



**King County**

Department of Natural Resources and Parks  
Wastewater Treatment Division

## NORTH MERCER ISLAND/ENATAI

## Sewer Upgrade Project

King County is upgrading four miles of sewer pipeline across north Mercer Island and south Bellevue. It's a big project that's been years in the making and will involve years of construction. Some of the work will be in heavily used public spaces, and some will be in residential areas. The end product will provide great public benefit, but the work to get there will involve inconveniences to residents and users of public spaces.

We are committed to keeping you informed about what's happening and why, in order to minimize impacts on the community. This is one of a series of fact sheets that explain the North Mercer/Enatai Sewer Upgrade Project and what the public should expect—during construction and after the work is done.

# Mercer Slough and the Swayolocken Boat Launch What's Happening... and Why

Bellevue's popular Mercer Slough Nature Park located on the east side of Bellevue Way SE centers on the Mercer Slough, which flows under I-90 east of the Enatai neighborhood into Lake Washington. Work on the North Mercer/Enatai project will affect users of the lower end of the slough, two nearby bike trails, and the Swayolocken Boat Launch, which gives kayakers and other small-boat users access to the slough. Two parts of the project—occurring at different times during construction—will impact these public amenities in different ways.

The first part—installation of the Enatai Siphon by a construction process called horizontal directional drilling—will take place at the site of King County's Swayolocken Pump Station, along the access road to the boat launch. The Enatai Siphon will provide additional capacity for conveying wastewater for the North Mercer/Enatai system. Future wastewater flows that exceed the capacity of the existing Enatai Interceptor in Lake Washington will be diverted to this new siphon, which will be installed by drilling under the Enatai neighborhood. The siphon is essential to the project mission of ensuring that the system has enough capacity for wastewater flows expected through 2060.



*Installing the Enatai Siphon and upgrading the Enatai Interceptor will both have impacts in the area around the Mercer Slough and Swayolocken Boat Launch*

The new siphon needs to be up and running to carry wastewater before the existing Enatai Interceptor can be taken off line for repairs, which is the second part of the project that will affect the Mercer Slough area. The existing interceptor extends east from Enatai Beach Park along the bottom of Lake Washington to the mouth of the Mercer Slough. It then follows the slough north to the Swayolocken Pump Station. This pipe was installed in the 1960's and it is aging. The portion going up the slough has never been lined or replaced. Once all flows can be diverted to the new siphon, crews will take the Mercer Slough portion of the existing interceptor offline and repair it using a process called cured-in-place pipe, which adds a durable lining inside the existing pipe. This will increase the pipe's life span to extend at least through 2060.

# Working on the Siphon at the Sweyolocken Site

The Enatai Siphon will extend about 3,000 feet from Enatai Beach Park to the Sweyolocken Pump Station. Installing it will be a multi-step process that starts with drilling a hole from one end to the other using a drilling rig set up next to the pump station. Additional steps will enlarge the original drill hole, and then ultimately pull the pipe through the enlarged hole from the park to the pump station.

In addition to the siphon, work at this site will include installing a sewer from the end of the siphon to the pump station inlet. That sewer will be installed by more traditional open-cut construction: digging a trench, laying the pipe into it, and filling the trench back in.

The work calls for extensive equipment and materials that will be set up and stored at the pump station site. The access road from Bellevue Way SE to the Sweyolocken Boat Launch will have to be closed for the duration of the work.

## When will this work happen?

Project dates are not finalized yet, but the Enatai Siphon work at Sweyolocken could start as early as mid- 2021 but most likely later and last six to nine months.

**How will the work affect the Sweyolocken Boat Launch?** The boat launch will be closed to vehicle, foot and boat traffic for the duration of the work.

**Can I use the Mercer Slough Bike Trail during this work?** Not in the area south of the pump station. During the siphon work, trail traffic will be detoured along side streets from near the South Bellevue Park & Ride to the I-90 Bike Trail near 108th Avenue SE. The I-90 Bike Trail will remain open throughout the majority of the work; however, detours may be required during final restoration of the trail if required after construction.

**What about use of the rest of the Mercer Slough Nature Park?** By the time the Enatai Siphon work begins, Sound Transit's light rail work in the vicinity will be finished, so park access points that were closed during that project will again be available for entering the park from the west side.

