



SalmonGRAM

Committed to Protecting and Restoring South Puget Sound Habitat



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The SPSSEG is administered by a nine-member volunteer board elected by the general membership.

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Cover: Kennedy Creek Chum, Fall 2010

Photo: Brian Combs

Message from the Executive Director

Lance Winecka



The South Puget Sound Salmon

Enhancement Group (SPSSEG) relies

heavily on cash donations, local, state,

federal, and tribal grants to sustain our worthwhile Mission.

However, our overall organizational funding is not as diverse as

we'd like. The SPSSEG Board of Directors has acknowledged

this funding gap and is continually searching for ways to improve

our financial well being and diversity. One identified approach

is to increase organizational funding opportunities through the

Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW). SPSSEG

currently receives approximately \$40,000 of state WDFW dollars

each year to cover operational expenses. These funds are allocated

by the Washington State Legislature through revenues derived from

salmon fishing license sales and selling the excess carcass and roe

(ECR) from state operated salmon hatcheries. For the past decade

there has not been any increase in these funding amounts to keep

up with rising inflation. While the fishing license revenue remains

somewhat predictable each year, the sales of excess carcasses and

roe are affected by the size of the fish runs, market value of roe and

fillets, and food bank donations. Typically, SPSSEG receives about

\$4,000 per year from these ECR resources. Our Board of Directors

and others feel that there is an excellent opportunity to increase

SPSSEG funding from this existing, ongoing, and "non WDFW

general fund" source.

This year the WDFW is updating and improving their ECR contract

to maximize the state's resource, improve funding for Regional

Fisheries Enhancement Groups, facilitate nutrient enhancement and

to maintain donations to the food banks. This new contract will

undoubtedly improve transparency for the overall ECR program

and should also increase funding to SPSSEG and other Regional

Fisheries Enhancement Groups. Our thanks go out to WDFW

and Washington State Legislature for acknowledging that the ECR

improvements are a possible funding increase to our program.

SalmonGram is published twice per year by the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group (SPSSEG), a 501(c)(3) non-profit, volunteer-based organization.

The SPSSEG is one of fourteen Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups created in 1989 by the Washington State Legislature. The Regional Fisheries Enhancement Program is partially supported by United States Fish & Wildlife Service and by surcharges on sport and commercial fishing licenses. The Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife provides technical and administrative support to the program.

Collaboration!

By Lance Winecka

SPSSEG has made a positive name in the salmon restoration world over the past two decades by working collaboratively with many tribal, federal, state, local, business, and other non-profit organization partners. Collaboration improves our success in implementing on-the-ground projects. SPSSEG understands that our role as a non-governmental, non-political, and regional non-profit is to support an array of projects that benefit the Puget Sound. SPSSEG tends to stay “neutral” on controversial projects and will typically advocate and implement projects and policies that are decided by comanagers or other important stakeholders. For example, SPSSEG has recently been invited to participate in the Sequelitchew Creek planning process regarding the proposed Cal Portland mine expansion near Dupont. SPSSEG will be working with other participants, including the Nisqually Tribe and Fort Lewis to help develop a mitigation action plan that will improve salmon habitat and restore water flow back into the creek. SPSSEG is determined to be a productive and non-biased participant throughout the process. SPSSEG has also participated in many other planning efforts including Swan Creek, Chambers Bay, Titlow Lagoon, McLane Creek, Sherwood Creek, and Goldsborough Creek.

SPSSEG partners with many tribal governments including the Muckelshoot Tribe, Nisqually Tribe, Puyallup Tribe, Squaxin Island Tribe, and the Northwest Indian Fisheries Commission to help implement strategic projects in many prioritized watersheds. Projects are spread across our region which includes the Puyallup River, Greenwater River, Mashel River, Ohop Valley, Goldsborough Creek, Sherwood Creek, Kennedy Creek, and along the South Puget Sound marine environments. These relationships develop “win-win” solutions by establishing positive project outcomes that were assisted by tribal support, technical expertise, grants and contributions.

