

***We envision a fully restored 800+ Acre Wildlife Area and Nature Park at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers: A place that provides habitat for more than 100 species including bald eagles, painted turtles, federally listed salmon and steelhead and extraordinary opportunities for people to hike, paddle and enjoy nature in an urban environment.***

*Visitors will explore a mosaic of wetlands, grasslands, beaches and one of the largest intact bottomland hardwood forests left on the Lower Columbia River. A new nature center will provide programs for children and adults about the unique role that confluence areas play in the migratory cycles of our imperiled fish and wildlife populations. Our local green economy will be supported by nature based recreation, restoration projects, and establishment of a regional mitigation bank to allow for marine development in more appropriate locations.*

*West Hayden Island will symbolize our commitment to restoring balance to our urban landscapes and leaving the land better than we found it for future generations*



# Save West Hayden Island

October 2011



The City and Port continue to move forward with their efforts to pave over the West Hayden Island Wildlife Area for future marine terminals. This 826-acre natural area located at the confluence of the Willamette and Columbia Rivers represents one of the most important habitat areas in the city of Portland. The Port is currently in the process of trying to have the island annexed and rezoned so that it can build hundreds of acres of parking lots and marine industrial infrastructure---a facility for which there is no demonstrable need.

Public opposition to this project from conservation and community groups over the course of more than a decade has prevented the Port and the City from moving forward with annexation and rezoning. **We are making progress!** The Port's original demands for more than 600 acres of development have now been reduced to 300 acres and claims by the Port that it was physically impossible to build this facility at a smaller scale have repeatedly been proven false. Still this is a HUGE facility---more than 5 times the size of the Oregon Zoo-----more than 200 city blocks---that will be built in the middle of a floodplain. Even though no final decision has yet been reached on West Hayden Island, the Port is already filling the island's floodplains with tens of thousands of cubic yards of contaminated dredge materials from the Portland Harbor Superfund Site to prepare the island for development.

## **1) West Hayden Island is a critically important natural area:**

- It contains 826-acres of intact habitat including 39 acres of wetlands, more than 100 acres of grasslands and 4% of the remaining intact cottonwood bottomland habitat between rivermile 12 and rivermile 145.
- It is home to at least 81 species of birds, 9 mammal species, 4 amphibian species (including bald eagles, western painted turtles, and provides critical habitat for federally listed salmon.
- It is designated as Class 1 riparian habitat and a "Habitat of Concern" under Metro's Title 13
- Former US Fish and Wildlife Service State Supervisor Kemper McMaster has written the West Hayden Island is considered "an important conservation asset regardless of its location. Its presence on and otherwise highly urbanized landscape accentuates its importance."

**2) West Hayden Island is located almost entirely in the floodplain.** In 1996, almost all of West Hayden Island was underwater. This is not the place to construct industrial facilities.

**3) The Port of Portland has not justified destroying West Hayden Island to build a marine industrial facility.** The Port has not sufficiently explored other opportunities such as collaboration with the Port of Vancouver to make more efficient use of the industrial land supply.

**4) The new bridge (yes, another new bridge!) that would be required to support development on West Hayden Island will cost over \$100 million of your tax dollars.**

**5) East Hayden Island is currently one of the most park deficient areas in the City:** Protecting West Hayden Island as a natural area would create outstanding recreational opportunities to enjoy nature in North Portland and it would undoubtedly become one of the regions premier natural areas.

To stay up to date on efforts to permanently protect West Hayden Island, check out our [Save West Hayden Island Facebook Page](#).

For more information contact Audubon Conservation Director, Bob Sallinger at [bsallinger@audubonportland.org](mailto:bsallinger@audubonportland.org)

## City of Portland Open Houses

The City has produced new concept plans that will be available for public review over the next two weeks. **Please go to one of two open houses to comment on these concept plans.** It is important to send three key messages:

1. No development should occur on West Hayden Island---it is a critical fish and wildlife area that should be protected in its entirety
2. If the city does proceed forward with annexation and rezoning, we recommend the following elements be incorporated from the two draft concept plans:
  - **Development Footprint:** Audubon supports Option B. Option B results in the least fragmentation and disturbance and highest ratio of interior to edge habitat in the remaining habitat that remains. It will result in a much healthier landscape over the course of time. Option A significantly fragments much of the remaining habitat--because of this its real footprint is close to 450 acres rather than 300.
  - **Recreation:** Audubon supports a modified Option B. We believe that additional recreational opportunities could be added to option B. However it is important to leave portions of the island untraveled. We support the concept that parking, boat ramp and nature center and other amenities should be at the edge of the natural area (ideally east of the bridge rather than in the middle. Option A places parking, roads, boat ramps into the interior of the habitat areas and fragments the entire island with trails.
  - **Bridge:** Audubon is not for or against a bridge to West Hayden Island. However if a bridge is built, Option B would minimize its impacts whereas Option A would require even more fragmentation of the remaining habitat
3. The City must complete additional studies before making a decision. these include:
  - Alternative site analysis--specifically regarding more efficient use of existing industrial land base in Portland Harbor and collaboration with the Port of Vancouver
  - Cost/ Benefit analysis (including analysis of impacts on the surrounding community)
  - On and Offsite Mitigation Plan
4. Any development that does occur needs to be completely mitigated in a way that results in a **net increase in ecosystem function**



West Hayden Island Grasslands