several bird species were abundant along the trail during the survey. These species included American crow, European starling, house finch, house sparrow, American robin, black-capped chickadee, Bewick's wren, song sparrow, bushtit, and spotted towhee. Breeding behavior and nest building activities were evident for several of these species including bushtit, black-capped chickadee, American robin, and Bewick's wren. One bald eagle was observed perching in a tall conifer adjacent to the trail in a residential area near NE 155th Street.

Several bird species were identified in Lake Washington near the trail. Waterfowl species on Lake Washington near Log Boom Park included mallard, bufflehead, greater scaup, common merganser, American coot, and western grebe. American coot and western grebe were present in large congregations. Violet-green swallows were foraging over the water of the lake, and double-crested cormorants were foraging in the lake and perching on the pilings at Log Boom Park.

Priority Habitats and Species

Lake Washington provides foraging opportunities for large congregations of waterfowl and for raptors such as the bald eagle. The trail is located within an active bald eagle nesting territory (WDFW, 2003). The bald eagle nest is located in Saint Edwards Park, approximately one mile east of the trail at NE 145th Street. Construction activities occurring more than 0.5 mile from bald eagle nests are not likely to disturb nesting activities (USFWS, 1999). A bald eagle was observed perching near the trail across the lake from this nest. The proposed trail improvements should not affect this bald eagle nest or available habitat in this territory. No other priority habitats or species were observed during the survey or recorded by WDFW near this section of the Burke-Gilman trail.

Conclusions

Land use along the trail varies from developed parkland to residential and commercial zones. Native forest and shrub habitats are sparse along the trail. Several songbird species were observed in habitats along the trail and several waterfowl species were

observed in Lake Washington near Log Boom Park. The trail is located within an active bald eagle nesting territory. One bald eagle was observed perching in a tall conifer adjacent to the trail in a residential area near NE 155th Street. The proposed trail improvements should not affect the bald eagle nest located across the lake from the trail or available habitat in the bald eagle territory.

References

USFWS (United States Department of Fish and Wildlife). 1999. *Biological Assessment Preparation and Review*. Lacey, Washington.

WDFW (Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife). 2003. *Priority Species and Habitats Database.*

Attachments

Figure 1
Photos 1 through 6

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Map data are the property of the sources listed below. Inaccuracies may exist, and Adolfson Associates, Inc. implies no warranties or guarantees regarding any aspect of data dipiction.

SOURCE: King County GIS, 2002, 2004;

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FIGURE 1

AERIAL VIEW

BURKE GILMAN TRAIL

LAKE FOREST PARK AND KENMORE, WASHINGTON

Photo 1. Burke-Gilman Trail bounded by residential lots in Lake Forest Park (April 4, 2005).

Photo. 2. New home construction along the Burke-Gilman Trail in Lake Forest Park (April 4, 2005).

Photo 3. Slope vegetation (English ivy and black cottonwood) between SR 522 and the Burke-Gilman Trail west of Log Boom Park (April 4, 2005).

Photo 4. Lombardi poplar trees between SR 522 and the Burke-Gilman Trail near Ballinger Way (April 4, 2005).

Photo 5. Lake Washington shoreline and a lake-fringe wetland near the Burke-Gilman Trail in Log Boom Park (April, 4 2005).

Photo 6. McAleer Creek, view downstream of the Burke-Gilman Trail (April 4, 2005).