

the REEDD



THE NEWSLETTER OF THE SKAGIT FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT GROUP

Dedicated to Restoring Wild Salmon for Future Generations

Fishing with Dad

By **KEELIN MAURMANN**, WSC Community Engagement Associate

Now, I know that dead and rotting salmon carcasses smell quite awful. You can always smell them before you see them. I'm not saying that I like the smell, but it reminds me fondly of fishing with my dad. Before I got the chest waders that I have today, I had top-of-the line, fresh out of the box, bright yellow rain boots. These things were the pinnacle of my childhood adventure gear; they even had handles at the top for easy on-off. It also helped that I had the best adventure buddy.

We lived in Bremerton and there is a cute little creek that has a fairly good run of chum every year, Chico Creek. Yes, we have an exit that says "Chico Way Chico" and all of my friends like to make fun of it... but this little creek flowed into Chico Bay, and this was where my dad took me every year. I didn't actually do any real fishing until I was about nine. My dad would hook one and then "hand me the pole" while still holding onto it, to let his little 40lb, 5 year-old try and wrangle a 20lb angry salmon. But I lived for that fight; the feeling that I was wrestling something wild always left me wanting

more. I didn't have the patience or the skill at the time to hook them myself, but I would land EVERY SINGLE ONE that my dad had on. Then of course, once we had one, I was pretty much done since all I wanted to do was play with it.



ABOVE: Keelin age 5 with a fish caught at Tiger Lake

I asked my dad what the hardest part about bringing a small child fishing; he told me that it was getting them to catch fish.

"When they're out there, they need to be catching fish or else they won't have any fun." He said. I asked him why that would be so important, why bring a kid along if you have to constantly be making sure they're having fun and catching fish. I mean, my dad's a pretty good angler but even he can't catch fish on command.

"Well, I wanted you to enjoy fishing and continue maybe throughout your lifetime. I wanted to pass along something that I've loved my whole life and share that with you."

I can remember most times that I joined my dad on his fishing trips; he really didn't do a lot of fishing. If we were troll fishing, he would drive the

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the REDD

REDD: A female salmon uses her tail to dig a nest in the gravel. After she deposits her eggs the male fertilizes them. The female then covers the fertilized eggs and the resulting nest is called a redd.

MISSION

Our mission is to educate and engage the community in habitat restoration and watershed stewardship to enhance wild salmonids.

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The SFEG Board meets the 4th Tuesday of each month. The public is welcome.

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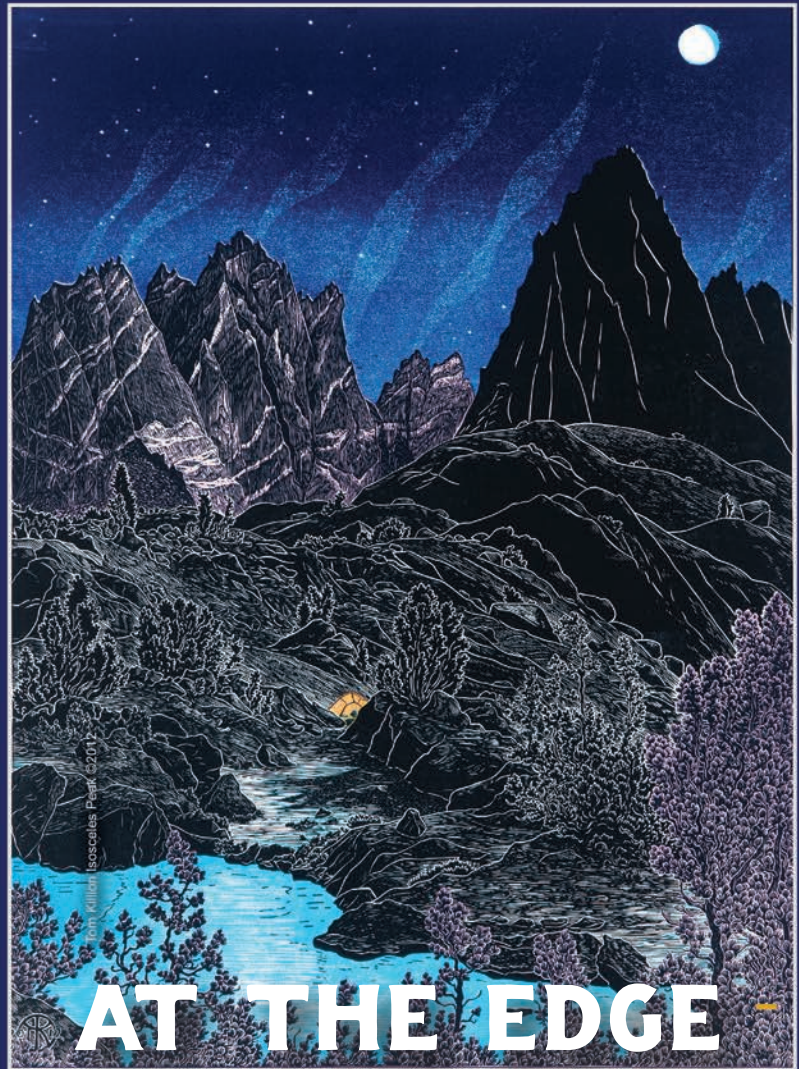
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Samish Tribal Nation

