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Paine Field Airport celebrates 25 years of Narbeck Wetland Sanctuary

When created, Narbeck was the first wetland mitigation bank approved in the state of Washington.

Everett, Wash., August 2, 2024 –Snohomish County Executive Dave Somers joined U.S. Representative Rick Larsen, Paine Field Airport Director Joshua W. Marcy, members of the Friends of Narbeck, and staff members of Snohomish County Parks and Paine Field Airport on Wednesday, July 31, 2024, to commemorate the 25th anniversary of the opening and dedication of Narbeck Wetland Sanctuary.

In his opening remarks, Joshua W. Marcy, Paine Field Airport Director, emphasized the significance of Washington state’s first wetland compensation bank near Paine Field. He stated, “This wetland bank stands as a testament to our commitment to preserving and restoring vital ecosystems for the benefit of current and future generations.”

Paine Field Airport pioneered the establishment of the first two Wetland Compensation Banks in the state of Washington back in 1999: Swanson and Narbeck. These banks facilitated safety improvements on the airfield and will aid in future airport development. The project set a standard for balancing economic growth with environmental stewardship.

County Executive Somers added, “What once seemed cutting edge has now become a model of innovation and environmental care through mitigation banking. This project demonstrates how we can harmonize economic development with environmental preservation, benefiting both our businesses and our community.”

Bill Lewallen, former Paine Field Deputy Director and a founding member of the Friends of Narbeck, was on hand at the brief ceremony. Lewallen shared, “As one of Narbeck’s planners, I am most proud of the legacy this park has left: a model for others to follow and be inspired by.”

The success of Narbeck has led to the creation of 20 wetland mitigation banks across the state. These banks play a crucial role in environmental conservation and sustainable development.

Also present at the event was Rep. Rick Larsen (WA-02), a former Snohomish County Councilmember who supported the Narbeck Wetland Sanctuary project. “Happy 25th anniversary to Narbeck Wetland Sanctuary!” Larsen said. “Thanks to the vision and hard work of community leaders and stakeholders, including my former colleagues on the Snohomish County Council, Narbeck has served as a relaxing and accessible place for residents and visitors to enjoy and wildlife to thrive in. I look forward to continuing to work with members of the community to invest in and build a cleaner, greener, safer and more accessible Snohomish County.”

Narbeck Wetland Sanctuary provides a passive recreational opportunity for thousands of people who live and work in the area. There are two walking trails, a small loop trail and a 1.5- mile interpretative trail around the perimeter, with educational signs and self-guided tours.

About Paine Field Airport

Owned and operated by Snohomish County, Paine Field Airport is a vital economic driver for the region. Located about 30 miles north of downtown Seattle, Paine Field offers top-notch aviation facilities and services. The airport is home to a diverse range of aircraft, from recreational planes to commercial jets, and boasts the newest commercial airport terminal in Washington state: Seattle Paine Field Passenger Terminal. Privately-owned and operated, the commercial air terminal connects the Puget Sound to a dozen western destinations, making it a convenient hub for travelers. With its strategic location and proximity to major cities like Seattle, Bellevue, and Redmond, Paine Field plays a crucial role in supporting the region's air transportation needs.

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