SPSSEG also works with federal, state, and local agencies to implement projects within their respective jurisdictions. While SPSSEG does receive some federal and state funding via the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Department of Fish & Wildlife, we are very successful in leveraging outside funds as well. SPSSEG seeks out meaningful partnerships with local and state jurisdictions such as City of Olympia, City of Tumwater, City of Lacey, City of Shelton, City of Tacoma, Port of Olympia, Thurston County, Pierce County, Mason County, Department of Ecology, Department of Transportation, Department of Natural Resources, Puget Sound Partnership, US Forest Service, amongst many others. This collaboration allows SPSSEG to work with dedicated and vested project partners while completing local projects.

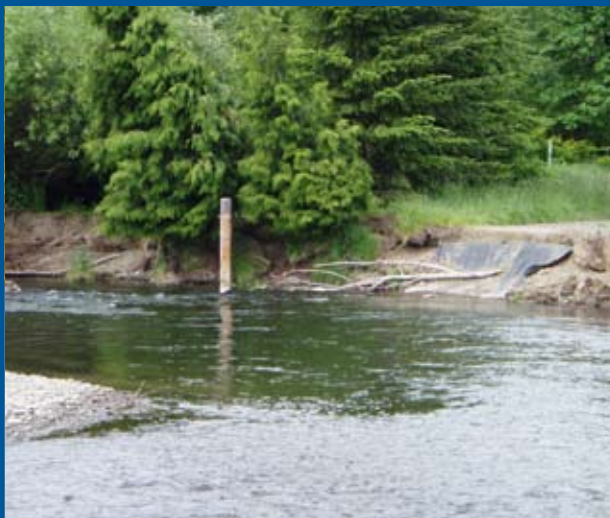
SPSSEG relies heavily on business support too. For the past 12 years, SPSSEG has been partnering with the Taylor Shellfish Company and Mason Conservation District to manage the successful Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail. Taylor Shellfish has donated a 20-year easement for SPSSEG to operate and maintain the Trail. Since the Trail opened in 2000, over 40,000 people have visited the Trail to learn more about the salmon life cycle. Without the support of this iconic local business, the Trail would not be possible for the public to enjoy.

Finally, SPSSEG is working with our local and regional non-profit associates to maximize our over arching effectiveness. SPSSEG has recently been collaborating with the Capitol Land Trust and Nisqually Land Trust to restore land that is respectively owned or controlled by them. This is most effective because we share a common goal to conserve and restore critical salmon habitat. Since SPSSEG is an expert in salmon restoration, but not in the delicate world of negotiating conservation easements, it has been extremely worthwhile to combine our efforts and to share our expertise. By partnering on projects they are completed less expensively and by groups with extensive experience in their fields. We have identified that collaboration is one primary key to our success and we will continue to focus on our mission and to target future opportunities to partner with others.

Deschutes River:

A collaboration

By Adam Sant



The South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, in partnership with several landowners and the City of Tumwater will begin design work to address some of the long standing issues affecting the Deschutes River. As many might be aware, the degraded habitat of the Deschutes River directly contributes to issues effecting salmon populations, Capitol Lake and Budd Inlet. Some of the identified problems are sedimentation, a lack of functional wood in the river, lack of riparian tree cover and thermal regulation - meaning portions of the river are getting too warm for salmonids. When rivers get too warm, the water's ability to carry oxygen decreases and fish as well as other aquatic life suffer.

Continuing the work begun by other groups and agencies during the past decade, SPSSEG is beginning to work with restoration engineers and stakeholders to design stable in-water structures. SPSSEG is now working on a Salmon Recovery Funding Board design only grant to investigate (not build) in-stream structures that create better aquatic habitats for salmon and other species.

These in-stream structures will be designed to slow water velocities, increase channel roughness and diversification. These measures will also help reduce sedimentation and bank failure. In addition, these in-stream structures offer salmonids excellent places to hide from predators. Deep water pools with riparian cover, provide salmonids with a cool, safe, refuge. These structures will be designed for salmon, keeping in mind that portions of the Deschutes are popular for recreational activities.

As stated earlier, SPSSEG is one of many groups working on the issues affecting the Deschutes River. SPSSEG is developing stakeholder relationships to support projects that address river issues. By combining our resources and knowledge, we can continue the planning process for a healthier Deschutes. This conceptual design, completed with this SRFB grant, is one step closer to an overarching riverine restoration plan.

Developing Habitat Projects

By Brian Combs

When reading the *SalmonGram* or other articles dedicated to habitat restoration, you've read about many kinds of habitat improvement projects. Over the years we have highlighted projects such as fish barrier corrections, in-stream habitat, and restoring estuaries and marine areas. In this article we talk about how projects are developed.