Fishing with Dad

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

boat while I held my pole expectantly, hoping for a bite. If we were fly fishing, he would cast for me, placing my fly just right and then hand it to me. He would give me all the best spots and help me hook them. He would be on the shore, waiting to help me land them and then take all of these pictures like I was the best angler he'd ever seen.

As I got older, I actually learned how to fly fish. I got my first rod around 9, a cute little 7ft 5 wt. from L.L.Bean. Once I was armed with that thing, my dad probably got snagged and hit by me more times than I could count. I always got my fly caught in something, a branch, a tree, or a rock. I couldn't understand why he would want to bring such a nuisance fishing with him when he really never got to fish. I asked him if he would rather have fished with his buddies or with me.

"Well, with you of course. You're my daughter." Goodness, that got me choked up.

It wasn't until college that I realized how good of an angler my dad was. I took the Advanced Fly Fishing class at Western Washington University, because why not? My professors were a little skeptical when I walked in carrying this rod that was at least two feet shorter than all the others. But I did know how to cast and I knew where to look for fish, I even knew how to tie flies because my dad taught me. On our trip, watching my instructors fish was such a mirror of my dad. My dad was really good and I had had no idea. There was never any inkling that he was that talented; he always just enjoyed it. He so often let me have all the fun, that I never knew that he was so good.

My dad took me adventuring all the time. Besides fishing, we went hiking, camping, and back packing. Some of my fondest memories from my childhood were of being outside with my dad. It was his love of the environment that instilled in me my love of the environment. I asked him what he thought when I got my degree in Freshwater Ecology. He thought that was pretty cool, that he was happy that I chose something that could make a difference.

Well, here's to you, Dad. You made an environmentally-crazed fly fisherwoman.

P.S. I still get my fly caught in everything.

The Salmon of Knowledge

Adapted from www.celtic-weddingrings.com

The Pacific Northwest is rich with local stories of salmon.
Here is salmon story you may not have heard:

The Irish legend of the Salmon of Knowledge is the ancient tale of Fionn Mac Cumhail, (Finn Mac Cool) who was the leader of a heroic band of warriors and hunters called the Fianna. Finn is one of the greatest heroes of Celtic Mythology and it all came about because of a remarkable salmon!

Finn's father was a warrior and young Finn was also training to become one. To augment his training he went to live with a poet named Finegas. This was the custom in those days, as poets were considered very wise men who could teach young men the ways of the warriors. Finegas was known to be one of the wisest men in Ireland.

Finegas lived close to the River Boyne and had heard stories of a remarkable salmon living in a still pool shaded by a magical hazel nut tree. The salmon had eaten the hazel nuts and they had passed on to him all the knowledge of the world.

The druids prophesied that anyone catching and eating the salmon would acquire all that knowledge for themselves. Many had tried and failed to catch this magical fish, and Finegas spent many years attempting to catch the wily old fish and so become the wisest man in the world.

One day, Finegas saw the biggest salmon he had ever seen swimming in the River Boyne. Realizing that this was the famous fish, he immediately tried to catch it in his net. He tried to avoid looking into its eyes, as the story told that anyone doing so would fall deeply asleep. Suddenly the

salmon leaped into the air and Finegas could not avoid its gaze and immediately fell fast asleep.

