

Improvements completed on the Chehalis River Surge Plain Natural Area Preserve walking trail in Grays Harbor County

Local News

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OLYMPIA - The Washington State Department of Natural Resources (DNR) recently completed an upgrade to the walking trail at the Chehalis River Surge Plain Natural Area Preserve (NAP). When this interpretive walking trail was established in 2001, the final compacted gravel cap for a large section of the trail was not completed. The project just completed provides a 6 foot wide compacted gravel trail surface for the entire 3.5 mile length of the trail. The informal parking and fishing access area at the end of Preacher's Slough Road was also improved, and no longer has a large puddle. Simroe Contracting, Inc., a local contractor, completed the work on the trail. This project helps to implement public access goals outlined in the recently completed management plan for the site, available by request from DNR's Pacific Cascade Region, at 360-577-2025.

Chehalis River Surge Plain Natural Area Preserve Chehalis River Surge Plain NAP is located in Grays Harbor County. The preserve supports a large wetland area that spreads out at the lower end of the Chehalis River just upstream from where it empties into Gray's Harbor. Sitka spruce and western red cedar thrive in the wet soils, where fresh and salt water mingle on this 2,643 acre site. This preserve contains the largest and best quality tidal surge plain wetland in the state. The site protects sloughs that wind through the site, providing important shelter for young salmon and other fish. **Natural Area Preserves** DNR is steward of about 31,000 acres of NAPs in 51 preserves throughout the state. NAPs protect outstanding features including native forests and grasslands, bogs, and sagebrush communities. Habitats for rare plant and animal species, such as basalt daisy, the Puget blue butterfly and Oregon spotted frog are also protected. Preserves have been established in most areas of the state. They range in size from about 5 acres to 3,600 acres. Natural Area Preserves are acquired through gift or purchase from willing sellers.