Fall 2015 Newsletter

SOUTH PUGET SOUND Salmon ENHANCEMENT GROUP

SalmonGRAM

Committed to Protecting and Restoring South Puget Sound Habitat

This Issue:

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

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Cover: Clearwatwer River Valley

Photo: Kristin Williamson

Message from the Executive Director

Lance Winecka

The South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group (SPSSEG) has been involved in regional restoration projects for nearly 25 years. I've been fortunate enough to help contribute to the Group's success for the past 15 years and have seen the organization thrive over time. In the early years, the projects were mainly opportunistic and typically were smaller in scale. In 2001, that all changed with the Sherwood Creek bridge project. This bridge was the largest and most complex project ever attempted by the Group, and it is still considered one of our greatest accomplishments. The cost was about $1 million dollars. These days, quite a few of our projects are over $1 million dollars. These projects are large-scale watershed restoration efforts that will provide both immediate and long-term habitat benefits for fish. You can read more about our most recent large scale project, the Clearwater River Floodplain Restoration Project in this newsletter. In our next newsletter, we will focus on the last construction phase of the Ohop Creek project, which is wrapping up this summer.

The Clearwater, Greenwater, Mashel, and Ohop are all legacy projects that will evolve and reshape the floodplains over the next several decades. These projects support a multi-species approach to improve ecosystems, and will restore our watersheds one log jam at a time. 'Wood is good' and one of the greatest riverine attributes are complex log jams. Log jams occur naturally in every watershed. To date, SPSSEG has built over 400 log jams in our service area. These jams are utilized heavily by anadromous and resident fish and support adult and juvenile life stages. At some point in their journey a fish well seek refuge in a log jam.

As we continue to restore in-stream habitat, we can't forget about the ultimate habitat for salmon: WATER! Salmon need cold, clear, clean, and constant water to survive. This summer has been great for family barbeques, but terrible for the fish and riparian plants. Unfortunately the warm water and low flows will have a negative impact on several generations of fish species. However, many of these fish will survive by utilizing deep, cool pools created by complex log jams.

SalmonGram is published 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.

Meet Emily, Our Newest Board Member

By: Emily Garlich, Board Secretary

I have lived in the Olympia area for 39 years or so. Last year I retired from teaching (25 plus years) biology at Shelton High School, where I taught an ecology field study class in which students learned by getting outside doing sampling and analysis of the local ecosystems of beaches, lakes, streams and forests. I am also a partner in Kamilche Sea Farms, growing mussels in Totten Inlet. I have done this for 34 years. My daughters, Gretchen (35) in New Zealand and Anna (34) in Hawaii give me a wonderful excuse to travel. My hobbies include sculling, bicycling and gardening.

The first few months on the SPSSEG board has let me see the passion and dedication the staff and board members have for doing habitat restoration. They are good to work with and I am learning the ins and outs of agencies and funding which they negotiate so well.

Emily and daughter, ready to set out on a week long bike trip in Australia.

If you are interested in giving a donation to SPSSEG and inviting First Salmon into your space, please contact Jerilyn at jerilynw@spsseg.org

1 month ..... $ 250

3 months ..... $ 700

6 months ..... $ 1,250

All donations will be used to support the Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail and our Education and Outreach program.

Connecting Community & Salmon at Kennedy Creek

By: Bob Barnes, Board Member & Docent

Splash – It is the sound of west-coast streams this time of year with the return of an ancient rhythm of life. The return of Pacific salmon to their native streams.

I am fortunate to serve on the board of the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, and it is our core mission to protect and restore salmon populations and aquatic habitat in our area. Community education and outreach is one of the ways we spread the word and get people involved in this core mission.

One of the chief ways we have to share the enduring legacy of a healthy salmon run is at the Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail near Shelton. This is a collaborative effort to educate our youth and share the knowledge of this resource with visitors. We host thousands of students and visitors every November. This past year was the first I served as one of over 30 volunteer docents who donate over 500 hours of time to help provide information, interpretation, and inspiration to people visiting the Trail. It is an important opportunity to help us connect with this local icon. For many students living in urban locations, this is the first time they experience a native salmon run that is healthy and sustainable.

