



Terrell Creek Estuarine Reach

LAND USE MANAGEMENT PRIORITY: RESTORATION

Watershed Characterization Results from the 2007 Pilot Study:

This watershed's ability to help maintain / improve water quality:

The Terrell Creek Estuarine Reach contains two low-gradient streams (including Terrell Creek) and several wetland areas, which are effective at removing nitrogen, bacteria from upstream septic systems, and other pollutants that would otherwise flow into Birch Bay. Given that this watershed is at the lower end of the entire Birch Bay watershed, its ability to perform water quality functions is of particular importance to the overall ecological health of the Bay.

This watershed's ability to maintain / improve natural patterns of surface and groundwater flow:

The Terrell Creek Estuarine Reach contains the lower portion of Terrell Creek, which is the major source of freshwater into Birch Bay. The watershed contains several wetland areas that can store a significant amount of water, thus reducing downstream erosion during periods of heavy or prolonged rain.

Important Wildlife Features:

The major habitat feature in the watershed is the lower portion of Terrell Creek, which provides important rearing habitat for salmon and trout. In particular, this area is vital to both young and returning adult salmon, because the brackish water in the creek allows the fish to acclimate when traveling from salt to freshwater, and vice-versa.

Anticipated Challenges:

Portions of the watershed are densely developed, especially near Terrell Creek. The remainder of undeveloped land is either zoned as urban residential (6 houses per acre), or open space (Birch Bay State Park). The potential increase in roads, parking lots, houses, and other impervious surfaces in this watershed may degrade the streams and wetlands, which could potentially increase the likelihood of flooding and water quality problems. Restoring Terrell Creek and the surrounding land is listed as a key goal in the 2007 pilot study, due to the importance of Terrell Creek to provide fish habitat and preserve water quality. However, there is little land available for restoration due to the existing development.

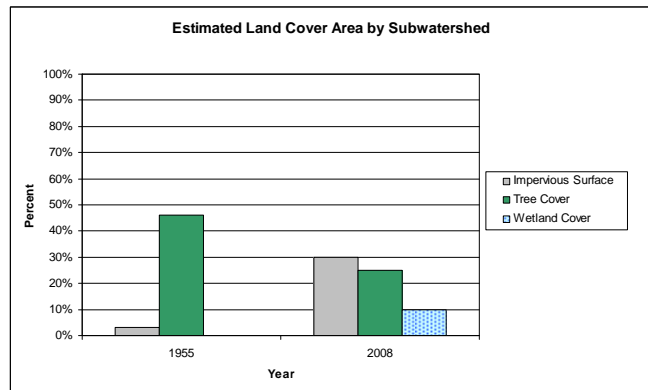
What We Found: The Land Cover Analysis by the Numbers

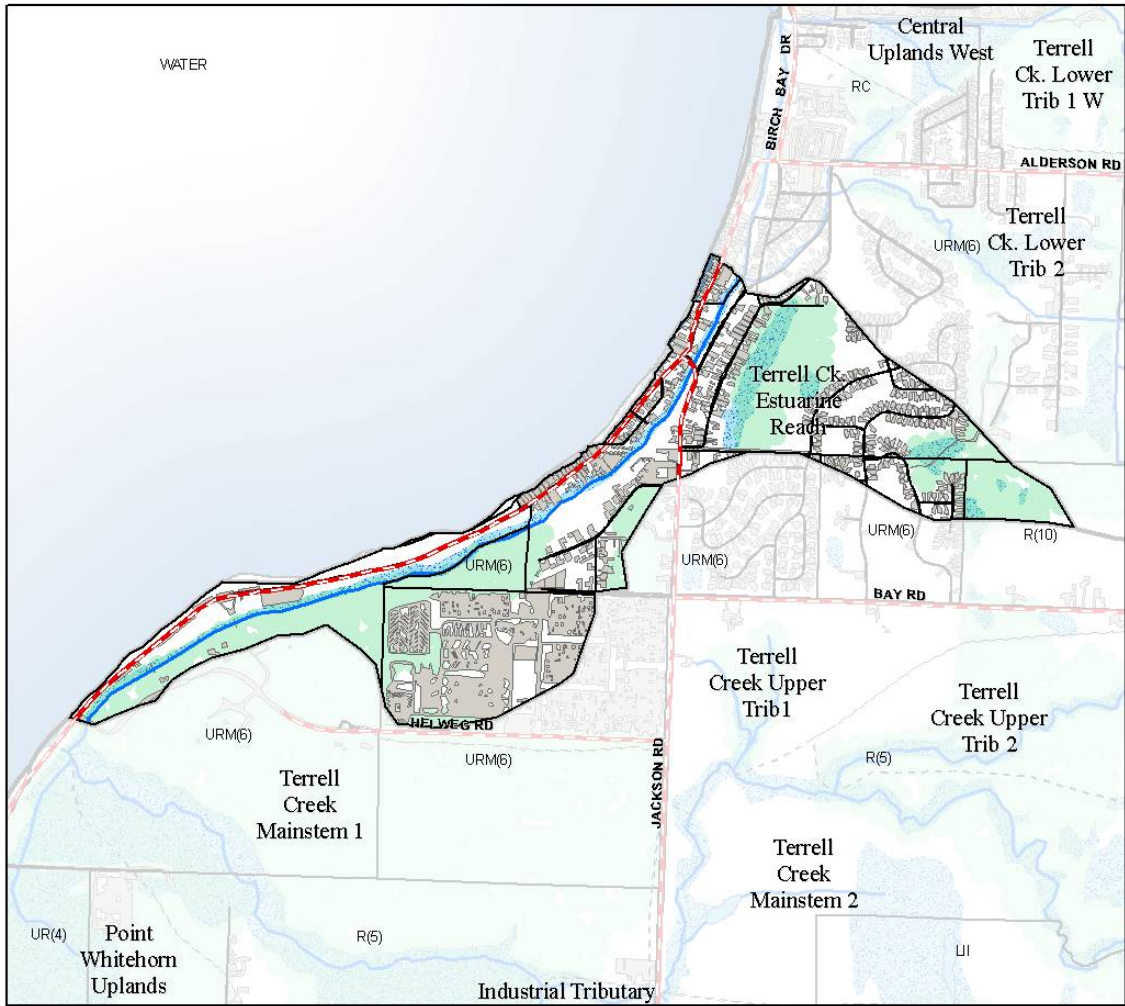
Feature	2008	1955
Impervious Surface	30 %*	3 %*
Tree Cover	25 %*	46 %*
Wetland cover	10 %*	
Stream miles	1.44 mi	
Subwatershed Area	240 Ac	

*Percentage of Subwatershed

Note: Areas of tree cover and wetland cover may overlap

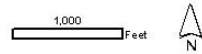
Note: Wetland Data was unavailable for 1955





Terrell Creek Lower Estuarine Reach: Natural Infrastructure and Development

-  Subwatershed Boundaries
-  Tree Cover (2008)
-  Zoning (Summer 2009)
-  Mapped Wetlands
-  Impervious Surfaces (2008)



Questions or comments? E-mail us at pgill@co.whatcom.wa.us or call 360-676-6907