

City of Bellingham Habitat News



Contribute to a 'Beloved' Bellingham Community on MLK, Jr. Day of Service, Jan. 21



"Life's most persistent and urgent question is, 'What are you doing for others?'"

– Dr. Martin Luther King, Jr.

Event: MLK, Jr. Day of Service

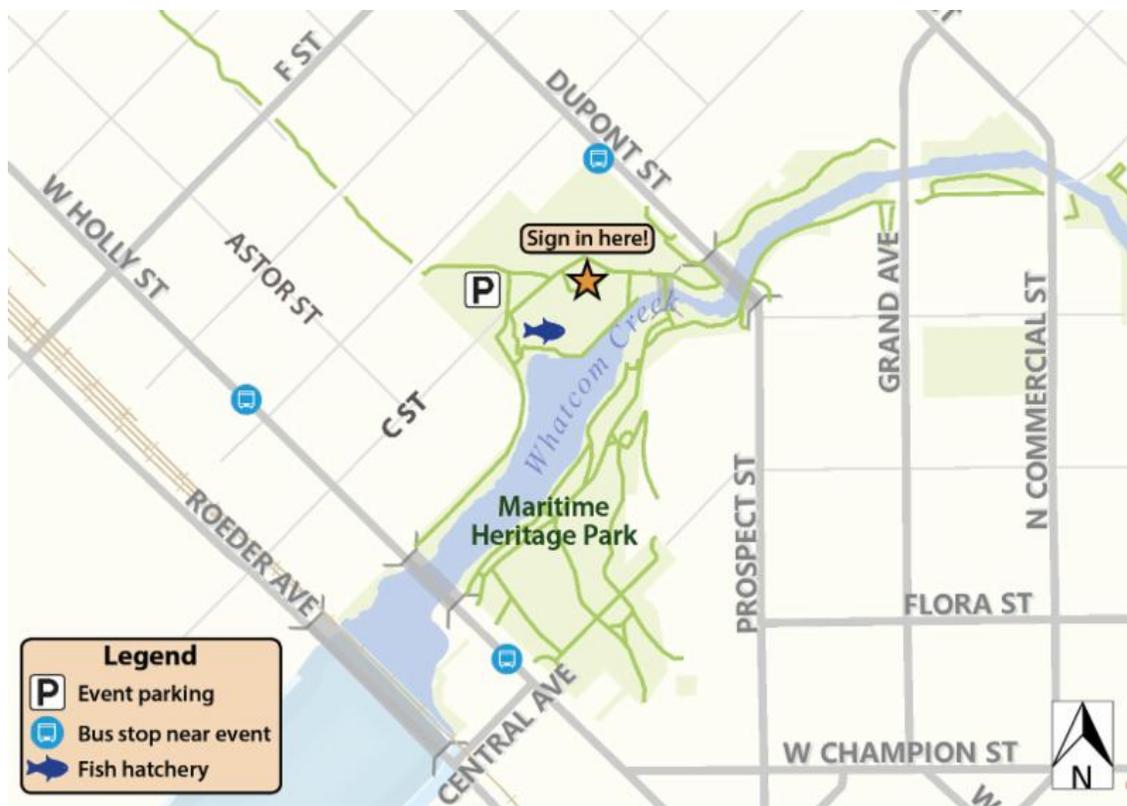
Date: Monday, Jan. 21, 2019

Time: 10 a.m. to 1 p.m.

Location: Maritime Heritage Park

You are invited to join the City of Bellingham Parks Volunteer Program, City of Bellingham Public Works Natural Resources, and the Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association (NSEA) for a community work party in honor of Martin Luther King, Jr. Day of Service. The annual work party will take place at Maritime Heritage Park, 500 West Holly Street in downtown Bellingham, from 10 a.m. to 1 p.m. on Monday, January 21. The event will be followed by a celebration with free pizza and raffle prizes. Volunteers will remove invasive species and plant native plants around the [Whatcom Creek estuary](#), contributing to ongoing efforts to improve water quality, salmon habitat, and green space.

Maritime Heritage Park serves as a gathering place for people of all backgrounds in Bellingham, especially people experiencing homelessness, given its location and proximity to services. Volunteers are invited to join in promoting Dr. King's vision of a "[beloved community](#)" – a community in which poverty, hunger and homelessness do not exist – by bringing donations of hats, mittens, scarves, blankets, sleeping bags, hand warmers, and non-perishable food to this event in support of [The Lighthouse Mission](#).



The work party site will be located near the Bellingham Technical College fish hatchery at the north end of the park. Several Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) [bus routes](#) can get you to Maritime Heritage Park. The park is also accessible by [bike](#). Parking is available at the end of C street, at 1600 C Street. Tools, gloves and instructions will be provided. Youth under the age of 18 must provide a [City and NSEA Youth Liability Release Form](#) signed by their legal guardian.

For additional information: Contact Amy Brown, Bellingham Parks Volunteer Coordinator, at apbrown@cob.org or 360-778-7105

Continued Restoration Work at Post Point Lagoon

[Post Point Lagoon](#) is one of only seven remaining pocket estuaries in Bellingham Bay, providing habitat for three species listed under the federal Endangered Species Act – Chinook salmon, bull trout, and steelhead trout. The lagoon is also home to the only Great Blue Heron colony within the City of Bellingham.

In 2018, City-sponsored [Washington Conservation Corps \(WCC\) crews](#) installed additional native plants and removed invasive species as part of a long-term project to restore the Post Point Lagoon restoration site. The crews also added compost and mulch to support plant growth and long-term survival.



2005: Pre-restoration photo of Post Point



2018: Recent photo of Post Point

Post Point Lagoon has been the focus of restoration efforts since 2004. Prior to restoration work at the site, the area served as an off-leash dog area which caused fecal coliform spikes in the lagoon. Fecal coliform bacteria can indicate the presence of pathogenic bacteria and viruses that may be a risk to human health and water quality. In 2008, a major restoration project was completed that improved the shoreline riparian corridor, upper intertidal salt marsh, and intertidal mud flat. Elements of this project included: placing large wood within and around the lagoon; removing fill from the shoreline, increasing shoreline length by 18% and saltmarsh area by 70%; re-establishing a native marine riparian buffer along the shoreline; protecting native vegetation and habitat elements by restricting access to sections of the upland, shoreline and intertidal zones; and installing educational signs. This restoration project also restored the beach, which had previously been stripped by foot and paw traffic. Environmental monitoring at the site has found decreased fecal coliform levels since restoration work began.

Finding a Balance with Beavers



Beavers have been a part of the North American landscape for millions of years, and today they are prevalent in many of our restoration sites. Although their work is not always compatible with urban infrastructure, beavers provide many habitat and water quality benefits. Beaver dams help to “slow it, spread it, sink it,” meaning that they hold water on the landscape by getting it to slow down, spread out, and infiltrate into the groundwater. This is important for maintaining water temperature, quantity,

and quality. The ponds created by beaver dams provide habitat for fish and wildlife, reduce the extremes of flash flooding, store sediment, reduce erosion, and filter out pollutants.

Beaver dams generally do not pose a significant barrier to fish passage.

Instead, beavers more commonly benefit salmon by providing habitat and water quality improvements. However, since built environments are not as flexible as natural areas, beaver dams can increase potential flood risk and compromise infrastructure in urban settings. We monitor beaver activity at our [restoration sites](#) closely to make sure that we maintain public safety while striking a balance between our work and the beavers' work.

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Habitat Outreach Team
Public Works Natural Resources
(360) 778-7971
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