This was not always the case. Back in the 1970's the escapement was declining so rapidly that the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife (WDFW) decided to install in-stream incubators to raise the survival rate of Chum fry. This did not succeed in raising the escapement numbers, so the incubator was removed and the focus shifted from fry enhancement to harvest management. In 1984 the Squaxin Island Tribe and the State of Washington agreed on a plan to raise the number of spawning adults. The State stopped harvest along the migratory routes of Kennedy Creek Chum in northern Puget Sound during peak migration and the Squaxin Island Tribe, which had traditionally fished in Totten Inlet, agreed to pull out and only fish in the open sound. WDFW also implemented riparian habitat improvements, such as placing large logs in the stream to create pools and riffles. Since then, the Kennedy Creek runs have been some of the healthiest in the entire state and in any given year the spawning numbers can reach as high as 80,000 fish and normally range between 20,000 and 40,000 fish.

All nations – salmon nations, bird nations, animal nations, plant nations, people nations... have a responsibility and trust to coexist and prosper. It is everyone's job to take care of the planet and this beloved species. We are just a strand in the web of life. We have to teach our young the importance of respecting the earth and all those that reside therein. The Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail is a great example of how we can work together to achieve a positive and sustainable outcome. I am encouraged by my experience as a docent this past year. Students are so much more aware of their environment these days and have a heavy responsibility to leave this place better than they found it. I hope to see you on the trail.

Let the Numbers do the Talking

It is easy to say that Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail is a unique and fantastic resource for learning about pacific salmon up close and personal - because we have some amazing numbers to back it up.

In 2014, the Trail opened to visitors on Saturday November 1. Open a total of **29** days, the Trail brought over **5,000** visitors, an average of about **180** people per day! **17** of those days were weekdays when scheduled groups, mostly from schools in the surrounding community, explored the trail. **2,300** students and community members from **49** different schools and organizations visited during those weekdays, keeping our **35** volunteer trail Docents on their toes. For **12** days the trail was open to the public, and **3,000** community members flocked to see the miracle of returning salmon in Kennedy and Fiscus Creeks. **550** hours were donated by our hardworking volunteers to keep the trail open and running smoothly.

The visibility in Kennedy Creek and Fiscus Creek was incredible in November of 2014, which allowed us to capture some great photos and videos of salmon utilizing the habitat available along the Trail. To help spread salmon knowledge near and far, we have created a salmon spawning behavior video, which can be viewed on our website (www.spsseg.org).

We anticipate similar attendance this season, and look forward to another marvelous year watching the chum return.

Long time docent Steve teaches students how female salmon dig their redds.

Lance teaches the story of the salmon lifecycle with a little help from some salmon puppets.

Nearshore Restoration Projects

Arcadia Point Structure Removal

The Arcadia Point Structure Removal Project will enhance natural beach processes such as shore-drift through removal of a boat ramp and a boat basin structure. The structure prevents sediment from drifting along the beach, which historically maintained the down-drift beaches. The down-drift neighbors are looking forward to having sand and gravel reach their beaches after having been starved for over 50 years.

The private boat launch and the groins that make up the boat basin represent the last remaining impediment to lateral drift within this cell. In 2011, the Squaxin Island Tribe replaced the public boat ramp with one which would allow sediment to be transported, just a few hundred feet updrift of this boat ramp and jetty.

Nearshore habitat provides a critical nursery for juvenile salmon as they prepare to make their seaward migration and also serves as migration corridors for returning adult salmon. Beaches are also important spawning habitat for forage fish such as herring, surf smelt, and sand lance. Forage fish are small, schooling fish which serve as an important source of food for other fish species, birds and marine mammals.

