

OYSTER RIVER ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY NEWSLETTER

WINTER 2025/2026



PRESIDENT'S MESSAGE

We must give thanks for the crews who worked throughout the fall recording the returning salmon starting off with pinks moving in-front of our new camera systems alleviating the need to dip-net, count, sex and then place into our channels. Thanks to support from The Campbell River Salmon Foundation.

With Lyle's guidance and planning we processed fish egg takes up to 3 times a week.

Hatchery staff and yes **they are the volunteers**, 'Gord, Bob H, Mike #1, Mike #2, mike #3, Karen, Randy, Randy 2, Tom, Jim, Ray, Nigel, Cathy, Charlie, and some 20 + more members made it happen with great fellowship and smiles.

With our Finance committee under the direction of our Treasurer, Ron has put together the Operational budget that is helping us "stay around" for the future. This to a large extent was started some 10+ years ago with members donating through their estates gifts that have built up an endowment fund that is getting close to producing all of the funds needed to cover our day to day operations in perpetuity. There are no outside sources to cover Operational costs.

We must give thanks to the legal firm of Tees Kiddle Spenser "TKS" who have participated in the building of the fund by offering estate planning (wills) at a major reduction of fees.



Coho egg take crew starting day on trap 3

"ORES members or others interested in including a Fund contribution in their estate planning can contact Jay Havelaar at TKS, at 250-287-7755."

Terry Lawrence, ORES President

Oyster River Hatchery Underwater Camera System

In the spring of 2025, ORES applied for funding from the Campbell River Salmon Foundation for \$17,000 to acquire underwater camera systems for the two traps at the downstream ends of Channels #2 and #3. This project was on Lyle's wish list because he had to physically dipnet and count over 10,000 pinks coming in from those traps in 2024. In June, we were told that we were successful in obtaining these funds. With advice from DFO Stock Assessment staff, Lyle and the camera subcommittee members researched cameras and the components of other systems.

Lyle's plan was to count the pinks coming through the traps by turning on the cameras, opening the gates and letting the pinks swim through on their own without netting them. This would both save everyone's backs for too much dipnetting, and be much less harmful to the fish.



Cam 3 - pink salmon on the laptop passing through the trap

The pinks passing the cameras were easily seen on the laptop computer and were counted individually by Lyle and volunteers. This was done for an hour or two each day, allowing the bulk of the pink run to swim up on their own.

In July, Mike Flynn was in charge of building a shed within the existing egg take shelter to house the computer components. In August, the components including the 2 underwater cameras, laptop computer, generator, aluminum boxes, cables and other computer equipment were purchased, assembled and installed. We had fun testing the cameras on each other before they were installed.

Lyle installed the cameras and fabricated boxes himself. In early September a work party of 10 volunteers dug two trenches for the wiring and conduit from the cameras to the computer shed. Upwards of 10 volunteers spent two mornings painting the shed "ORES green".

The wires were all connected and the system was turned on in early September; in time for the majority of the pink salmon run. The camera systems operated until October 1st until coho in the traps increased and broodstock coho began to be collected for the hatchery. The first day saw 2 pinks counted through the trap. There was a steady increase each day throughout September reaching a high of 802 through #3 trap on September 28th. The total number of pinks counted by the cameras during September was 4,450. During the last few days of September the coho count was 614.

Future plans for the camera systems include modifying the boxes, placing the cameras across the boxes and a bit further away. It was very difficult to count the pinks when there were over 100 in the traps, rushing out as soon as the gates were opened. We think modifying the placement of the cameras will make this easier. Overall the camera project was a huge success and we should be able to use this labour saving device for years to come.

**Dave Davies
ORES VOLUNTEER**

Salmonids in the Classrooms

A new school year has arrived and I am awaiting confirmation as to which schools in SD 71 and 72 will be participating in our Salmonid in the Classroom program, which is a piece of DFO's Stream to Sea program. We will deliver approximately 100 coho eggs to each of the schools in January and then in April the coho fry will be ready for release. The classes will bring them to our hatchery where we will find a perfect spot to release them. Always memorable days for the children.



School tour group

Cottonwood Rose Learning Community contacted me last month and asked if they would be able to meet up with me to talk to them regarding our program. Their community is a nature based learning program with students from K to 9. It is situated on 50 acres very close to our hatchery. Kaitlyn and I visited their school and really enjoyed our chat and tour of the property. We then arranged a date for a visit from them. 25 students and a few of their educators came on October 17th. It was a great visit and tour! Everyone had a wonderful time, especially watching the salmon spawn and feeding our young coho fry.

I was also contacted by Coastal Restoration Society (<https://www.coastrestorationstore.com/>). They asked if we could give some students a tour. The students were doing a few days of boating skills and certifications, and had a few hours between these exercises. It was a great opportunity to show them different aspects of marine related work. I recommend that you view their website as that society has done amazing things along our coast.

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



Photo by Phil Bolin

**A young student wearing one of our life jackets
Logo handpainted by Mary, ORES volunteer**



**How far we've come! A step back in time - channel #1 - Coho rearing pond
Read about our history <https://oysterriverenhancement.org/our-history>**



Channel #1 - smolt release 2025

A Look Back

For the record, I'm someone who loves to hear stories about ORES, old or new. If the story has already been told, please tell it again. If I've heard it, I'll happily listen again; someone around me surely will be hearing it for the first time. No story is ever retold exactly the same. This goes the same for newsletter articles.