**Will Bellevue Way SE be affected?** Not much. Construction vehicles will use the road to access the work site, but no work will happen on or near the road, and it will not be closed at any point.

**Will the work affect wetlands and trees?** Yes. About 20 trees will be removed, largely to make room for a staging area to store equipment and materials. The work area will extend into a wetland at one point. We will completely restore the affected wetland to its pre-construction condition once the work is finished.



*Sweyolocken Boat Launch and Pump Station Site During Construction of the Enatai Siphon Connection*

# Fixing the Pipeline along the Mercer Slough

Once the new Enatai Siphon is operational, we will divert wastewater flow out of the Enatai Interceptor and into the new siphon, so we can repair the interceptor to keep it functional for years to come. Crews will open a trench to repair a segment of the pipe at Enatai Beach Park, complete spot repairs on the pipe from the water in front of some beach front homes, and insert a new liner into the existing pipe along the Mercer Slough.

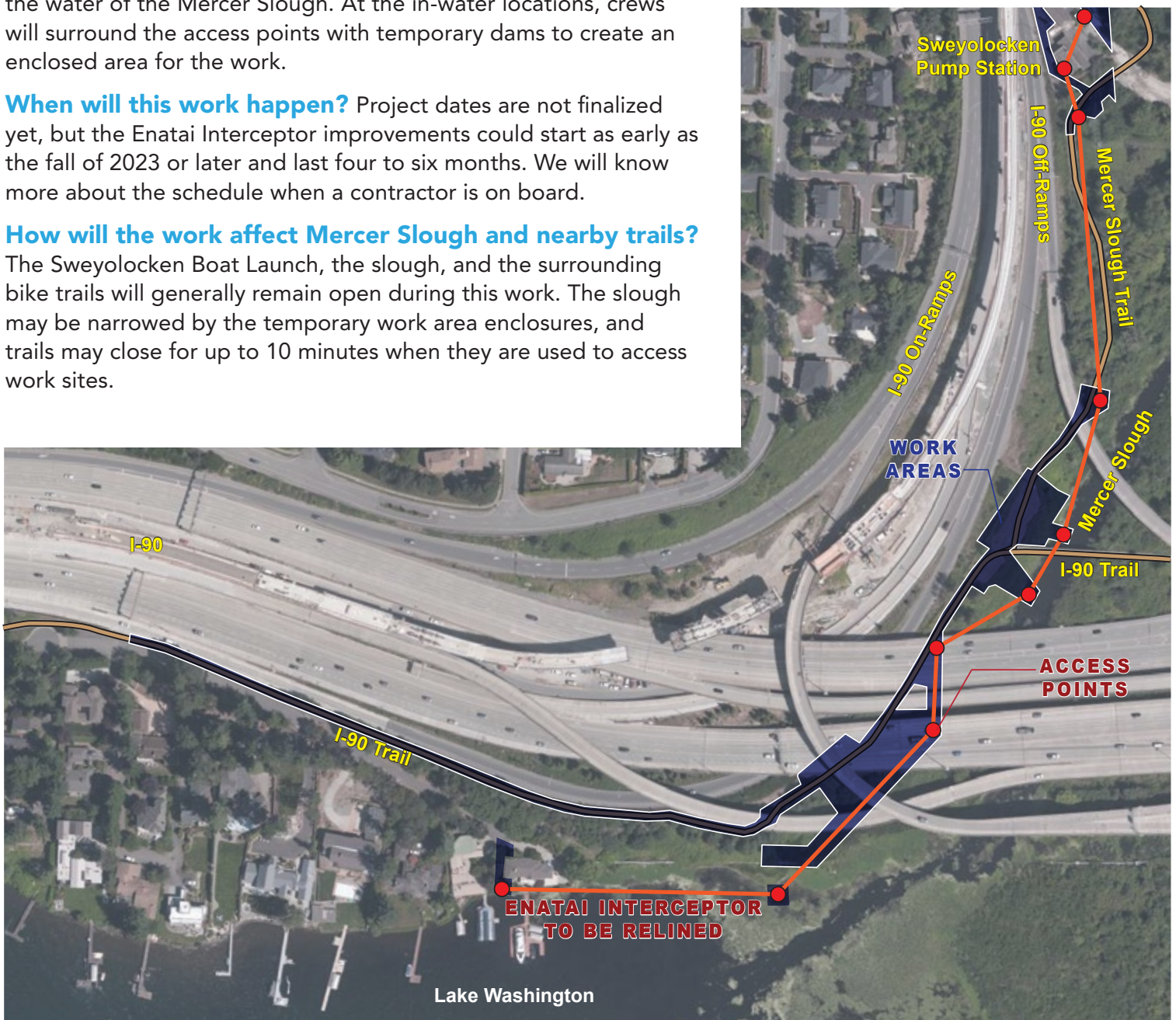
The Mercer Slough relining will extend about 2,200 feet from the end of SE Lake Road to the Sweyolocken Pump Station. The work will take place at maintenance holes and angle points along the way, with the new lining inserted at one of these access points and pulled through the pipe to the next.

