



Puyallup River Tales

A newsletter of the Puyallup River Watershed Council

Volume 1, Issue 3

February 2006

Restoration Give Salmon Refuge During Floods



More than 20 acres of off-channel habitat have been reconnected to the Puyallup River by tribal and local governments and a non-profit group. "As the winter rains bring higher river levels, juvenile salmon and trout will begin to use the additional habitat," said Lance Winecka, project manager for SPSSEG. "Salmon have a hard time in the main river channel when there is a lot of fast moving water."

The Puyallup Tribe joined Pierce County, the Pierce Conservation District, with the South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group (SPSSEG) to complete the effort.

"Salmon need places to get out of the way when the river floods," said Ladley. This summer, the group reconnected the 18-acre

Sportsman's Oxbow with the river. Last year, four acres were opened up when the 96th Street Oxbow project was completed. The Puyallup Tribe is also planning a third restoration project that will reconnect 17 additional acres of off-channel habitat farther downstream.

The projects will especially benefit coho and chinook salmon, and cutthroat, bull and steelhead trout, all of which live in freshwater for extended periods as juveniles. Puyallup River chinook and bull trout are part of wider stocks listed as "threatened" under the federal Endangered Species Act.

"Reconnecting habitat blocked by dikes is the single most important thing we can do to restore salmon on the Puyallup River," said Ladley.

The Puyallup River Watershed Council is a forum which promotes and implements programs that restore, maintain, and enhance the watershed in order to protect its environmental, economic, and cultural health.

We've got a lot of work to do for this year

As your new watershed coordinator, I am excited to work with many partners to help accomplish these actions as part of an ambitious work plan for 2006. For more information on the work plan, see our website at www.piercecountywa.org/prwc

Lorin Reinelt
**Personal
Perspective**

I began work as the watershed coordinator in October and soon after attended my first Forum. One of the things that attracted me to this job was an opportunity to work with citizens, local governments, resource agencies, tribes and other groups to make a difference on the ground, improving water quality, habitat and overall watershed health. I believe that local government can be part of the solution, but it also takes committed people working at the watershed or neighborhood level and individual stewardship efforts on our own land to make a difference. I see this energy and commitment at the watershed level and with Pierce County Water Programs' support of watershed councils.

One of the exciting projects I have been working on over the past months is the new Clarks Creek Initiative. Clarks Creek was as a high priority area for improving water quality. The initiative addresses numerous problems in the basin with the following actions: (1) a riparian restoration program, (2) an education/technical assistance program on nutrient and pesticide/herbicide management, and (3) a stormwater retrofitting demonstration project to improve water quality. More detail will be presented in the next newsletter.

I have also been working with the Chair on upcoming Forums. The March Forum will focus on the status of salmon stocks and the "4 Hs" (habitat, hydro, hatcheries and harvest). The April Forum will focus on sustainable communities, linking planning, design and infrastructure with natural resources protection, restoration and enhancement. Also, don't forget to stop by and see our booth at the Livable Communities Fair on April 8 at the Puyallup Fairgrounds.

Salmon receive \$1,484,764 from the state

Bee Spit Honey

\$552,228

Pierce County Conservation District

The district will use this grant to acquire and restore 20 acres of quality riparian habitat. The project will include an active public involvement component in the riparian restoration phase. The conservation district contributed \$97,452.

Soler Farms

\$397,536

Pierce County Conservation District

The district will acquire and restore 26 acres of land along South Prairie and return it to quality riparian habitat. The property is zoned for agricultural use, and is maintained as pastureland. The conservation district contributed \$70,154.

Lower Boise Creek

\$535,000

King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

King County will use this grant to relocate 500 feet of Boise Creek into a new channel, restoring channel, floodplain and riparian conditions on Boise Creek, a tributary to the White River. The new channel will meander with no levees, and it will restore the historic channel gradient and habitat. The berms confining Boise Creek will be removed to restore a floodplain connection with the White River. The County will contribute \$95,000.

I am a water resources engineer by training and a professional wetland scientist. Over the past 22 years, I have worked in research, consulting and for local government. My expertise and experience includes nonpoint-source water pollution management, aquatic monitoring, stream restoration and enhancement, wetlands and stormwater management, flood hazard reduction, assessment of urban and agricultural runoff, and groundwater management. I have a BS and MS in Civil and Environmental Engineering and Science and a PhD from a research program entitled, "Water in the Environment and Society."

