



WATER STORAGE IMPROVEMENT PROJECTS



Planned East 40th Ecological Study: Background & Scope

Clean, high quality and reliable drinking water consistently ranks highest in importance to EWEB customers. The utility is making significant investments to ensure we continue to meet those needs and expectations by improving the resiliency of our water storage systems while supporting healthy habitat and public spaces.

The East 40th site supports oak and Douglas fir forest, an open meadow, and other plant communities that provide habitat for a variety of birds and other wildlife. Because neighbors currently enjoy open access to the vacant property, and this unofficial public access has been a valued community benefit, EWEB is evaluating options for maintaining areas of open space and opportunities for mitigation, restoration or enhancement. In addition, EWEB would like to better understand and address the potential environmental impacts of this project.

EWEB is contracting with the consulting firm DOWL to conduct an ecological study at the site. Work will include:

PRELIMINARY RESEARCH

This task includes obtaining and reviewing existing environmental information, seeking site specific information from local conservation groups and citizens, and natural resource protection regulations and policies that could affect the project.



As part of DOWL's preliminary research, neighbors will be invited to share their observations of unique or highly valued wildlife and habitat features on the property. Watch your inbox for a questionnaire from DOWL.

SITE VISIT AND MAPPING

DOWL will conduct a site visit to:

- Inventory, map, and assess ecological resources including, but not limited to areas with unique or rare habitat features and/or areas with high functions and values.
- Record observed wildlife species and/or wildlife species habitat.
- Identify areas with mitigation and/or restoration potential.
- Map areas where disturbance will have limited impacts to the surrounding natural areas, vegetation, and wildlife.

ECOLOGICAL INVENTORY REPORT AND INITIAL IMPACT ASSESSMENT MEMO

DOWL will prepare a draft and final ecological inventory and assessment report, review EWEB's conceptual site plans to identify likely impacts, and provide guidance on how best to avoid or minimize impacts.

The ecological inventory report will include, but not be limited to, the following:

- Description of field, mapping, and assessment methods.
- Overview and summary of ecological resources present on the property.
- Detailed description of on-site plant communities, wildlife observed, and habits present, including rare, unique, or sensitive species if observed and location of species.
- Maps of the habitats and ecological/biological resources present.
- Matrix of relative functions and values of on-site ecological resources.
- Photos of on-site ecological resources.
- Overall base map showing existing ecological features.
- Map or figure showing suggested areas for protection, avoidance, and construction minimization, and areas with mitigation, restoration, and enhancement potential.

The report will include:

- Description of potential construction and operational impacts on the ecological resources present.
- Options, alternatives, and considerations for the design team to consider prior to final design to avoid potential impacts.
- Options, alternatives, and considerations for the design team to consider for impact minimization should complete avoidance be unfeasible.
- Suggested operation and maintenance best management practices to avoid and minimize impacts.
- Prioritized list of proposed avoidance and minimization measures.

ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION AND ENHANCEMENT STRATEGY PLAN

The strategy plan will:

- Identify the location and extent of temporary disturbance areas and permanent disturbance areas, cross referenced with the ecological inventory map.
- Quantify the acreage of temporary and permanent impacts to on-site ecological resources. Identify restoration and ecological enhancement opportunities for EWEB to consider, including:
 - Restoration suggestions for temporary impacts and temporal losses resulting from construction.
 - Restoration suggestions to offset long term impacts that may result from operation and maintenance activities over the life of the project.
 - Enhancement opportunities for areas not impacted from the project that could improve existing ecological and biological resources and habitats on the parcel.
 - Enhancement opportunities to rare, special, or unique habitats and ecological zones that may be present on the parcel.
 - Prioritized list of restoration and enhancement opportunities presented in the plan.
 - Suggestions for long term restoration, enhancement, and protection of the ecological and biological resources remaining on the parcel upon completion of the project.

Information about schedules will be shared as it becomes available.