Edgewater Beach Restoration

We are pleased to announce the upcoming Edgewater Beach Restoration project, which is one of the largest examples of shoreline armor removal in South Puget Sound. Located near Eld Inlet in Olympia, Edgewater Beach is an expanse of shoreline backed by a feeder bluff which historically provided sediment needed for healthy beach formation. Shoreline habitat and ecological functions at this site are hampered by a nearly 800-foot long concrete bulkhead that has buried inter-tidal habitat and is blocking sediment input needed to maintain down-drift beach habitat. The project will remove the concrete armoring and restore beach habitat that provides a critical link in the ecological web used by juvenile and adult salmon, and a myriad of other wildlife.

In addition to the restoration project itself, we have received funding from the Estuary and Salmon Restoration Program (ESRP) to monitor the changes and to study responses of the biota and habitat at the site. To do this, we have teamed up with Dr. Megan Dethier from the University of Washington to conduct the monitoring, the results of which will be incorporated into her larger study on the effects of armoring throughout Puget Sound.

Thus, the project represents a significant restoration opportunity and a chance to contribute to scientific research on the detriments of shoreline armoring as well as the benefits of restoration.

Community Partnerships & Salmon Restoration

Toray Composites of America (TCA) recently doubled down on the environment by donating a $200,000 energy rebate it received from Tacoma Power to local salmon recovery efforts undertaken by SPSSEG. The funds are going to restoring salmon habitat along the Clearwater River, a vital Chinook and Steelhead stream in the Puyallup River watershed.

In recent years TCA, a Pierce County based subsidiary of the Tokyo-based Toray Industries, has worked closely with Tacoma Power and other agencies to reduce power consumption at their composites manufacturing facility in east Tacoma. The reward for their energy saving endeavors has been a substantial rebate from Tacoma Power.

Ryoichi Nakama, TCA President, asked the company to find an avenue to reinvest the rebate money in the local community in a way that reinforces Toray's commitment to environmental stewardship and corporate responsibility. TCA recognized that the bulk of their power from Tacoma Power is generated from hydroelectric dams in the region and so to offset the effects hydroelectric power generation has on salmon habitat, TCA elected to invest the rebate money in salmon habitat restoration.

TCA's environmental team selected SPSSEG to receive the rebate funds because of their commitment to restoring local salmon habitat. SPSSEG decided to allocate a significant portion of TCA's funds to the

Clearwater River Restoration Project, a five year project effort to restore salmon habitat on 1.5 miles of the Clearwater River on private forest land east of Enumclaw.

The Clearwater River FloodplainRestoration project is a collaborative effort between the SPSSEG, Hancock Forest Management, and the Puyallup and Muckleshoot Tribes. Project actions will install up to 31 engineered log jams and remove over a mile of old forest road from the floodplain. In addition to funding contributions from project partners, the project also enjoys funding support from the State's Recreation and Conservation Office Salmon Recovery Funding Board, the Puget Sound Acquisition and Restoration Fund, and the US Fish and Wildlife Service and Toray Composites. The project was designed by Herrera Environmental Consultants and construction is being completed by local construction companies McClung Construction (2013) and Stafford Excavating (2015).

Above: Log jams completed in 2013 now are home to juvenile coho and steelhead
Below: Nine new log jams were constructed in 2015

Channel spanning log jam collecting woody material and carving out deep, cold pools. January 2015

Titlow Estuary Restoration Project

SPSSEG has been working with Metro Parks Tacoma and the BNSF railway company since 2009 to develop a restoration plan for Titlow Park, which will restore fish passage and estuarine function to a 5 acre embayment in the Tacoma Narrows. The project aims to replace a 4 foot culvert and tide gate with a 96 foot span rail bridge and remove significant infrastructure, armor, and fill from the shoreline to reclaim and restore critical nearshore habitat for salmon, forage fish, and migratory birds.

