Lake Washington/Cedar/Sammamish Watershed (WRIA 8) Salmon Tour

Rainbow Bend Levee Removal and Floodplain Reconnection Project (Cedar River) – King County and City of Seattle

- Project implemented by King County in partnership with City of Seattle. Funding for acquisition through construction provided by City of Seattle Cedar River Watershed Habitat Conservation Plan, Federal Emergency Management Agency, King Conservation District, King County, King County Conservation Futures, King County Flood Control District, Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration, and Salmon Recovery Funding Board.

- Over ten years to move from first acquisition grant to completion of construction.

- Project is high priority for salmon recovery and flood risk reduction—a levee disconnected the river from its floodplain and disrupted natural processes, and the mobile home park and nine single family homes on the site were subject to repetitive flooding.

- Acquisition of the mobile home park and single family homes and relocation of the tenants from the site took several years.

- Restoration involved removing a 900-foot levee, excavating pilot channels across the floodplain, placing log structures in the floodplain to create diverse floodplain habitat, and planting native vegetation.

- The levee removal reconnects approximately 40 acres of floodplain to the Cedar River and will increase edge habitat, offer off-channel and backwater habitat, and create overall channel complexity. The result is a significant improvement in conditions for juvenile salmon and upstream migrants.

- The floodplain reconnection will also provide capacity for floodwater storage and conveyance and will reduce stress on the left bank, where the Cedar River Trail, State Route 169, and a regional fiber optic cable line are located.

- King County plans to closely monitor the site to in the coming years to better understand how salmon respond to floodplain restoration in this system and at this scale.

January 2009 Flood

Site Overview

During Construction

Following Construction