



Tahuya River Estuary

The Tahuya River inlet is near the Great Bend of Hood Canal. In the past, the inlet supported a large estuary. To support logging and later a county road, an embankment was constructed across the mouth of the Tahuya River estuary, with only a short bridge where it crosses the Tahuya River channel. The embankment has constrained tidal flows and the formation of tidal channels. In addition, gravel fill material was placed on historic tidelands southwest of the bridge (now used as a helipad for emergency medical transport). The restoration would replace the road embankment with a bridge, allowing tidal flows to resume across the estuary and tidal channel patterns to form. Fill would be removed to restore historic salt marsh habitat. Old pilings related to a historic mill site would also be removed, potentially removing a source of creosote contamination from the estuary. The restoration would improve shellfish productivity in the lower estuary by allowing increased transport of coarse sediments that are beneficial to shellfish.



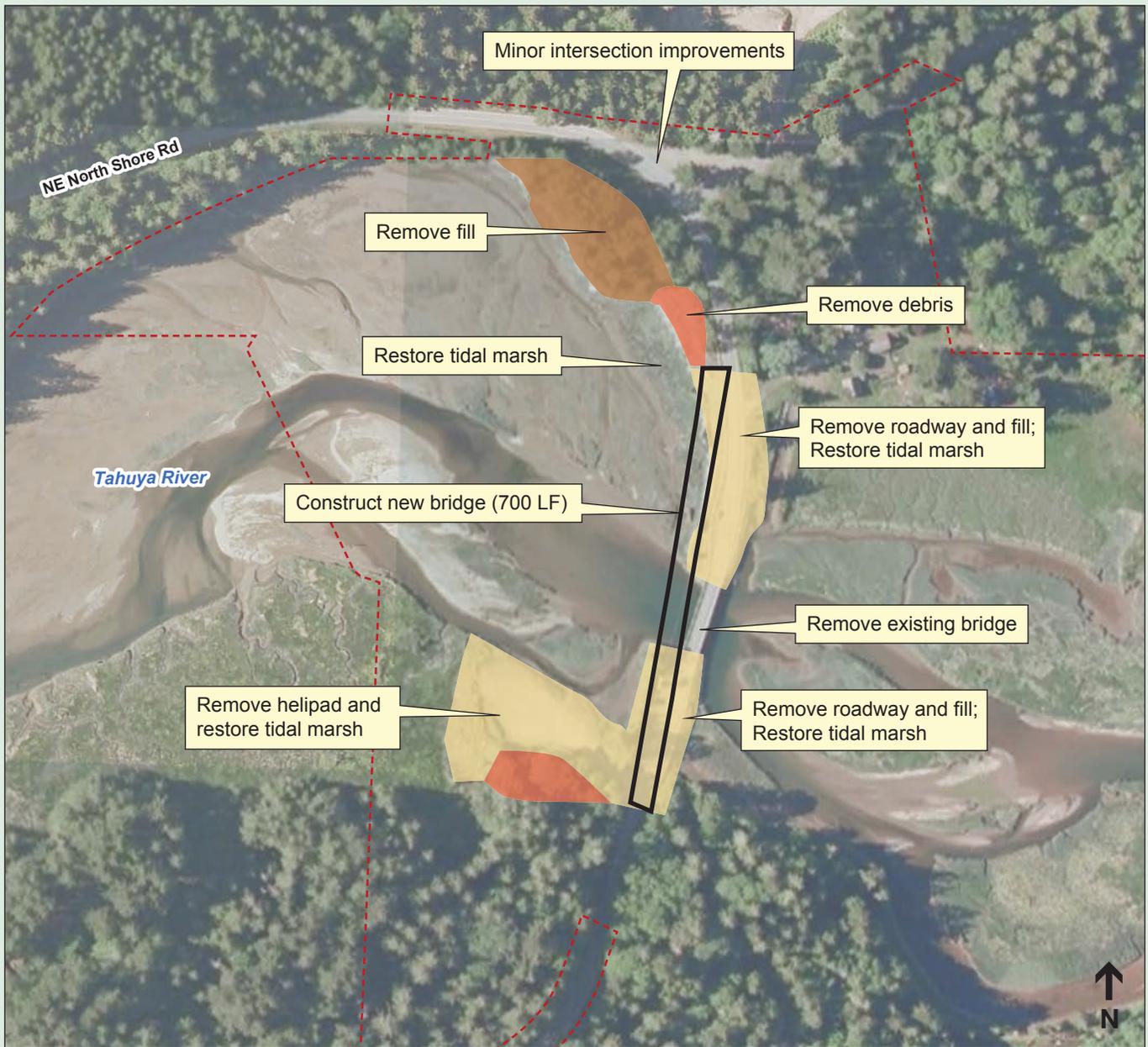
IMAGE: Washington State Department of Ecology (2006)

Processes Restored

- Natural erosion and accretion of beaches.
- Natural formation of tidal channels in estuaries.
- Unrestricted flow of freshwater rivers and streams into estuaries.
- Unrestricted movement of saltwater through tidal channels in estuaries.

Conditions Improved

- Restored coastal embayment that provides valuable nursery habitat for threatened species of juvenile salmon such as Chinook, increasing their survival and supporting population recovery in Puget Sound.
- Restored intertidal and shallow subtidal areas that are habitat for recreationally and culturally important shellfish such as oysters, mussels, and clams.
- Improved quality of the water flowing through the estuary.



SOURCE: ESA (2011); USDA-NAIP (2009)

Image above depicts major project features. See design report for additional details.

Key Design Elements

The restoration would remove the entire roadway embankment fill from the estuary, replacing it with a 700-foot-long bridge span. Portions of the NE North Shore Road would be realigned to conform to the new bridge placement. Other fill such as the gravel helipad would also be removed from the intertidal zone. In areas where fill is removed, the marsh would be restored by decompacting the soil and installing native plant species.

Site Summary Statistics

- Area of Restored Process: 36 acres
- Total Project Cost: \$28.9 million

For more detailed information regarding this conceptual design, please visit our website at www.pugetsoundnearshore.org/cdr.html.