Restoration projects often start as an idea with a single person, landowner, or more commonly, from a group of restoration professionals. Concepts can rapidly turn into a successfully completed project in a year or two, however many projects take several years, or even decades, to fully develop. At SPSSEG, we constantly work with a number of regional partners, landowners, and agencies to develop projects and guide them from concept to completion.

The early stages of this process involves prioritizing potential project areas with local stakeholders, collecting site data, and meeting with landowners to discuss project options. It is in this early development phase that projects get their "legs" and become viable. This is an essential part of cultivating landowner support, partnerships and meaningful projects in our region.

Currently, SPSSEG has project development campaigns in much of Thurston and Mason Counties (WRIA 13 & WRIA 14). We are actively meeting with landowners and partners to find quality, feasible habitat restoration projects in a number of stream and river systems. This effort is focused around the 3-year work list, a list of priority projects developed by the Lead Entity organization in each watershed. Our goal is to collaborate with landowners and contract engineers to provide at least 20 preliminary project designs.

These designs will help get projects from the concept level to the design level. Most of these projects are designed to the 10%-30% level, and will be promoted for possible funding and continued stakeholder support. Of course, projects can also come from other avenues and don't necessarily have to come from 3-year work lists. So, if you live near aquatic habitat, fresh water or marine, and think there may be an issue with fish passage or degraded habitats, feel free to give SPSSEG a call and we can possibly arrange a site assessment.



WRIAs 13 & 14 - Thurston & Mason Counties



Partner Spotlight *City*



ht: ty of Olympia

By: Lance Winecka

Photo: Rachel Titus

The City of Olympia has been a great SPSSEG partner and environmental steward for many years. Recently, SPSSEG has been working with the City on several important salmon restoration projects including Priest Point Park Bulkhead Removal, Mission Creek Estuary Restoration, and Allison Spring's Restoration.

All of these projects have a common theme: they are all located on City owned property. Completing complex and diverse projects is very important for the future of salmon restoration in the Puget Sound. In order to convince skeptical stakeholders, citizen groups, and private landowners that restoration projects are effective, meaningful, and beneficial, success must be demonstrated on public property first. Especially in times with increasingly strict ordinances it is critical for local jurisdictions like The City of Olympia to invest and advocate for restoration projects that improve habitat when possible on their publicly owned land. If jurisdictions lead by example it is much easier to advocate the importance and effectiveness to the public. In our ongoing restoration efforts, The City of Olympia has been a model jurisdiction to work with and the these restoration projects would not be possible without their direct support and participation.

The Priest Point Park Bulkhead Removal project is located in the northern section of Priest Point Park, where the former caretakers house has been removed. The project will remove a derelict well and rubble/concrete bulkhead during the fall of 2011. The site will be restored to match adjacent beach profiles and substrate. Invasive vegetation is also being removed from the bluff as part of ongoing maintenance.

The Mission Creek Estuary Project will partner with the

City of Olympia and the Port of Olympia to remove a derelict road and culvert that crosses Mission Creek at the southern end of Priest Point Park. By removing the road, a small embayment will be restored. This project is slated to be funded by the Salmon Recovery Funding Board in 2011 and proposed to start in 2012.

The Allison Springs Restoration project will partner with the City of Olympia and Capitol Land Trust to remove a series of earthen dams that impounds water to create fish ponds. These ponds were abandoned in 1999 and discussions have been underway for many years to restore the site to natural conditions. South Puget Sound Community College archaeology staff completed a cultural resource survey as part of the permitting process for this project. This project will be completed in 2011.

The City of Olympia is also directly involved in Stream Team and is extremely dedicated to educate the local community about water quality and salmon habitat. Stream Team is an education-to-action program for people interested in protecting and enhancing our local streams, rivers, lakes, and Puget Sound. Other local entities involved in Stream Team are Lacey, Tumwater, and Thurston County.

Stream Team volunteers plant trees, mark storm drains, gather stream health data, remove litter, talk to people at local viewing sites about spawning salmon, and perform other tasks that make a big difference in the health of our local waterways. Stream Team also offers classes and field trips on a wide range of topics, including shellfish, salmon, gardening, native plants, geology and "stream bugs." Ready to get your feet wet? Contact the Stream Team staff person who represents the program in your area (<http://www.streamteam.info/>).

