

Estuary Overview

Filling Information Gaps

Creosote Piling Inventory

- Updates DNR’s inventory of creosote pilings in the Grays Harbor estuary

Chinook/Steelhead Survival & Residence Telemetry Study (n=50)

- Survival: Where in the basin are we losing individuals, and what are the likely sources of mortality in those locations? Are there estuary-specific sources of mortality that might have a bearing on returns?
- Residence time in the estuary: how important is estuary habitat quality to the survival of out-migrating Chinook and steelhead? To what extent are they using rearing/surge plain habitat vs. being exposed to more degraded portions of the estuary?

Pinniped Abundance Assessment

- First step toward assessing predation impacts on salmonids

Restoration & Protection Planning

Chehalis RM 13-20 Planning/Assessment

- Sponsored by Grays Harbor CD
- Identifies project opportunities to initiate long lead time actions in priority GSUs in forested tidal surge plain

Key 2024 Takeaways & Next Steps

- In-progress planning and mapping efforts
- Next step: coalesce around priority planning / project developments to continue moving forward
- Ideas: 1) Surge Plain and Mouth of Tributaries Land Protection Local Strategy 2) Aberdeen Shoreline Softening Local Strategy
- Mainstem Chehalis RM 13-20 investment plan could serve as a template for estuary area plans and Local Strategies in the future.
- “Low-hanging fruit” project opportunities might still be challenging

Ecological Region

Tidal Reaches of Chehalis River and Other Tributaries

Rivers and Streams

+

Mainstem Chehalis River Mile

Coastal Resilience & Triple Bottom Line Projects (CCA \$):

- Coastal erosion & SLR
- WSDOT, ECY, WDFW
- Transportation Infrastructure + Habitat

Priority Knowledge:

- tide gate barriers
- eulachon population dynamics and habitat use
- smooth cordgrass distribution
- salmonid prey abundance in varying habitat types
- water quality: understand seasonality of concerns in shallow water and shoreline habitats
- identify potential cold-water refugia
- project effectiveness monitoring for large wood placements

Elk River RM 10 Protection

- Protect rare salt marsh and surge plain forest
- Increase footprint; direct adjacency to the DNR NAP
- Development threat extinguished
- Restore shrub and forest tidal wetlands that are currently rare and expand upstream to accommodate sea level rise

Peels Slough & Trib. + Alder Grove

- Protect and restore 87 acres of floodplain
- Adjacent to DNR land; increases footprint
- Allows floodplain and wetland connectivity
- Extinguishes development threat

Chehalis RM 14.5-17.5

- Protection/acquisition, reach-scale restoration, landowner outreach
- High priority riparian planting above surge plain (sea level rise preparation)
- Potential structure elevation(s) / relocation(s)

ASRP Implementation Projects Funded

Project(s) Name & Symbol	Sponsor(s)	Project Cost	Current Status	Project End	River miles/ Acres
◆ Camp Creek at Schafer Boom Road	CBFTF	\$877,800	Complete	June 2026	5.65 mi access
▤ Surge Plain Protection: Peels Slough & Tributary + Alder Grove	Forterra	\$638,000	In Progress	April 2029?	96-102 acres
▥ Elk River RM 10 Protection	Forterra	\$403,000	In Progress	March 2027	40 acres
▦ Estuary Local Strategy Planning	Forterra	\$139,668	In Progress	June 2029?	In Planning
▧ Chehalis RM 14.5-17.5	GHCD	\$135,326	Concept	2029?	2-7 mi
▨ Oyhut Proposed Acquisition	Forterra	\$699,500	Funding Review	2027?	18.7 acres

