



Project Overview

What is a natural drainage system and why do we need one?

When it rains in Northeast Seattle, pollution from our streets runs into Thornton Creek untreated. This is not healthy for the creek or for people. The good news is that there is something we can do!

Natural drainage systems are an alternative to traditional stormwater management systems. They consist of shallow depressions built in the roadway shoulder (the space between the street edge and the property line) and are filled with deep-rooted plants and spongy soils that temporarily hold and clean polluted stormwater from streets. These features capture and clean pollutants before they reach Thornton Creek.

SPU is leading this project, which is paid for in part with funding from the King County Flood Control District and the Washington State Department of Ecology. We've also partnered with the Seattle Department of Transportation (SDOT) to include pedestrian walkways on some blocks where we are installing natural drainage systems.

Location

SPU will construct natural drainage systems at 4 sites in the south Thornton Creek basin:

- **41st PI NE** (NE 107th St to NE 105th St)
- **23rd Ave NE** (NE Northgate Way to NE 103rd St)
- **N 117th St** (Meridian Ave N to 1st Ave NE) and **N 120th St** (Meridian Ave N to 1st Ave NE)
- **Wedgwood** (NE 88th St, NE 87th St, 29th Ave NE, and 30th Ave NE)



Figure 1. South Thornton NDS project map

Schedule

Construction is expected to begin as soon as **October 2023**. It will take approximately **14-16 months** to complete the full project. Construction start dates will vary by site. SPU will share updates with the community before work begins at each of the sites.



Benefits to the Community

Natural drainage systems hold and clean polluted stormwater, removing pollutants before they reach Thornton Creek. NDS offer **multiple benefits to local neighborhoods and ecosystems** including:

- Increased landscaping
- Lower risk of flooding
- Creation of habitat along our streets
- Healthier creek ecosystems
- Traffic calming
- More street trees
- Pedestrian safety improvements



Figure 2. A completed natural drainage system

What to Expect During Construction

We will keep the nearby community informed about anticipated impacts throughout construction. During construction, you can expect:

- Typical weekday working hours of 7 AM – 5 PM
- Construction traffic, noise, dust, and vibrations during working hours
- Equipment and materials staged in the right-of-way (shoulder)
- Temporary parking and travel lane restrictions
- Temporary driveway access restrictions (impacted properties will be contacted by the project team)

Stay Updated

SPU will provide updates about the project throughout construction. Learn more and sign up for project updates at

www.seattle.gov/utilities/thorntonNDS

Questions? Please contact:

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Figure 3. A newly planted natural drainage system