By this time, Finn had seen what was happening and quickly woke Finegas before the salmon escaped. This time he was prepared and asked Finn to fetch him a cloth to cover his eyes. For hours he tried to catch the Salmon of Knowledge and finally, after a long and frantic struggle, just as night fell, he succeeded.

Too exhausted to cook the salmon, he asked Finn to do it, but warned him not to eat any of it, not even the smallest taste. Finn agreed and cooked the fish over a fire. When he was about to serve it to Finegas he noticed a bubble in the skin and without thinking, broke it with his thumb. It was so hot he was burned and he quickly put his thumb in his mouth to ease the pain. When he took the fish to Finegas, the old poet noticed something different about his young pupil, a wisdom which had not previously been there.

He asked Finn if he had eaten any of the salmon and he truthfully denied it, but explained how he had burned his thumb on the fish and had sucked it to help ease the pain. Finegas realized that it was in the blister on the skin of the fish that all the knowledge had been, and that Finn had acquired it. He was disappointed, but accepted that this was Finn's destiny.

So it was that when Finn grew up, he became a great warrior, a wise poet and leader of the Fianna, the most heroic and memorable warriors in the history of Ireland.



"Enter to Learn, Go Forth to Serve"

By **TAYLOR SCHMUKI**, WCC Restoration Associate



That phrase welcomed me when I stepped onto the Brigham Young University college campus for the first time six years ago. I had no idea how such a simple phrase would change my life. After graduating

college, I found an excuse to move to the Pacific Northwest and shortly after that fell into the AmeriCorps program by chance. Here was my opportunity to go forth and serve. For those that are not familiar with the program, AmeriCorps engages more than 80,000 Americans in an intensive year of service where young adults learn valuable work experience, earn money for school, and serve the community they are in. The Washington Conservation Corps, the specific branch I served in, fulfilled those promises on all accounts. Not only have I received my education award but was certified as Wilderness First Responder, HAZWOPER, a swift water technician, and other countless training. For my second year of service I came to SFEG, whose mission statement is to "educate and engage community in habitat restoration and watershed stewardship to enhance wild salmonids." Here was another organization carrying on that spirit of education and service. So as a result, I have learned and served in more ways than I could have ever predicted.

This year consisted of riparian areas, fish, native plants, work parties, ArcGIS, volunteers, and lots of laughs. I rescued salmon fry in Concrete, germinated wildflowers in our native plant nursery, organized and implemented 2017 Earth Day event at Howard Miller Steelhead Park, analyzed pesticide applied near water via ArcGIS, stared at fish while doing snorkel surveys at midnight, and planted hundreds of trees with our volunteers. At this point, I can't remember what I expected from this position at the beginning of year but

I can tell you I could have never fathomed all that I actually did. Even though there were some serious growing pains, it has been a successful year with projects and concepts for my successor to continue on with. If I had to choose my favorite experience from this, it would be working with all the different organizations and really seeing how nothing can get done without our faithful volunteers. I want to take this opportunity to give a special shout to one of our new volunteers, Pete D. Pete's first SFEG event was the Vegetation Workshop and ever since then, he has been my comrade in the nursery. Besides being one of the most diligent and hardworking people I have ever met, he's been a great advisor and teacher. Trust me; his work doesn't just stop at nursery. Though you may not see him around, he probably helped set up the event or is helping one of our school groups nearby. People like Pete, our board members, the Harvest Mission kids, and so many more have really inspired me to want to give back to my own community down in Snohomish. Even though I am sad to see my term to come to an end, I am very excited for the next IP to have this same amazing opportunity. It truly is a once in a life time opportunity.

And with that, SFEG has one lesson to teach me, which is how to say good bye.

I entered school and went forth to serve as a conservationist. I entered the conservation corps and went forth to serve in restoration. I entered SFEG as restoration assistant and now go forth as better person, worker, and community member. What I didn't realize back in 2011 was that I had started down a path that I could and would never want to leave. So if you are looking for an opportunity to learn more, to get involve with the community, or both, Skagit Fisheries is a great place to start.



ABOVE: Releasing salmon during a Salmon in the Classroom program



Biodiversity

The Reason a Fisheries Enhancement Group Plants Trees

By **TAYLOR SCHMUKI**, WCC Restoration Associate

Although the term “biodiversity” would not make its first appearance in print until 1968, people have been applying this concept ever since we could tell the difference between a fish and a tree. Biodiversity refers to the variety of all species on the earth from animals to plants to even the soil (Department of the...). To put it simply, biodiversity explains why five different salmon species would all exist in one river.

