



South Waterfront Greenway Construction Update August 20, 2012

Construction

- In the next week or so we will begin construction of the vault walls. Vault walls are a system of interlocking concrete boxes that shore up the upper portion of the Greenway. Excavators will cut into the bank a place for each vault. Excavation will proceed north to south and be followed by installation of the vaults. Once the line of vaults is started, it must be completed.
- Because the water level continues to be high, a berm of intact riverbank will be left to keep the water out of the central area of construction and installation of the vault wall.
- We continue to test soil for contaminants as we excavate.
- Sheet pile walls will be installed in late August and early September – this will be loud and you may notice slight vibrations. The soils on the riverbank do not require as much force to drive piles as in upland areas, so we expect the vibrations to be negligible.

Water Levels – we continue to closely monitor the water levels. Portions of the construction depend on the water level dropping.

- The water level continues to be unusually high. Today, it is between 7' and 9', depending on the tides. The river level needs to drop to a maximum of 5' and stay there for a minimum of 8 weeks to complete the beach work.
- We will not begin the beach work if we are not confident that we can finish it before the water begins rising in the fall. This is usually in mid- to late-September, but we are still evaluating the forecasts on this.
- If the water level does not drop this season, beach construction would then take place in summer 2013 and extend the duration of the construction through fall 2013.

Work Hours

- Currently 7:00 AM-6:00 PM, Mon-Fri.
- In late August/early September, hours will increase to 7:00 AM-7:00 PM, Mon-Sat (possibly 11:00 PM).
- May add Sunday work hours, 7:00 AM-7:00 PM (possibly 11:00 PM).

Questions – we have received the following questions from the community and are sharing the responses.

There is a large diameter corrugated pipe in the central area of the project. What was it for and what will be done with it?

A – The pipe was a stormwater outfall prior to the formal development of the South Waterfront District streets and utilities. It is no longer functional and will be removed.

We have seen beaver below the construction area on the river side? What will we do about that?

A – According to Bureau of Environmental Services, they frequently have beaver on their project sites. They say that given the level of activity going on, this could be nutria since beaver will usually move out of an active construction area. We have information on who to contact within the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife if it appears the animal is in distress.

Why are we fencing the swale?

A – Just south of the Greenway project, the Bureau of Environmental Services recently completed a habitat restoration project funded by federal dollars. BES staff has attempted to protect the area with plastic construction fencing and allow it to reestablish. Unfortunately, individuals have consistently removed, cut, or gone around the fencing to gain access to the area. Human and animal access in the area has had a significant negative impact on the restoration site, and we are currently not in compliance with the terms of the grant we received. This could result in the city facing penalties and/or fines. We are installing a 6' chain link fence around the protected area in order to protect the restoration project until Greenway construction is complete.

What happened to the osprey fledgling?

A – According to Audubon: the fledgling was late in attempting to take his first flight, which ended in a collision with the construction fencing. Construction staff immediately contacted Audubon who are caring for it. They have informed us that the bird suffers from developmental disabilities as well as injuries sustained in the collision. His prognosis is unclear, but fairly serious.

Please let me know if you have any questions, Elizabeth Kennedy-Wong, 503-823-5113 or Elizabeth.kennedy-wong@portlandoregon.gov