

Habitat Limiting Factors and Reconnaissance Assessment Report

Green/Duwamish and Central Puget Sound Watersheds
(Water Resource Inventory Area 9 and Vashon Island)

Volume I I

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3. TRIBUTARY CONDITIONS

SALMONID HABITATS IN THE TRIBUTARIES OF THE GREEN/DUWAMISH RIVER BASIN, WRIA 9 DIRECT DRAINAGES TO PUGET SOUND AND VASHON ISLAND

GENERAL OVERVIEW

Many of the tributaries of the Green/Duwamish River are among some of the most hydrologically altered streams in the Puget Sound ecoregion. The tributaries of the lower Green/Duwamish River exist in heavily urbanized locale and are subjected to the adverse habitat impacts that accompany this setting. These streams and their subbasins generally have high levels of impervious surfaces, altered hydrologic regimes, loss of floodplain connectivity, poor riparian conditions and water quality problems. As one moves upstream into the middle reaches of the watershed, the habitat conditions of the tributary streams show some improvement and the land use becomes a mix of residential, agricultural and forestry. Tributaries in the middle reach still do not meet many of the criteria necessary for properly functioning habitats important for salmonid survival. Upstream of the Tacoma Headworks Dam, the tributary streams are almost exclusively in lands utilized for commercial forestry and recreation. While the habitat around these streams is generally better than downstream, it has problems typically associated with commercial forestry and damage to habitat forming processes are less permanent.

In this chapter, the tributaries of the Green/Duwamish watershed (WRIA 9) and Vashon Island (a portion of WRIA 15) are subdivided into important streams as follows:

- Longfellow Creek Subbasin (chapter 3.1);
- Hamm Creek Subbasin (chapter 3.2);
- Spring Brook Creek Subbasin (chapter 3.3);
- Mill Creek and Mullen Slough Subbasin (chapter 3.4);
- East Hill Tributaries Subbasin (chapter 3.5);
- Middle Green River Tributaries Subbasin (chapter 3.6);
- Soos Creek Subbasin (chapter 3.7);
- Newaukum Creek Subbasin (chapter 3.8);
- Coal and Deep Creek(s) Subbasin (chapter 3.9);
- Upper Green River and Sunday Creek Subbasin (chapter 3.10);
- Lester WAU Subbasin (3.11)
- Puget Sound Creeks (chapter 3.12); and
- Vashon and Maury Island Creeks (chapter 3.13).

There are numerous additional tributary streams not covered in this assessment. Generally these streams do not have anadromous fish access or have very limited amounts of access. However, the absence of these creeks in this report should not be interpreted as diminishing their importance, rather the lack of information that was located during the course of this investigation.