Biodiversity often applies to small scale projects, such as a streams or planting areas, but it also applies on a larger scale of differing ecosystem biogeographic patterns, such as comparing watersheds, mountain ranges, even hemispheres. Biodiversity can have us looking up close and personal with redds or understanding the salmon migration pattern. Since biodiversity has such a wide range, the reduction of it is considered one of “the most fundamental questions of our time” and therefore a critical component to ecological restoration worldwide. (Gann & Lamb 2006; Soule & Wilcox 1980) That’s why SFEG’s work considers a lot more than just fish.

In his book “King of Fish: The Thousand-Year Run of Salmon” David A. Montgomery notes the cycle from one country to next of over-fishing, habitat loss, and possible extinction, is a current concern here in the Pacific Northwest. Unfortunately, for many years similar restoration strategies have been applied with minimal success. This often is a result of project constraints including funding, time, access to locations, and manpower. Even though it’s now accepted knowledge that plants, river structure, nearshore, etc. directly affect salmon, we are doomed to repeat this broken pattern until our restoration projects start addressing the

inherent complexity of the ecosystems (Viers 2011). So SFEG chose to diversify to achieve the best biodiverse restoration possible. Here are a few examples of how:

SFEG may be limited in number of full time staff but turns to the community to make projects successful. SFEG is run by a volunteer board of directors who helps decide which projects to take on and where to delegate funding. SFEG has nine AmeriCorps members assisting in restoration. But when it comes to the bottom line, it’s the volunteers who make the difference. Whether an intern from WWU, a high school student trying to fulfill service hours, or a friendly neighbor, these are the faces that make restoration happen.

SFEG also has a native plant nursery. In this past year we acquired four species of willow, dewberries, and wildflowers. Although canopy cover in Western Washington is essential for restoration, a diverse planting list allows us to achieve species richness and provide appropriate habitat for numerous animals including macroinvertebrates.

Knotweed is a noxious weed that has enveloped Washington streams. It easily outcompetes local vegetation and if one piece of plant travels downstream, it will establish a monoculture. Knotweed leaf litter does not provide the same nutrients as native vegetation, and as a result, in its vicinity there occurs dramatic population reduction in benthic macroinvertebrates, a food source for juvenile salmon.

These are examples of how SFEG achieves the best biodiverse restoration projects it can achieve. Jose Luiz de Andrade Franco of University of Brasilia stated biodiversity is “...related to the diversity of species and with the environment that serves to support

them, at the same time in which they are supported by it, they are, simultaneously, both the stage and the result—always unfinished...”(Franco 2013). SFEG was created to help protect and improve the greater Skagit Watershed, and as a result, the greater watershed community has protected and supported us. It’s a nice little cycle. Like we teach all the time, we plant trees to provide habitat for the salmon and in exchange the salmon provide nutrients for the trees-- an unending mutualistic relationship. This is the success of biodiversity and therefore proving that biodiversity, in all its forms, has intrinsic and important value.

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Say Hello to our New AmeriCorps members!



My name is **ERIN MATTHEWS** and I am thrilled to be the 2017-2018 Washington Conservation Corp Riparian Restoration Assistant. Born in Seattle and raised in Tacoma, my answer to "what do you want to be when you grow up?" was always "a biologist." In 2011 I moved to Bellingham and 4 years later I graduated from Western Washington University with a BS in Ecology. During my time at WWU, I studied abroad twice: first as a field research assistant in Nepal where I trekked over 200 miles through the Himalayas, and then in Mexico, where I assisted with several shallow water field studies. For two years I managed a research team of 10 WWU students conducting a project studying harbor seal predation on spawning salmon and I was a data analysis intern with the City of Bellingham Natural Resources Division. After graduation, I worked on commercial fishing vessels in the Gulf of Alaska where I collected biological data for NOAA. When I am not working, I love cooking, acrylic painting, hiking and working in my garden.

Hello! My name is **KEELIN MAURMANN** and I am the new Community Engagement Associate! I am so excited to start this new adventure with Skagit Fisheries. I graduated from Huxley College at Western Washington University with a BS in Environmental Science and an emphasis in Freshwater Ecology. I was born and raised in Bremerton, Washington. I enjoy playing outdoors by riding horses, back packing and fly fishing. I decided to join AmeriCorps because I know how valuable service is to the community. I have a deep passion for the integral part that salmon play in the Pacific Northwest and hope to be able to make a difference in their return home from the sea. The environment is everyone's home and I want to be a good steward to it. I am looking forward to all that I will learn in this position and be able to be a voice in this community.



