

Journal photos by Gordon Weeks

**Brian Combs, salmon restoration biologist for the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, and Scott Steltzner, a fisheries biologist with the Squaxin Island Tribe, survey the site where their agencies recently created a log wall to enhance salmon habitat on Goldsborough Creek in Shelton.**

# New creek log wall will protect salmon, rail line

*Tribe, agency, landowners team up at Goldsborough*

By **GORDON WEEKS**

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Logs recently placed at a Goldsborough Creek site will create habitat for coho salmon and protect a Simpson Lumber logging railroad line.

The log wall was erected on the creek near U.S. Highway 101 by the Squaxin Island Tribe and the Olympia-based nonprofit group South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group. The project, completed last month at the cost of about \$275,000, was executed with the cooperation of the three landowners: Green Diamond Resource Company, Simpson Lumber and Miles Sand & Gravel.

The logs placed in and next to the creek will create pools and shade for salmon, and provide a refuge from predators.

"It's a major coho stream in the South Sound, the biggest outside of the Nisqually River," said Scott Steltzner,

said. Coho salmon stay in the creek for about a year before heading to salt water, and need a place to feed and be safe, he said.

"Let the habitat get shaped by the creek," Combs said.

The project is the latest effort to aid salmon on Goldsborough Creek. The creek was dammed in 1885, limiting adult salmon migration for more than 100 years.

Satsop Railroad Co. used it as a log storage pond in the late 1880s. The city of Shelton rebuilt the dam to provide hydroelectric power. During the 1950s, the dam diverted water for Rayonier and Simpson.

During the winter of 1996, the dam sustained structural damage and was no longer useful.

"It was a complete fish blockage," Steltzner said. "It had a fish ladder, but it wasn't working very well."

The dam was removed and the channel reconstructed in the fall of 2001 in a joint effort to improve salmon habitat by the Squaxin Island Tribe, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, Simpson and other parties.

In a 2006 report to the Army Corps of Engineers, the Squaxin Island Tribe



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*team up at Goldsborough*

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The logs placed in and next to the creek will create pools and shade for salmon, and provide a refuge from predators.

"It's a major coho stream in the South Sound, the biggest outside of the Nisqually River," said Scott Steltzner, a salmon biologist for the Squaxin Island Tribe.

At the same time, the log wall halts the erosion of the creek bank that has threatened a rail line used by Simpson.

"It's a win-win for everyone," said Brian Combs, a salmon restoration biologist for the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group.

The logs and the protruding root wands will catch woody debris floating down the 25-mile-long creek, Combs

for about a year before heading to salt water, and need a place to feed and be safe, he said.

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In a 2006 report to the Army Corps of Engineers, the Squaxin Island Tribe Natural Resources Department said that in 2003, an estimated 61,844 coho smelt left the Goldsborough Creek watershed — of these, 40,840 originated above the dam site.

Last summer, the tribe and the enhancement group replaced two undersized culverts just upstream from the log wall site that blocked a tributary to the creek. That effort opened almost a mile of new spawning and rearing habitat, the Squaxin Island Tribe reports.



The wall of logs placed alongside Goldsborough Creek will create more salmon habitat in the creek, and protect the bank from further erosion that was threatening a Simpson rail line. Inspecting the site last week was Brian Combs, salmon restoration biologist for the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group.



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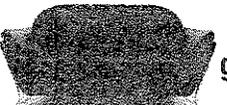
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