

## Rebuilding the Wetland – Ecological Restoration of Titlow Beach Park

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Wetland environments provide important ecological services by recycling water and nutrients and providing habitats for various marine species. However, many of these habitats have been deteriorating due to human activities, preventing them from performing those services, although there are various restoration efforts done to mitigate this. In the case of Titlow Park in Tacoma, Washington, the modifications to the estuary have hampered the wetland's ability to provide for endemic animal species. To counter this Metro Parks Tacoma has developed a restoration plan for the area. The project's team has been assigned to plan for the removal of invasive plant species in the park and install native species to restore the original ecology of the area. This was done by selecting new native plants based on how well they will grow in the area and how they will enhance the ecology and aesthetics of the park. A key aspect of this project was achieving community engagement with this effort and as such, the physical work involved in the project was done by hand by both project facilitators and volunteers. After the project was completed, the goal of removing every invasive plant and planting every native species was met. The capstone project showed how similar work in ecosystem restoration can benefit these environments as shown in Titlow Park's wetland by removing invasive species and reintroducing native species. It also showed how much impact can be done by a small group of restorationists and showed how community outreach can determine the success of restoration projects.