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Hallmarks of MCRI are collaboration, functionality and efficiency

Interior Land Reclamation's Mike Kamann says Phase 1 of the Mission Creek Restoration Initiative (MCRI) is the "most collaborative construction project he's ever been part of," and that it's also "a showcase for functionality and efficiency." Dike relocation and floodplain enhancement between Casorso Road and Gordon Drive has increased the creek's channel width from 40 to 150 metres, thereby reducing flood risks while expanding fish and wildlife habitat and stocks.

COLLABORATION

Responsible for salvaging onsite material from the old dike, and then vegetating the expanded floodplain, Kamann explains that, "because each partner contributed to project design, and had very specific roles during construction, we all worked very well together." And given the strong lines of communication, "there was no money wasted" on the duplication of human and/or financial resources.

Formal MCRI partners include BC Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resources; Regional District of Central Okanagan; City of Kelowna; Okanagan Nation Alliance; Westbank First Nation; Central Okanagan Land Trust; and Friends of Mission Creek.

Phase 1 funding partners include the federal Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Okanagan Basin Water Board, City of Kelowna, Ocoela Fish and Game Club, Peachland Sportsman Association, Kelowna and District Fish and Game Club, and Trout Unlimited.

In-kind supporters include UBC Okanagan, Ecoscapes Environmental Consultants, Dobson Engineering, and Interior Land Reclamation.



Mike Kamann was responsible for vegetating the expanded floodplain adjacent to the new dike. He removed cottonwoods that were cut into 'stubs' or 'stakes' to provide short- and long-term habitat for fish, birds, reptiles, and mammals. The live cottonwoods will also help mitigate extreme weather events by absorbing water during floods and releasing water during droughts.

FUNCTIONALITY

“Every dollar spent on design and construction was intended to minimize environmental impacts and optimize ecological functioning,” explains Kamann. “During floodplain expansion, for example, we reused and recycled most of the onsite materials.”

He salvaged trees and shrubs from the old dike and the pathway for the new dike, and then transplanted them to the expanded one-hectare floodplain that will ultimately provide lush habitat for fish, wildlife, and indigenous vegetation. Some of the large cottonwoods that had to be removed were cut into ‘stubs’ and excavated in to provide roosting and nesting habitat. Smaller trees were cut into hundreds of ‘stakes’ that were planted and will grow into trees. Red osier shrubs, wild roses, willows, oregon grape, and other native plants were also relocated.

At project completion, more than 400 trees/stakes and 300 shrubs had been planted, and 30 pieces of large woody debris were strategically placed within the newly created floodplain to provide a range of habitats for birds and other wildlife. In addition, two ponds were created to provide wetland habitat, incorporating replanted sedges and cattails from nearby ditches. Nature will now take its course and the restoration will evolve over time, ultimately providing a broad range of ecosystem benefits.

EFFICIENCY

Kamann observed that project activities demonstrate MCRI partners’ commitment to collaboration and associated cost efficiencies. For example, total project costs of about \$510,000 reflect money saved by using City of Kelowna crews for construction and UBCO students for input to dike design.

For more up-to-the-minute information about MCRI visit www.missioncreek.ca. Watch for our Construction Synopsis and the upcoming MCRI video. You can also contact:

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