



State of Washington  
DEPARTMENT OF FISH AND WILDLIFE

*P.O. Box 1100, 111 Sherman St. (physical address), La Conner, Washington 98257-9612*

April 26, 2019

Jonn Lunsford  
Parks & Recreation Director  
City of Anacortes  
904 6th Street  
Anacortes, WA 98221

Dear Mr. Lunsford,

I would like to thank you and your colleagues for meeting with me on March 4, 2019 to discuss the implementation of mitigation for phases I & VII of the Guemes Island Trail construction. While work on the required mitigation is ongoing I am pleased with the progress and consider the City to be satisfactorily in compliance with the provisions of the Hydraulic Project Approvals (HPAs) issued to the City. I have summarized the results discussed during our conversation below;

RIPARIAN PLANTING

*Guemes Trail Phase VII Permit Number: 2014-4-92+01*

*23. Within seven calendar days of project completion, all disturbed areas shall be protected from erosion using vegetation or other means. Within six months of project completion, riparian vegetation consisting of conifers, red alder and other native species, shall be planted in selected locations along the existing and new sections of trail to increase beach shading as determined by the project biologist, WDFW, and the Parks Department. A vegetation monitoring plan, including the removal of invasive species, shall be prepared and implemented consistent with city and WDFW standards.*

In April of 2015 The City planted a total of 128 trees, 500 shrubs, and 100 herbaceous plants along the trail to as required in the HPA. Due to poor plant survival, unintentional mowing, and vandalism the plantings were not successful in satisfying the HPA requirements. In response to this, during February 2018 the City followed up with an additional planting of 225 trees and 100 shrubs; an additional 30 trees were planted in the fall of 2018 and a significant amount of self-seeding alders have colonized the site. The City has modified their mowing equipment to avoid plant damage and have installed signage to warn of the illegality of interfering with the riparian plantings.

As part of the riparian planting effort, “planting pockets” were installed along the path on the waterward side. Thirty seven pockets were constructed with areas ranging from 14.4 – 777ft<sup>2</sup> for a total

of 8706ft<sup>2</sup>. Plant survival was especially poor in these areas due to the failure of the pockets to retain the soil necessary to support the trees and shrubs planted in them. In response, the City has planted dune grass to create an integrated soil medium and to increase plant survival. Additional plantings will occur when the planting pockets mature and become more suitable for the trees and shrubs.

*Guemes Trail Phase I Permit Number: 115444-1*

*28. Mitigation shall include: (1) the removal of approximately 700 creosote treated railroad ties; (2) removal of approximately 3,600 angular rocks that have migrated down onto the beach from the existing rock wall; (3) removal of invasive species including Himalayan blackberry, English Ivy, poison hemlock, and Scot's broom; and (4) replanting of riparian vegetation with native species.*

Phase 1 plantings consisted of shore pine, Douglas maple, cedar, and dune grass. While many of these plants did not survive, the City is continuing the effort to establish native plants along the phase 1 trail.

The plantings referenced above were well cared for, watered and monitored, over the spring and summer of last year (2018) and from my observations of last summer, fall, and winter it appeared that the plants were doing well. Unfortunately during February of this year significant storm damage occurred to the trail and many of the plants. The City is working with Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) in order to repair the trail and will continue their effort to establish native plants. It is my opinion that with these efforts and with planned continued monitoring and maintenance, the City is satisfactorily in compliance the above provisions of the HPA.

#### BEACH NOURISHMENT

*Guemes Trail Phase VII Permit Number: 2014-4-92+01*

*24. As project mitigation, the beach waterward of Phase VII and Phase I Guemes Channel Trail sections (Phase I, 2,630 feet completed in 2009) shall be graveled with select material similar in composition to the on-site bank/bluff substrate or in compliance with the following specifications:*

*a. Sieve Size Percent Passing by Weight*

*1-inch 100*

*1/2-inch 80 to 100*

*3/8-inch 40 to 80*

*less than 3/8-inch 0 to 40*

*b. Gravel shall not contain silty or clay type soils.*

*c. Gravel shall not be angular type rock.*

*d. Gravel shall be spread along the entire length of the Phase VII and Phase I trail sections waterward for a distance of 4.5 to 9 lineal feet. One cubic yard of gravel shall be required for every 12 feet of trail (e.g., a 120 foot trail section will require 10 cubic yards of gravel). Where possible gravel shall be used to fill interstitial spaces within the rock wall.*

*e. A total of 500 cubic yards of gravel shall be applied to the beach over the five year life of this permit. This material may be applied in five equal applications of 100 cubic yards annually. Graveling shall be conducted each summer immediately after the March 15 through June 14 salmonid work closure.*

*f. To monitor the effectiveness of beach graveling (nourishment), up to 10 reference transect lines shall be spaced evenly along the length of the trail. Beach elevations shall be measured in*

*years 1, 3, 5, 7, and 10 to determine rise or fall of beach elevation along the transect lines. Results will be used to identify those sections of beach where gravel may be transported at a higher rate and which sections may need higher or lower rates of nourishment. A final monitoring plan shall be developed by the City of Anacortes and the project consultant.*

*Guemes Trail Phase I Permit Number: 115444-1*

*29. The City of Anacortes shall seek grant funding for additional mitigation in the form of beach nourishment.*

*30. Beach nourishment shall consist of the annual addition of approximately of 20 cubic yards of a 50:50 mixture of clean sand and round pea gravel (no crushed rock). The gravel shall be sized between 1/16 inch and 1/4 inch in diameter. Beach nourishment material shall be applied to the upper beach at the end of the Edwards Way Cul de Sac.*

In 2015 the City installed an initial 400 cubic yards of beach nourishment with suitable beach gravel/sand material. Additional installations of 100 cubic yards each were installed in 2017 & 2018, and the City plans to add another 100 cubic yards this year. Although the requirement for nourishment will be satisfied in August 2019, the City plans to continue adding 100 yards/year into the future. The City has also provided additional beach nourishment by transporting sediment from the bluff face adjacent to the trail that has been coming down during mass wasting events to the beach waterward of the trail. This material is of different composition than what is required in the HPA but is what would naturally exist on the beach if the bluff were allowed to erode naturally.

Beach elevations in response to the beach nourishment activity have been monitored and the resulting data has been made available in a compliance report submitted to and accepted by WDFW dated March 21, 2018 (Widner 2018), an updated report will be submitted to WDFW in October of 2019. The City will continue to monitor the site as required by the HPA and additional compliance reports will be made available.

The actions described above combined with the future actions planned by the City, has in my opinion shown satisfactory compliance with the HPA. WDFW will continue to work with the City to ensure ongoing compliance and eventual completion of HPA requirements.

Sincerely,



*Bob Warinner  
Assistant Regional Habitat Program Manager*