

OYSTER RIVER ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

SUMMER 2024



Volunteer Opportunities

For the past 41 years, our Society has operated a salmon hatchery in what is now Bear Creek Nature Park adjacent to the Oyster River. This facility produces over 1.5 million salmon fry a year that, upon release, swim down to the ocean to mature and become a part of the targeted sport fish population we subsequently try to catch.

With the exception of a professional hatchery manager who is paid, the work to run this operation is provided by volunteers, lots of volunteers! Young and old, male and female, we gather at the hatchery building each Tuesday at 8 am to perform the myriad of tasks required. Not surprisingly, the work is quite rewarding and actually quite a bit of fun. First, we have a gathering in the hatchery cabin to drink our coffee or tea, socialize, discuss the day's activities, and assign tasks which include feeding the fish, fixing broken tools and equipment, cutting grass, cleaning equipment, moving fish about and other activities too numerous to list. Then we spend the next couple of hours doing the work, and especially for those maintaining our numerous hiking trails, there is a chance to see interesting wildlife. Most people are on their way home nicely before noon. There are also weekend assignments available to those who can't make Tuesdays, but you have to make the first Tuesday to set this up.



Coho smolt fin-clipping Photo: Karen Wade

So if you are interested and would like to help, please join us any Tuesday morning. Drive out Macaulay Road to Bear Creek Nature Park, about 2 km from the turnoff on Hamm Rd. Turn in at the big sign on the right at the park entrance. Then proceed to the yellow bar gate at the entrance to the park. Plan to arrive at the gate between 7:45 and 8:00 am where you will find a vehicle waiting at the gate. Pull in behind the waiting vehicle and they will head down the hill. You stay at the gate until the next vehicle pulls in behind you. Walk back and tell the person you're new and they'll arrange to guide you the rest of the way.

Come give us a look - maybe you'll join us!

ORES Board of Directors



Black Creek Lions Club came for a tour and made a generous donation

Hatchery Manager's Report Spring 2024

As of now all the fish we were planning to release are released, and in early fall we will release our juvenile Chinook. We are waiting for what I call our water window to do any in-stream projects, which would be July and August. We have a few projects planned for the summer: 1) A Chum rearing pond that is waiting for final approval, 2) Dredging the silt out of #2 pond, and 3) Replacing an old bridge with a fish-friendly culvert. We also have a walkway to replace along the side of the #11 Capilano trough.

I'm looking forward to seeing and working with everyone on Volunteer Tuesdays, and would like to thank all of you volunteers for your hard work and dedication. It is you as volunteers that make this all possible.

Lyle Edmunds, Hatchery Manager



River otter

Photo: George Bowron

Education Report Spring 2024

Once again we enjoyed a busy season.

In January we delivered Coho salmon eggs to 4 schools, and students learned about the lifecycle of salmon, importance of healthy watershed environments and caring for the aquariums.

They learned about the different stages of development from eggs through to fry. They then brought the fry to the Bear Creek Nature Park and released them into a side channel of the Oyster River. We then explored the park and discussed why the area was a good choice to release them.

We also toured a few groups from the community who were interested in the park and what we do as a hatchery within the park.

Everyone who joined us on tours either with the school program or just for general interest really enjoyed the experience. If anyone is interested in a group tour, we would be happy to work with you to make it happen.

Please contact us through our website

www.oysterriverenhancement.org

Phil Bolin

ORES Education Director

A little story from Lyle

One morning at the hatchery as I was doing my routine, I got to the point where I was going to feed our small chinook fry in our holding area called #2 pond. I made it to the upper bridge, planning on cleaning the screens that hold the fish in the pond until time of release, when I noticed some activity upstream from me in the settling pond where our river intake pipe flows in. At first I thought it was a mink, but realized right away that this was a larger animal. And yes, it was an otter. It didn't see me, so I had time to watch it doing its own thing. It was diving down basically in the same spot (about 6' in diameter) and stirring up the mud. When it came to the surface it was chewing and swallowing its meal. At first I thought that it was eating the salmon and trout that live in the settling pond. But as I watched, this otter was staying in the same place, stirring up the mud and surfacing with a mouth full of food that wasn't salmon or trout. Looking more closely, I could see that this otter was eating lampreys. Who knew? A few minutes later the otter spotted me and disappeared. Just like that the show was over.

WWW.OysterRiverEnhancement.org [Find us on Facebook](#)

Publication: Joyce McMenamon, Ron Shymko

Donations can be made via e-Transfer to orestreasurer@gmail.com

MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

I wish to apply / renew my Membership in the Oyster River Enhancement Society

Individual (\$20/yr) _____	Family (\$30/yr) _____	Corporate/Group (\$200/yr) _____	Life Membership \$500
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# Yrs ____ x \$20 = _____	# Yrs ____ x \$30 = _____	# Yrs ____ x \$200 = _____	
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Donation Amount: _____	_____	_____	_____
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Total Enclosed: \$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____	\$ _____
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Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

I am available for Volunteer Work _____

Please return or mail to: Oyster River Enhancement Society, PO Box 93, Black Creek, BC V9J 1K8

Membership form and payment available on Website; also payable by e-Transfer to orestreasurer@gmail.com

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