For more information and volunteer opportunities, visit our Web site: www.piercecountywa.org/PRWC
Or, send an email to: PC-PRWC@co.pierce.wa.us

The Puyallup River Watershed Council meets on the fourth Wednesday of each month, 5-7 p.m., at Sumner City Hall, 1104 Maple St.

Biodiversity Council Selects Puyallup Watershed



The project will focus on the Lower White River portion of the Puyallup River Watershed and provides many different opportunities for you to get involved.

The Washington Biodiversity Council has selected the Puyallup River Watershed as the location for its first biodiversity conservation project in western Washington. The Council was created by Governor Locke to develop and promote effective ways to conserve, steward, and restore Washington's biodiversity. It is comprised of 23 members from the tribes, business, government, and non-governmental conservation organizations.

The project will be conducted by the PRWC and the Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance. The Alliance includes people from a broad cross section of conservation agencies and organizations that

share a common interest in conserving the biodiversity of Pierce County. Grants from the Washington Biodiversity Council and the Point Defiance Zoo Society are helping to support the project.

You can help by:

- ◆ Becoming a trained 'Citizen Scientist.' Participate in one of the upcoming NatureMapping workshops and contribute valuable data about plant and animal diversity.
- ◆ Working alongside professional biologists and botanists during the 24-hour BioBlitz scheduled for this spring. The BioBlitz will be a rapid assessment of the plant and animal diversity that occurs in and around the Lower White River.
- ◆ Having your land inventoried for plants and animals during the BioBlitz. This important information can help if you want to apply for property tax reduction programs.
- ◆ Participating in a town hall meeting where neighbors will explore ways to conserve the natural values of the Lower White River for future generations.

Learn more about this project and ways that you can get involved by contacting John Garner at the Tacoma Nature Center at 253.591.6439 or johng@tacomaparks.com.

Volunteer groups involved in watershed health

Citizens for a Healthy Bay

<http://www.healthybay.org>

chb@healthybay.org

917 Pacific Avenue, Suite 100

Tacoma, WA 98402

253-383-2429

Friends of the Hylebos Wetlands

<http://www.hylebos.org/>

chinook@hylebos.org

(253) 929-1519

Friends of Clarks Creek

(253) 864-6042

Pierce Stream Team

<http://www.piercecountycd.org/streamtm.htm>

streamteam@piercecountycd.org

(253) 845-2973

South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group

<http://spsseg.org>

spsseg@spsseg.org

(360) 412-0808

Friends of Swan Creek Watershed

253-472-7264

sueb.@prodigy.net



Students from the Chief Leschi School in Puyallup visit the Puyallup Tribe of Indians' Diru Creek hatchery. From late November to after the new year is a busy time at the hatchery as thousands of chum salmon return to be spawned, producing future generations of salmon.



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2005 PRWC Accomplishments in Detail

2005 Workplan focused on 3 major areas: Organizational development, Forums and Tours, and Watershed Projects that advanced our mission.

GOALS

A major goal of the Executive Committee this past year was to **increase the awareness of the mission of the PRWC and increase member participation**. This effort was not only directed to bring in new members but to also reach out to past members who had not participated at all in 2004. To increase the number and variety of stakeholders not only gives us a balanced perspective on the issues that face our Watershed but also allows us to forge partnerships and create the critical mass to enable us to carry out watershed projects.

An equally major focus for the year was to **make progress on the Watershed projects** that were chosen during our Nov 2004 Retreat and that advanced our Mission by carrying out portions of our Strategic Action Plan.

RESULTS

Visibility & Participation

To achieve this goal we created **new communication tools** (see box 1) and developed **an outstanding monthly speaker forum program** (see next page).

We also expanded our presence into sub-basin communities by scheduling **guided tours and other meetings to highlight specific local issues** (see box 2).

Box 1: New communication tools increased public awareness of PRWC mission and activities

- Brochure
- Website
- Newsletter (Puyallup River Tales)
- Press releases to newspapers & organizations

We saw a significant increase in the awareness of the PRWC mission and activities. Forum announcements appeared in local newspapers and other Web based server lists and newsletters. As a result, 104 new or previously inactive members attended one of our Forums or tours. A significant portion of the new members represented local municipalities (including city elected officials and staff) and the general public - both Stakeholder groups that we felt were under represented in the past. As a result of reporters attending our forums & tours, major newspaper articles and editorials (at least 10 that we know of) appeared in a variety of newspapers including the TNT, Herald, Courier Herald, and Orting Gazette widening the dissemination of important watershed issues to an audience beyond those attending our forums.

We also received requests from countless others who although they could not attend our Forums wanted to be added to our email distribution list so that they might receive important bulletins and receive our new Newsletter.

