

OYSTER RIVER ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2021/2022



Letter From The Board

Hello to all our fellow ORES members. It is surprising to realize that another year has almost gone and it will soon be 2022. With Covid the volunteer days at ORES have looked a bit different this past year. There is still the same laughter and camaraderie albeit through face masks and from six feet apart.

We have still managed to accomplish a lot with our dedicated group of volunteers along with Lyle and Mat of course. (Manager and Assistant Manager). Projects have been completed, fish have been fed and released. School groups have toured and released their "fish from in the classroom" projects. Countless numbers of informal tours and scheduled tours have taken place of our amazing diamond in the rough hatchery in the middle of the Bear Creek Nature Park. The looks on the faces of the children from Miracle Beach Elementary last spring as they each released "their coho fry" from the red solo cups into the wetlands was priceless. You just know the children will never forget that day ever..... I am pretty sure that they will always think of their little coho fry and where it went to on its adventure to the sea. Hopefully most of them will return to the Oyster River in a few years (children and coho).

As for this fall the pinks and chinook have been spawned. The coho are showing up in good numbers, the leaves are being cleared and the coho in the pond are being fed daily. As fall progresses the next phase is coming with eggs getting eyes and hatching in the coming months the cycle will continue to repeat.

None of this work could be completed without our group of volunteers. Thank you all for your continued dedication and assistance.

We would like to honour and remember our members we have lost in the past year. May your spirits all live on in the sound of the wind thru the trees down by the river.

We look forward to the future and the new year. We wish you and your families a warm and wonderful holiday season and look forward to seeing young and old along with new and old members in the coming year.

Maureen Ritter and the Board of ORES



Photo by Bernard Lecerf

We want to thank all the Volunteers, Members and Donors for your constant support, your hard work and your generosity. Because of your help we were able to continue caring for the salmon, their habitat, the Park and maintain good returns in the River and our channels. We hope next year will be kinder and allow us once again to celebrate our successes together, share our favourite dishes, and reconnect with old friends. We raise our glass to toast you if not in person at least in heart.

🦉 Wishing you all a Merry Christmas and a Happy New Year! 🦉



Photo by Graham Hilliar

YOUTH AND ECOLOGICAL RESTORATION ELDERS GUIDING YOUTH

Oyster River Enhancement Society (ORES) has been a dedicated supporter of Youth and Ecological Restoration (YER) since the program began in 2004. Youth #6 was the first to come and help ORES volunteers with restoring salmon stocks to the river. In 2005, Youth #20 said that "ORES is a birthplace that brings life to the world. It is a place for fish to mate and we can help them."

From 2004 to 2021, nearly four hundred youth have come to learn about the wonders of nature and how a group of volunteers working together can make changes. The ORES story is one of hope for recovery of this beautiful river and its salmon. That knowledge is transferred as the youth witness the compassion, devotion and coherence that exists between the volunteers.

The youth dipnet salmon and you gently teach them the right way to do this, as captured by Youth #398 "The people at the Oyster River fish hatchery were really kind, nice, and fun. They were very easy to work with and very encouraging when I was trying to net the coho, they were always like "you'll get it next time" or "there's more in there keep trying." It made me feel good, accomplished, and excited. I felt accomplished because when I have done something I feel accomplished, and when someone notices it makes me feel good."

ORES volunteers are like a grandpa or an elder that some of these young people have never had. They learn that people can be kind, patient and willing to help them. They learn that rivers and salmon are worthy of love and protection. A special and respectful relationship has developed between ORES and YER over the past seventeen years. The youth will remember you as their guides, elders and teachers.

By Wendy Kotilla on November 5, 2021

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Ron Gammie.....(778)420-1782
Lyle Edmunds.....(250)337-8898

FISH & WILDLIFE VIOLATIONS
1-800-465-4336
WEATHER INFORMATION
(250)339-5044

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Aquariums in the Classrooms 2021

I delivered coho salmon eggs to Miracle Beach Elementary and NIDES schools in January. DFO provided the salmon life cycle posters that I delivered to each student at both participating schools; they make a great keepsake.

In taking health and safety precautions, Ocean Grove Elementary opted out of the program this year, just as NIDES school chose not to bring their students to the releasing of the fry. Instead, I met with some of the faculty on a lovely Saturday morning and we released the fry, and then had an enjoyable tour of the park and hatchery facilities.

Miracle Beach School wanted their students to be involved and have the experience of releasing their fry, so we arranged for them to come on a Tuesday morning. It was a very successful day; big thanks are in order for Kevin Steele, Maureen Ritter, Cathy Bentley and everyone else that participated. I, as always, was happy to see how eager to learn and respectful the children were.

**Phil Bolin, Director of Education
Oyster River Enhancement Society**



Photo by Bernard Lecerf

NOTICE: All Members, including Honorary Life Members, are required by Revenue Canada rules to pay annual dues to remain in good standing.

MANAGER'S REPORT October 2021

Pink Salmon

500,000 Pink salmon fry were gradually released from the Hatchery. The release went into March. We are done collecting Pink eggs and it looks like we will have around 327,000 in incubation.

The return of fish in our side channels was 13,800 and the Pink return in the river is estimated at just below 21,000 fish returning

Chinook Salmon

60,000 Chinook Salmon fry were released in #2 side channel in early July. The estimated number of Chinook returning this year at this point is 490.

We are done collecting eggs but we will be short of our goal of 60,000 for incubation by 15,000 eggs.

Coho Salmon

40,000 Coho smolts were released in the lower reaches of #1 side channel in April. 40,000 Coho fry are being fed at the Hatchery in #1 Rearing Pond. Another 20,000 Coho fry were released mid May in Raven Channel. Also 20,000 were released in the Hatchery area as work needs to be done to get water flowing in the upper reaches of Raven channel in dry time. The last estimate of the Coho return was just over 6,000 with almost 800 returning up our channels and almost 300 hatchery clipped out of that 800.

Chum Salmon

120,000 Chum fry were released in May in the lower reaches of our side channels. We started releasing the Pink and Chum fry closer to the main river to ease up on predation a little.

So far at this time I have no count on the Chum return.

Other Activities

- 1) We added another round tank for holding brood Chinook in #2 Channel
- 2) Gravel was purchased to improve our roads to the Hatchery.
- 3) We finished up the non-skid on our walkways on the bridges of our ponds.

**Thank you to all volunteers for your hard work and dedication.
It is you as volunteers that make this all possible.**

**Lyle Edmunds
Hatchery Manager, ORES**



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

#Yrs ___ x \$20 = _____ #Yrs ___ x \$30 = _____ # Yrs ___ x \$200 = _____

Donation Amount: _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____ \$ _____

Name: _____

Address: _____

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

Email Address: _____

One year memberships are available on or before January 1st. All dues and donations are tax deductible. Receipts will be issued on request.

I am available for Volunteer Work _____

Please return or mail to: Oyster River Enhancement Society P.O. Box 93, Black Creek, British Columbia, V9J 1K8

Privacy Policy: Oyster River Enhancement Society (ORES) recognizes the requirements for Disclosures of Information under the Privacy Information Protection and Electronics Documents Act and the BC Personal Information Protection Act and adheres to the regulations under these acts. Your information is never disclosed outside of ORES without your consent.



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