Penrose State Park

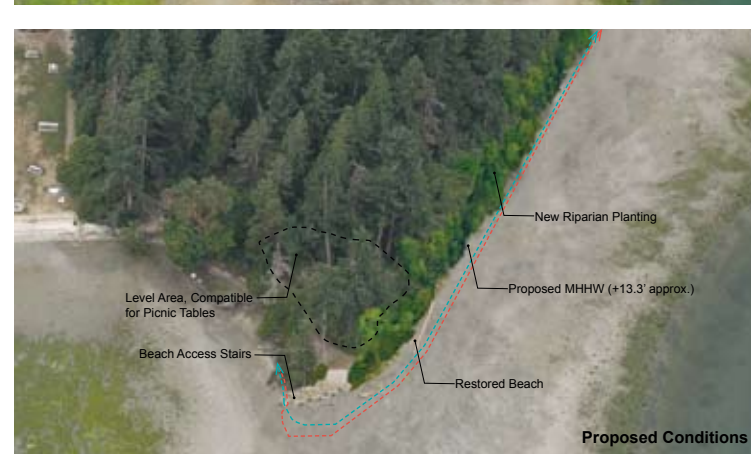
Restoration of Public Lands

By Kristin Williamson



Top: Penrose Bulkhead

Bottom: Conceptual Drawings



Existing MHHW (approximate)
Proposed MHHW (approximate)

Figure 1
Full Bulkhead Removal and Beach Access
Penrose Point State Park

Over the last two years, we have been working with Washington State Parks on planning a restoration project in Penrose Point State Park, on the Key Peninsula. The Park exhibits all of the key nearshore habitat types including: an active feeder bluff, mature riparian forest, surf smelt and sand lance spawning, low sloping beaches that lead into an eelgrass bed, and two estuarine embayments. However, habitat, and habitat forming processes in the Park have been impaired by a 700-foot long creosote bulkhead with rip rap toe protection that sits five feet below the normal high tide. The bulkhead limits shallow water refuge at high tide, sits on top of potential surf smelt and sand lance spawning habitat, impairs water quality through input of toxic creosote residue, impounds bluff sediments, and disconnects riparian fringe habitat for input of nutrients and wood.

Project development and design was funded in 2010 with Salmon Recovery Funding Board and U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service grants. The project design approach proposes to completely remove the 700-foot long creosote bulkhead, rip rap armor, and fill along the bluff backed beach. Improved public access to the beach will be established through installation of shallow rock stairs on the south east side of the point that will be partially buried into the veneer of the upper beach. Project efforts will also focus on riparian planting along the newly exposed bluff and installation of 12 large, unanchored pieces of wood above the Mean High High Water (MHHW) for near-term recruitment of wood structure to the beach. (see pictures)

We have applied for construction funds and are hopeful we will have final design, permits and funding in hand to remove this bulkhead in 2012. This highly visible site not only presents an opportunity for meaningful restoration work, it also lends itself to myriad outreach opportunities to showcase the benefits of this project, and others like it. We plan to host several events at the Park before and after bulkhead removal to catalogue the ways in which the environment changes as a result of our efforts. Please stay tuned for way to engage in this project.

Conservation Education



By Jerilyn Walley

Conservation Education helps people of all ages understand and appreciate the natural resources and natural wonders that surround them. When combined with standard grade-school curriculum, students learn how to conserve those resources. Through structured educational experiences and activities, conservation education enables students to realize how natural resources and ecosystems affect each other, how we affect our ecosystems and how to wisely use our precious resources.

Through conservation education, students develop the critical thinking skills needed to understand the complexities of ecological problems. Conservation education encourages students to act on their own to conserve natural resources and use them in a responsible manner by making informed decisions.



South Sound residents of all ages are lucky to have several wonderful conservation education resources available right here in our back yard. The Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail provides a unique look into the iconic northwest salmon lifecycle and The South Sound Global Rivers Environmental Education Network (GREEN) investigates watershed health. Combined, these programs provide hands-on insights into environmental susceptibility.

This year, SPSSEG employees participated in the South Sound GREEN watershed education program coordinated by the Thurston Conservation District. Local middle school students conduct stream investigations that include water quality monitoring, benthic macro-invertebrate sampling and field trips to observe spawning salmon. Results of water monitoring are presented at the South Sound GREEN Conference in February at The Evergreen State College.