Watershed Projects carry out our Strategic Action Plan

1. Increased visibility of Fennel Creek and its importance to our Watershed
 - Raised awareness and increased coordinated participation of: City of Bonney Lake (council members & city staff), Pierce County, and Citizen based groups (Fennel Creek Preservation Group, Lake Bonney Conservation Association, Bonney Lake Historical Society)
2. Increased visibility of Clarks Creek and its importance to our watershed by assembling key stakeholders & identified possible projects.
 - Helped birth Friends of Clarks Creek: mailed invitations to 100 residents along creek, facilitated first residents meeting Held agency/resident Open House

3. Made progress on a watershed assessment plan
 - Researched key assessment studies & formats, identified key sustainability indicators, contacted participants
 - Partnered with Pierce County Biodiversity Alliance
4. Supported White/Carbon River Forum
 - Produced the first in series of historic walking tour maps with the city of Buckley
5. South Prairie Creek Water Cleanup Plan (“TMDL”)
 - Held South Prairie Creek Open House and drafted Implementation Plan

Box 2: In-community Meetings and Tours reached out to local citizens & officials:

- Hosted public meeting Mid-Puyallup Basin Plan
- Co-sponsored Salmon Homecoming Celebration at S. Prairie Creek Preserve
- Held 4 on-site tours
 - Demonstration of stormwater control methods & innovative restoration concepts within the City of Puyallup
 - Dynamics of the Fennel Creek watershed and its importance upon habitat and community
 - Community efforts to restore Lake Bonney, view salmon returning in Fennel & S. Prairie Creeks
 - See fish trap in operation on the Puyallup river during peak outmigration time for chinook & steelhead

2005 Speaker Forum Program

January: On-site Sewage System Operation & Maintenance Program Update- Dennis Tone Tac/Pierce County Health Department

February: Using Indicators to Measure the Health of a Watershed: An Example from the Clover Creek Watershed- Jill Whitman Chair, Dept of Geosciences PLU.

March: Detailed Implementation Plan for the Upper White Watershed Sediment and Temperature TMDL-Gary L. Ketcheson Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie National Forest.

April: Surface Water Management: Best Management Practices-Jim Oberlander, Rick Fuller, City of Tacoma; Paul Bucich, City of Federal Way; Dan Repp, City of Puyallup.

May: Pierce County Water Programs: Overview, Updates and Upcoming Projects- Harold P. Smelt, Manager Water Programs Division.

June: Second quarter watershed council work plan status reports: Non-Point Project Plan, Support Fennel Creek Visibility Project, South Prairie Creek DIP, Watershed Assessment, Shared Salmon Strategy-Travis Cary, Fred Jacobsen, Linda Burgess, Bart Madison.

July: Implications of Recent Comprehensive Updates to Pierce County Flood Maps-Kevin Farrell, Flood Plain Specialist, WA Dept of Ecology, SW Region; Dennis Dixon, Civil Engineer, Pierce County Water Programs; Jeff Johnson, Principal with Northwest Hydraulic Consultants.

August: Update of Municipal & Industrial Stormwater Permitting Regulations Requirements- John Diamont & Janice Sedlak WA Dept of Ecology. Citizen Water Pollution Hotline - Amy Bates, Citizens for a Healthy Bay.

September: PRWC Community Outreach Programs Update: Fennel Creek, Lake Bonney, Clarks Creek- Marian Betzer, Fennel Creek Preservation Group; Dana McCauley, Lake Bonney Conservation Assoc; Ann Coon, Clarks Creek Advocate. Implications of recent critical habitat reduction to salmon recovery efforts - Bart Madison, Trout Unlimited.

October: The Puyallup River System, Flood Awareness and Disaster Preparedness-Tony Fantello, Division Maintenance/River Systems Manager, Pierce County Water Programs; Steve Bailey, Director PC Emergency Management.

November: Salmon Habitat Recovery Projects – Overview of Projects Funded Since 1998 and Proposed for 2005- Roy Huberd, PC Water Programs. Proposed Water Quality Standards for Surface Waters of the Puyallup Tribe - Char Naylor, Water Quality Manager, Puyallup Tribe of Indians.

December: Chinook Salmon Recovery in WRIs 10/12 and the Shared Salmon Strategy for Puget Sound - Debby Hyde, Pierce County Special Project Coordinator; Margaret Duncan, Shared Strategy for Puget Sound. Native Plan Salvage Program and Stewardship in Pierce County -Anna Thurston, Native Plant Stewardship Program Coordinator.

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