This ambitious project carries a 7-10 million dollar price tag. Thus far funding from ESRP, NOAA, and EPA's National Estuary Program has supported project design, stakeholder negotiations, and removal of a house, seawall, and rip rap armor from the shoreline to the north of the lagoon, planned for fall 2016. Given the project's high visibility and innovative partnership with Metro Parks Tacoma, City of Tacoma, Earthcorps, and BNSF, this project serves as a cornerstone for Puget Sound recovery efforts. Federal funding to support this large scale project will be paramount to its success and SPSSEG would like to recognize the dedicated efforts of Derek Kilmer's office to elevate Puget Sound recovery to the national landscape. Representative Kilmer has been integral in bringing EPA National Estuary Funds to our region. Rep. Kilmer toured the Titlow project site on May 6th to recognize project proponents for their strong partnerships. SPSSEG will be working closely with Kilmer's staff as we move this project forward.

Maria Hunter, Puget Sound Marine and Nearshore Grant Program, and Representative Derek Kilmer on the train tracks at Titlow Park.

Derek Kilmer with Bob Barnes, SPSSEG Board Member, Colleen Thompson, RFEG Coalition Coordinator, Lance Winecka and Kristin Williamson, SPSSEG.

House, seawall and rip rap armor slated for removal in Fall 2016 with EPA National Estuary Program funds.

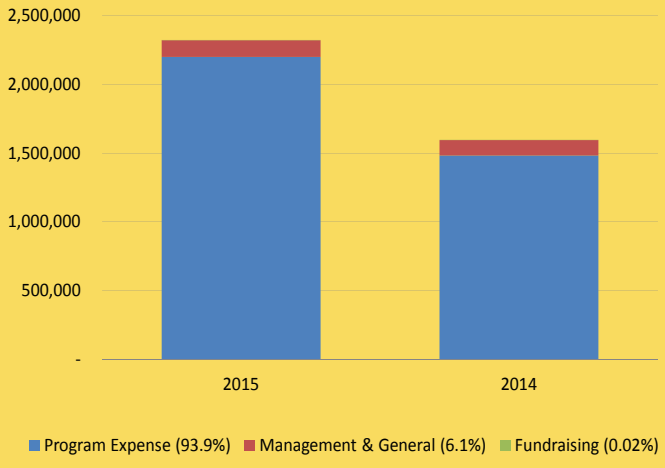
Financial Report

Below is a brief look at SPSSEG's financials for the 2014 - 2015 Fiscal Year. We consistently seek diversified funding opportunities. The vast majority of our funding is from project oriented grants, while donations and memberships account for 4.67%.

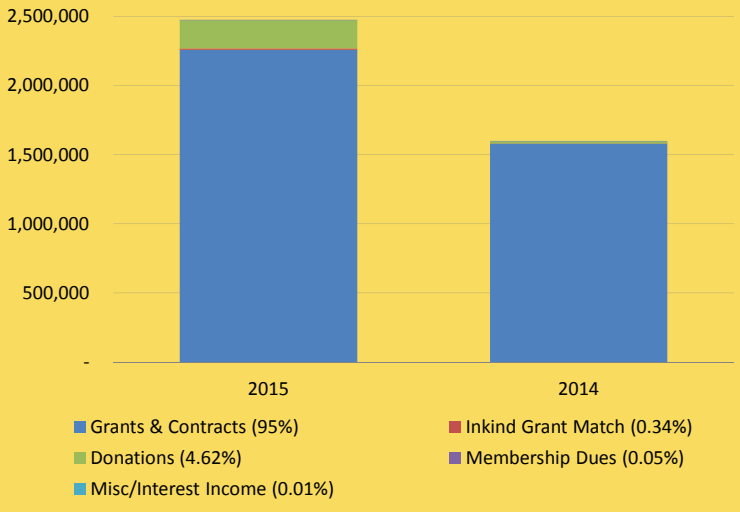
Abbreviated Statement of Financial Position As of June 30, 2015			
Assets		6/30/15	6/30/14
	Cash	268,889	163,146
	Receivables	248,201	132,721
	Prepaid Expenses	1,976	2,560
	Equipment	18,597	18,597
	(Less depreciation)		
Total Assets		$537,662	$317,024
Liabilities		267,859	199,389
Net Assets		269,803	117,635
Total Liabilities & Net Assets		$537,662	$317,024