Most of the access points will be on land, but a few will be within the water of the Mercer Slough. At the in-water locations, crews will surround the access points with temporary dams to create an enclosed area for the work.

**When will this work happen?** Project dates are not finalized yet, but the Enatai Interceptor improvements could start as early as the fall of 2023 or later and last four to six months. We will know more about the schedule when a contractor is on board.

**How will the work affect Mercer Slough and nearby trails?** The Sweyolocken Boat Launch, the slough, and the surrounding bike trails will generally remain open during this work. The slough may be narrowed by the temporary work area enclosures, and trails may close for up to 10 minutes when they are used to access work sites.

**What impacts are expected on wetlands and trees?** Some trees will need to be removed along the path of the interceptor relining work: a few near where the I-90 and Mercer Slough Bike Trails meet and about 20 from Sweyolocken. Some trees will likely be trimmed at the upstream end near SE Lake Road. Work also will take place in wetland areas, and a plan is in place for full restoration of affected wetlands after the construction is finished.



## What's Next

Final design of the project is nearly complete. Our team is working with regulatory agencies to coordinate efforts, obtain permits, and ensure a smooth transition to construction.

Between now and the start of construction, our team will be in your community sharing information so neighbors know what to expect during construction and beyond. Here is what you can expect from us this year:

- Attendance at community events
- Project newsletters, fact sheets, and field work notifications
- Monthly project web updates
- Briefings for interested community groups

We are committed to continuing to be a good neighbor during construction. We will share information about construction and impacts on our website, in project emails, and through posted information at the park.

We are always available to talk to you and your neighbors at small group meetings, in living rooms, and at stops along the future pipeline. Just let us know!

## Post-Construction Restoration



King County is committed to leaving project work areas in at least as good a condition when the work is done as they were before the work began. All construction equipment will be removed as soon as practical once construction activities are completed. Site restoration will follow as soon as weather is suitable for it.

### Work areas in the Mercer Slough Nature Park

Crews will restore affected areas along the slough and bike trails to pre-construction conditions. They will plant new trees in the area of tree removal at the end of SE Lake Road. They'll also implement ecological enhancements in the Mercer Slough Nature Park, including removal of invasive species and planting of native vegetation.

When the work is done, crews will repave any sections of the bike paths that were damaged in construction. Where the existing path is in poor condition, this means the path will be in better shape in the end than it was before the work began.

### Work at the Sweyolocken Site

The planned work areas at the Sweyolocken site are currently either improved surfaces—such as gravel, concrete, and asphalt—or degraded buffer habitat. Crews will replant disturbed wetland and buffer areas with native vegetation and plant new trees in the areas where existing trees had to be removed.

Crews will restore paved and other improved areas to their pre-construction conditions after the work is completed.

## NORTH MERCER ISLAND/ENATAI Sewer Upgrade Project

### Talk to us! Questions? Concerns? Contact the project team:

The community services team at **425-305-3578** or **NMEsewer@kingcounty.gov** Visit the project Web page at **www.kingcounty.gov/MercerEnataiSewer** Sign up for email and text alerts on the project Web page.



Alternative formats available  
206-477-5371 or TTY replay: 711

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