I've been given the privilege to have in my possession for a while old ORES newsletters, and it has been an absolute intrigue going through them. There are so many reminders and impactful things to again see in print; it was hard to select this small handful. To quote Ken Weaver from his 2011-2012 submission, he shared that he, "personally observed all of the skills, organizing talent, and member dedication required for the continuing accomplishment of the mission of the Oyster River Enhancement Society."

A quote from Rick Janzen where in his article titled *it's all part of fishing* for the 2009-2010 newsletter, he wrote, "when we combine ethical examples with honest help and information we exert a powerful influence on the future of our sport."

Another good one, from Bob Hammersley, found in the 2004 newsletter, "All in all everyone has a lot of fun and they wouldn't be there unless they were. I'm going to quit when it isn't fun anymore so I should be there for many years. God bless those who bring snacks."

In the newsletter from 1995, Charles Brandt quoted Aldo Leopold, "...a thing is right when it tends to preserve the integrity, stability and beauty of the whole biotic community. It is wrong when it tends otherwise."

And the last one for this look back, something Charley Vaughan said in 2018-2019, "We at ORES can truly say that a river runs through our lives. And as we work to keep our river alive with salmon, we are in turn rewarded with a never-ending flow of challenges, community spirit and friendships. It seems that as we enhance the salmon, so too the salmon enhance and enrich our lives."

Everyone has an ORES experience, they've had a moment, they have a story, an opinion, a thought - and they're important.

~B. Robinson ORES Newsletter



Smolt release 2025



Three of us, after working in Philips Arm on chinook tagging project

A Road Safety Reminder

Use Caution exiting the Hatchery/Bear Creek Park onto Macaulay Road. Recently I was involved in a VERY close call when exiting the park onto Macaulay Road. Having made my safety checks and I started rolling, a truck came at a high rate of speed from the left.

After gasps and enlarged eyes the other driver managed to stop within a hands width away from my truck; missing the car behind me. Lesson Learnt: Some drivers tend to go well over the 60km/h on Macaulay Road, treating it as the local race track.

Please let this incident be a reminder to all hatchery members and visitors. Use extra caution when exiting so we can go home safely.

Bob Haire - ORES Volunteer



Our Christmas Potluck Lunch is
Tuesday, December 9th 2025



Just around the corner is a celebration for another year of incredible achievements in helping the salmon!

Once again the potluck, after the work is done, will be held at the hatchery. As always there will be grand company, laughter and a ton of fun. ORES will provide turkeys perfectly roasted by our volunteers.

Bring your favorite dish to share, appetizers, salads or desserts. If possible let Bob know on Tuesdays coming up what you're bringing, or find the list that has started, so we don't get too much overlap.

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WINTER 2025/2026

Terry Lawrence.....(250)218-9498
Lyle Edmunds.....(250)337-8898

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



Photo by Dave Davies

MANAGER'S REPORT October 2025

Pink Salmon

286,900 Pink salmon fry were gradually released from the Hatchery. The release went into the beginning of April. We are done collecting Pink eggs and it looks like we will have around 320,000 in incubation. The return of fish in our side channels was over 5,000 and the Pink return in the river is estimated at around 7,000 fish returning

Chinook Salmon

65,500 Chinook Salmon fry were released from #2 side channel June 24,2025. The estimated number of Chinook returning up the river this year at this point is around 200. We have an estimated 20,000 eggs in incubation.

Coho Salmon

43,002 Coho smolts were clipped in March and released from #1 side channel on April 22,2025. Another 20,000 Coho fry were released mid May in Raven Channel. And 40,000 fry are being fed at the hatchery until their release next spring. It is too early to estimate the Coho return this year.

Chum Salmon

325,000 Chum fry were released in May from our new Chum pond in the lower reaches of #1 channel. So far at this time I have no count on the Chum return.

Other Activities

- 1) Under water cameras for counting fish were installed at the front of #2 and #3 traps with a counting station built at #2 Egg Take station.
- 2) Renos at Mel's Mess and the R.I.B. with new paint and corrugated plastic on the walls and ceilings were done.
- 3) Upgrade on our solar system for power was also installed.

**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**

**SMILES ALL AROUND!
Volunteers picking pink eggs at Mel's Mess.**

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



MEMBERSHIP APPLICATION FORM

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

Individual (\$20/yr) _____ Family (\$30/yr) _____ Corporate/Group (\$100/yr) _____ Life Membership: \$500

#Yrs ___ x \$20 = ___ #Yrs ___ x \$30 = ___ # Yrs ___ x \$100 = ___

Donation Amount: _____

Total Enclosed: \$ _____

\$ _____

\$ _____

Name: _____

One year memberships are available on or before

Address: _____

January 1st. Payment accepted by cash, cheque

Postal Code: _____ Phone Number: _____

or e-transfer to ores treasurer@gmail.com

Email Address: _____

Donations are tax deductible.

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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