Abbreviated Summary of Activities As of June 30, 2015			
Support & Revenue		6/30/15	6/30/14
	Grants & Contracts	2,258,528	1,579,550
	In-Kind Grant Match	8,500	319
	Donations	203,913	15,987
	Membership Dues	830	990
	Misc/Interest Income	246	165
Total Support & Revenue		$2,472,018	$1,597,011
Expenses			
	Program Expense	2,199,161	1,482,662
	Restoration	2,094,649	1,350,927
	Education	30,261	28,583
	Other	74,251	103,152
	Management & General	120,537	111,667
	Fundraising	149	391
Total Expenses		$2,319,847	$1,594,720
	Net Result	$152,171	2,291

Expenses

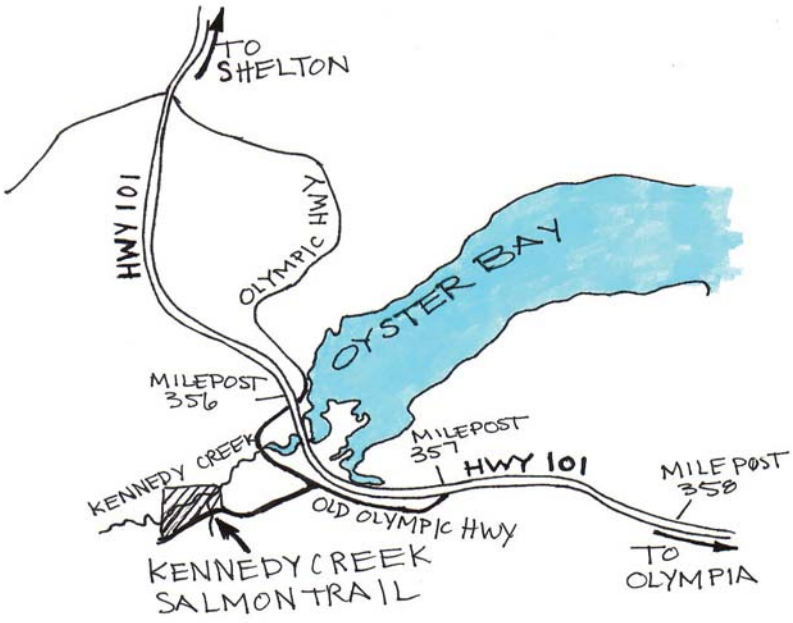


Income



Above figures are pre-audit and subject to minor adjustments

Chum, Chowder & Chocolate
Saturday, November 21



Join us for our 4th annual Chum, Chowder and Chocolate fundraiser! On **Saturday, November 21st** we will be serving delicious local seafood and chowder from **11am - 2pm**. Please mark your calendar, invite some friends, and come support community education in action.

If you are not able to attend, please consider making a donation to support a school group or school bus trip. School busses are approximately $150 for one round trip to the Trail and back and a $35 donation supports 10 student visitors to the Trail.

Thanks to our generous recent donors: Squaxin Island Tribe, Taylor Shellfish, Xinh's Restaurant, and most importantly our docents!

Become a Chum!
Support the Kennedy Creek Salmon Trail!

Name_____

Street_____

City_____ State_____ Zip_____

E-mail _____

Please Return form to:
SPSSEG
6700 Martin Way East, Suite 112
Olympia, WA 98516

- Chum Egg .....$50 - $250
- Chum Fry .....$250 - $500
- Spawning Chum .....$500+
- Corporate Chum .....$1,000+
- Other Tax-Deductible Donation .....$_____

South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group
6700 Martin Way East, Suite 112
Olympia, WA 98516

Please pass this newsletter on to a friend when you are finished. Thank you!

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.