

peter bracchi

My first comment documented the substantial public cost of removing garbage, abandoned property, biohazards, and other harmful materials from Burnt Bridge Creek. This second comment builds on that record by asking the Alternative Restoration Plan to address the conditions that caused those costs and environmental impacts, rather than relying primarily on cleanup after damage has occurred.

The City-managed Andresen Road encampment is an important example. The camp operated beside an already impaired waterbody for approximately two years before closing in July 2025. At closure, nearly 10 tons of garbage were removed, and the City identified risks including soil, surface-water, and groundwater contamination, as well as destruction of vegetation and trees. This history shows that impacts along the creek extend far beyond litter and can directly threaten water quality, habitat, restoration work, and public investment.

Burnt Bridge Creek has been officially recognized as impaired since 2004, yet the draft ARP proposes compliance dates extending to 2041 and 2061. With restoration expected to continue for decades, the final ARP should include clear responsibilities, response procedures, monitoring, cost tracking, and protection of restored areas. Including the Andresen Road camp history and the related cleanup costs would help ensure that the ARP learns from past conditions and is better equipped to prevent repeated damage, protect public funds, and achieve its water-quality goals.

Please See the Attached Detail PDF
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Use the Andresen Road Camp History to Strengthen ARP Implementation

My first comment documents the substantial public expense associated with removing garbage, abandoned property, biohazards, and other harmful materials from Burnt Bridge Creek. Those costs show that pollution and damage along the creek cannot be treated simply as a litter problem.

The city-managed Andresen Road encampment provides an important example of why the Alternative Restoration Plan must focus on preventing damage, protecting restoration investments, and clearly assigning responsibility for future action.

For approximately two years, the city operated or allowed a large managed encampment on public land beside Burnt Bridge Creek. The camp remained until its closure in July 2025. At closure, nearly 10 tons of garbage were removed, and the city identified risks that included soil, surface-water, and groundwater contamination, along with destruction of vegetation and trees.



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City closes Burnt Bridge Creek/Andresen encampment

July 14

On July 14, the City closed the Burnt Bridge Creek trail encampment east and west of N.E. Andresen Road. Camping is no longer allowed on this section of the trail under the City's emergency order and will be enforced. Camping anywhere else along Burnt Bridge Creek has been prohibited since 2022.

This work was part of an ongoing effort to address safety, environmental impacts and provide meaningful support to those living outside.

- Our [Homeless Assistance and Resources Team](#) (HART) started outreach and service referrals for those living in the camp in February.
- Of the 40 people living in this camp, 23 accepted referrals to shelters, including City [Safe Stay communities](#).
- Nearly 10 tons of garbage was cleaned up by our solid waste crews.

The purpose of including this history is not to criticize the decision to provide emergency shelter. It is to ensure that the ARP learns from a documented event that affected the creek corridor and required a costly public cleanup.

Burnt Bridge Creek was already a Category 5 impaired waterbody when the camp was established. The creek was first listed as impaired in 2004, Ecology began the TMDL study process in 2008, the Source Assessment was completed in 2020, the Partnership formed in 2021,

and the draft ARP was released in 2026. The draft now proposes bacteria compliance by 2041 and compliance for temperature, dissolved oxygen, and pH by 2061.

With restoration goals extending decades into the future, the success of the ARP will depend on protecting the creek from new and recurring damage while restoration work is underway.

The draft ARP acknowledges that camping, human waste, garbage, and encampments can pollute the creek, damage restoration plantings, and increase maintenance costs. However, the primary responses currently identified—litter cleanup, sanitation education, and portable toilets—remain largely reactive. They address conditions after they occur but do not fully address how sensitive creek areas and restoration investments will be protected.

The Andresen Road camp and the cleanup expenses documented in the first comment should be used as an implementation lesson for the final ARP.

Suggested Improvements to the Final ARP

The final ARP should:

1. Briefly document the Andresen Road camp, its closure, the nearly 10 tons of material removed, and the environmental risks identified by the City.
2. Recognize that encampment impacts may include harmful materials, human waste, vegetation destruction, soil disturbance, erosion, and risks to surface water and groundwater—not only litter.
3. Identify which agency is responsible for responding when camping, dumping, vegetation removal, or other activities threaten the creek or completed restoration work.
4. Establish procedures and timelines for preventing damage, responding to reported conditions, and confirming that corrective action was completed.
5. Track and report future cleanup, repair, and restoration-replacement costs associated with these impacts so Ecology and the ARP program manager can evaluate whether current strategies are effective.
6. Require that publicly funded restoration areas be actively monitored and protected from repeated damage.

Burnt Bridge Creek has been impaired for more than twenty years, and the ARP proposes a restoration process that may continue for several more decades. The Andresen Road camp demonstrates that successful restoration will require more than cleaning up damage after it occurs.

Including this history and these implementation measures would strengthen the ARP, protect public restoration investments, and improve the likelihood that the plan achieves its intended water-quality outcomes.

Andresen Camp photos

<https://photos.app.goo.gl/Ur7ZACTR94wkbQKVA>

