**From mudflat to wetland for wildfowl**

**The creation of a shallow wetland for wildfowl is the purpose behind the application by the Port of Gothenburg that is due to be submitted shortly to the Land and Environment Court. The wetland is a way of reinstating an area that has been used to deposit dredging spoils for almost 40 years.**

Ever since the 1970s, the Port of Gothenburg has had a permit to deposit polluted dredging spoils in the Torsviken area, immediately beside the port. The permit expired in 2009. The port now wants to cover the material and, as far as possible, reinstate the land and create an area rich in wildlife and birdlife.

"Over the years we have had discussions with ornithologists and interest groups about how we can compensate for the encroachment on nature by the port. It has become obvious that the best alternative is to establish a wetland for wildfowl\*," says Ida Fossenstrand, project leader at the Port of Gothenburg.

**Clay from new tunnel**Before the wetland can be created, the dredging spoils must be covered with clean material. This is where the construction of the new Marieholm Tunnel in Gothenburg comes into the picture. Large volumes of clay will be excavated during construction of the tunnel. Whilst the top layers are contaminated, the clay further down – known as glacial clay – is clean. This clay can be used to cover the contaminated ground and create a protective barrier.

"This is good for Gothenburg, for the port and for nature. We regard the excavated material as a resource that can be used for community development," says Stein Kleiven at the Swedish Transport Administration, who is project leader for the Marieholm Tunnel.

Delivery of the clay is due to commence next year and will continue into 2015. The base must then be allowed to settle before the wetland can be created. The birds will probably have to wait until 2016-2017 before they can begin bathing and wading in their new haven.

*\* The group of wetland birds includes the ruff, smew, whooper swan, greater scaup, goldeneye and tufted duck. A Natura 2000 area has been established at Torsviken to protect these species.*

Further information:

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