South Sound GREEN also provides numerous training opportunities for teachers participating in the GREEN program. Nearshore education is an important part of watershed education through the South Sound GREEN program. Students experience nearshore marine creatures up close at local South Puget Sound shorelines and learn about the food webs and habitats that sustains the species of this ecosystem. They also learn about how human actions can impact local shellfish harvest.

South Sound GREEN is sponsored by Thurston County Conservation District, Thurston County, the Cities of Olympia, Tumwater, and Lacey, and Trout Unlimited.

Fundraising Events and Opportunities

Help send a WCC student to college!

SPSSEG currently has a Washington Conservation Corp (WCC) Individual Placement (IP) position through the Department of Ecology and Americorps. This program is geared towards students 18-25 years old and provides them an hourly wage, health insurance, and a generous college stipend to be used at the end of their one-year of community service. Most importantly, it provides students with real world experience in the environmental field.

SPSSEG has been awarded another WCC Individual Placement position starting in October 2011 through September 2012. We are asking for assistance from our generous supporters (corporations and members alike) to help provide SPSSEG with donations to help fund this position. A full time WCC Individual Placement cost SPSSEG \$9,000 per year. Although \$9,000 doesn't sound like a large investment for a full time employee, it is actually very difficult for SPSSEG to obligate limited funds away from other organizational needs not covered by grants (like rent, utilities, computers, insurance, general office supplies, etc).

The WCC position is an important part of our education and outreach program and provides critical office support to our small four person staff. Some specific WCC duties include: Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail coordination, community education, attending local and regional events, water monitoring, riparian plantings, office work, website, social media updates, and nearshore education. Please consider a financial contribution to SPSSEG to support next year's WCC-IP student. All donations are appreciated and fully tax deductible. SPSSEG is a registered non-profit 501(c)(3).



FUNdraising!

Last year SPSSEG took part in the inaugural Olympia Traverse (www.olympiatraverse.com) event and had a blast. This year the Olympia Traverse was held on Saturday July 23. The Traverse is a multi-sport adventure relay for solo, tandem and teams celebrating the life cycle of wild salmon. The event started in the Capitol Forest and wound its way to the Olympia waterfront for a strong finish and community celebration at Fish Tale Pub. A primary goal of the Olympia Traverse is to raise awareness about the salmon lifecycle and to also provide financial support to local non-profits, like SPSSEG. Please feel free to make a donation on behalf of the Olympia Traverse event and support the SPSSEG team "the South Sound Chums"! Also, it's not too late to support our team by submitting a donation using the enclosed envelope or by visiting www.olympiatraverse.com.

Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail SPLASH - August 21, 2011



The Splash tradition is alive and well! On **Sunday August 21**, from **3-6 pm**. SPSSEG, Taylor Shellfish, and Mason Conservation District will host our 4th annual fundraiser benefiting the wonderful and educational Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail. Last year over 70 people enjoyed gourmet appetizers, Olympic Mountain Ice Cream, and local beer and wines. Our goal this year is to share the experience with at least 100 supporters. So please mark your calendar, invite some friends, and come support community education in action! This is an outstanding opportunity to visit the Trail in the sun versus sideways rain, snow, and sleet that often accompany the Trail during the fall chum spawning season. Tickets are \$35 each or \$30 each for groups of four or more. Each ticket sold supports about 10 student visitors. So plan to support a great cause, invite at least three friends to join you, and save a little money to boot. This event really is a Splash!

If you are not able to attend Splash, please consider making a donation to support a school bus trip. School busses are approximately \$150 for one round trip to the Trail and back.

Become a Chum! Register today for the one-and-only Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail SPLASH!

Name _____

Street _____

City _____ State _____ Zip _____

E-mail _____

Please Return form to:

SPSSEG

6700 Martin Way East, Suite 112

Olympia, WA 98516

- ◆ Add me to the guest list!\$35
- ◆ Me and three friends!.....\$120
- ◆ Chum Egg\$250 - \$500
- ◆ Chum Fry\$500 - \$750
- ◆ Spawning Chum >>>>>>>>.....\$750+
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South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group Mission:

To protect and restore salmon populations and aquatic habitat with an emphasis on ecosystem function through scientifically informed projects, community education, and volunteer involvement.