Hello, my name is **EMILY JANKOWSKI** and I am the new Washington Service Corps Education Associate. After graduating from Gettysburg College with a BS in Biology, I worked on the summer field crew at a US Geological Survey lab in Pennsylvania. We snorkeled in the Delaware River to survey freshwater mussel populations. I loved spending so much time on the river and working closely with the ecosystem I was studying. After that, I worked as a K-12 math tutor. Helping students understand difficult topics and appreciate their value is always rewarding. Being the Education Associate excites me because I can combine my teaching experience with my love of the environment to share important and fun lessons with students. Because I moved from the east coast, I am also looking forward to discovering all that this beautiful region has to offer.





Return of the Salmon

SHORT STORY?



{ MEMBERSHIP INFORMATION }

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CITY / STATE / ZIP _____

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Working in the Mud on Muddy Creek

By **LINDSEY JUEN**, SFE Restoration Technician

A change in the weather also brought a change in the workload for the field crew at Skagit Fisheries this September. Rain in the forecast opened a window of opportunity to remove a giant pile of junk from an old demolished house near Muddy Creek in the small town of Hamilton. The property is owned by Skagit Land Trust who works with SFE to implement and complete restoration projects. The creek is a salmon-bearing tributary to the Skagit River.

Typical of many areas we restore, the site was overgrown with thick blackberry groves. A day of brush-cutting early in the summer revealed the decrepit remains of an old house that had been flooded and consumed by the Skagit in years past. The junk was formed into piles and was removed with the help of an excavator, trailers, power saws, hand tools, leather gloves and a hearty crew.

We worked in the pouring rain for the first time this summer and finally got to test out our raingear. Though it

poured for hours, the ground remained dry just an inch or two below the surface. It was a joyous reunion with our beloved northwest weather.

After several trailer loads to the transfer station in Mt. Vernon and Skagit Steel Recycling in Burlington, we calculated a total removal of 10,940 pounds of garbage and 3,400 pounds of steel. The next steps for the site on Muddy Creek will be to control the blackberry that will inevitably grow back with a vengeance in the spring and eventually install native trees and shrubs.





SKAGIT FISHERIES ENHANCEMENT GROUP

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Events Calendar *AND* Volunteer Opportunities

SFEG Spawner Survey Workshop

October 14 (Saturday) 9am-3pm

Learn more about salmon while helping to restore their habitat! Classroom training followed by field practice at a nearby creek. Trained volunteers will conduct weekly spawner surveys at restoration sites in the Skagit and Samish watersheds late October through late January. Contact us for location and more information: outreach@skagitfisheries.org or 360-336-0172 ext 304

Wild & Scenic Film Festival

October 20 (Friday) 6:30pm at Lincoln Theater in Mount Vernon.

The Wild and Scenic Film Festival will show at the Lincoln Theatre for one night only on Friday October 20. This unique Film Festival event will begin with a 6:30 pm reception, with films beginning at 7:30 pm. This event uses film to inspire conservation within our community. The Festival will feature two hours of environmentally themed short films that together represent the work of over 100 film artists and directors. More info at www.skagitfisheries.org

Salmon Sightings

October 21 and November 4 (Saturdays) Noon-3pm at various locations

October 21 (Saturday) at Cumberland Creek in partnership with Skagit Land Trust, and November 4 (Saturday) at Oyster Creek in partnership with NSEA

and Taylor Shellfish. Both events noon-3pm. Join us to view and learn about salmon. Experts will be on hand to talk about salmon habitat and local restoration efforts. More info at www.skagitfisheries.org. Limited parking will be available at both sites, so please carpool!

Fall Planting Parties

October 28, November 11, and 18, (Saturdays) 10am-1pm at various locations

Help restore native riparian plants in the Skagit Watershed! These plants will help restore salmon homes by providing shade and cover for salmon and leaf litter for aquatic insects, which in turn provide food for salmon. These riparian zones also improve water quality by controlling erosion and filtering pollutants. More info at www.skagitfisheries.org. Limited parking will be available, so please carpool!

Contact us to volunteer today!