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Peach Creek Salmon Spawning Restoration Project – Information sheet

Why?

- The purpose of the Peach Creek Salmon Habitat Restoration project is to support resilient salmon populations and robust floodplain ecosystems in the Chilliwack and Vedder River watershed. This is the third year of a multi-year project, focussed on creating off-channel spawning habitat and new rearing and overwintering habitat at two locations along the Vedder Rotary Trail.
- Off-channel habitats are important to salmon because they:
 - Have slower moving water and can allow young salmon a safe place to grow without being swept downstream.
 - Often have cool, clear water, important for salmon habitat.
 - Provide the right food for salmon to grow and mature before migrating out to the Pacific Ocean.
 - Have more complex habitats like fallen logs and branches and an area that is well vegetated with native trees and shrubs that make it harder for predators to catch the salmon.

Why the Vedder River?

- The Vedder River is known for its high recreational fishing value and for its year round world class fishing opportunities.
- The Vedder River, its tributaries and off-channel habitats provide important habitat for all species of salmon.
- It is important to maintain and care for the natural resources in this watershed so that our waterways support healthy salmon populations, diverse aquatic ecology and provide resilient riparian and biodiversity values and ecosystem processes for our children and grandchildren and their grandchildren for many generations.
- It is important for our communities to connect with nature.

What?

- The Peach Creek Salmon Spawning channel is built to provide spawning grounds primarily for Chum Salmon and Coho Salmon. It was also designed to connect to the Peach Ponds rearing habitat to support the growth of the young salmon and offer refuge to migrating salmon.
- In early fall (around mid to late September to late October and early November), you may start to see chum salmon spawning, completing their life cycle in the Peach Creek channel.
- You will most likely see a chum or coho salmon using the habitat
- You may see a chinook or pink salmon and/or a cutthroat trout, or steelhead trout using the habitat.

How?

- Restoration work will require the use of heavy machinery including excavators and dump trucks to dig down to the groundwater to create a wetland suitable for salmonid overwintering and extend Peach Creek channel east along the north bank of the Vedder River. Large logs and wood will be placed in the wetland and across the Peach Creek spawning channel to help create complex habitats to support salmon.

How Much?

- In 2017 – the Peach Creek groundwater channel was extended approximately 312 meters (the equivalent of about 1,950 iPhone 6's lined up in a row)
- The enhanced spawning location at Foley Creek, as a result of recycling the gravel from Peach Creek, resulted in over 800 m² new spawning habitat (the equivalent of approximately half a hockey rink).
- In 2018 - 960 linear meters (almost 1 kilometer) of new instream habitat was constructed with large wood to enhance the complexity of the channel along Peach Creek. Riparian plantings were completed in the fall of 2018 with an approximate area of 3,684 m² {~10,870 individual trees and shrubs were planted}.
- This year (2019) - We plan to create a rearing and overwintering pond approximately 1,000 m² in size (the equivalent of just over half a hockey rink), extend the ground water channel by 150 meters, and plant a minimum of 1,000 m² of riparian habitat.

Who is Involved?

- This project is being led in partnership by the Fraser Valley Watersheds Coalition and Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Resource Restoration Unit.
- Supported by the City of Chilliwack, the Fraser Valley Regional District, BioCentral, local community members, businesses and volunteers.
- Funded by Environment and Climate Change Canada – Environmental Damages Fund, the Pacific Salmon Foundation, donations raised from the Wally Hall Memorial Steelhead Fishing Derby, Chilliwack Fish and Game Protective Association and donations from the community.



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What's Next?

- This fall the Fraser Valley Watersheds Coalition will be replanting sections of the Peach Creek spawning channel and is looking for volunteers!
- Want to help? Please visit the FVWC's website at www.fvwc.ca or email info@fvwc.ca for more information and ways to get involved!