

Hello Fish Labbers,



It is November, which means we are right in the middle of spawning season. I recently checked out the chum run heading up Mill Creek in Cosmopolis, and it was truly a sight to see. Local hatcheries are doing egg takes, spawning, and surplus, along with beginning to care for the eggs in their incubation systems. Soon we will begin to pick eggs, which is when you remove the unfertilized or contaminated eggs from the batch using what looks like a cross between tweezers and chopsticks. This is the busy season for fisheries!

This past month has been overflowing with Fish Lab events, and the pictures and recaps are all in the attached newsletter! Beyond the pictures, here's what you can expect to read about this month:

- **Recap of Last Month.** Over the past month we have cleaned up Alder Creek, toured the Historical Seaport, Surplused with Satsop Springs, and learned about invasive species.
- **Upcoming Events.** What are we going to be doing for the remainder of Fall Quarter?



-November 19th, Bring your own T-Shirt and we'll paint this year's Fish Lab logo design on for you. While the paint dries, we'll be joining the GHC Natural Resources Club to walk Lou's Loop on the trail system.

-November 26th, Fish Lab will be closed for the holiday weekend.



-December 3rd, Regular Fish Lab maintenance. We have been on so many excursions recently, it is important to prepare our facility for this year's eggs. Cleaning, flow rate analysis, water quality, you name it. The focus is on our own system.

-December 10th, Wilson Creek Clean Up. We will be partnering with Clean Streams and Memes and Grays Harbor Stream Team to pick up trash along Wilson Creek. With such a great turnout to the Alder event, it is time for us to spread the love and take care of other local streams.

-Periodically, upon request, we will be joining DFW and CBTF for egg picking. It is a tedious task, made fun by the conversation amongst great volunteers and hatchery experts.



Recap of Last Month. Our **Alder Creek Clean-Up** remains one of our most popular events. Approximately 30 people showed up to this collaboration with the City of Aberdeen, Aberdeen Stream Team, Grays Harbor Stream Team, GHC Natural Resources, and Clean Streams and Memes. We removed around 2,220 pounds of trash, according to the City of Aberdeen who took care of the disposal.

This event was particularly valuable for the Fish Lab because our fish depend upon the health of this juvenile and spawning habitat. It was especially encouraging to see Mayor Erik Larson amongst the volunteers. Let me just say that I never expected to have an intense conversation about our continuous dissolved oxygen measurements with our mayor. I was incredibly impressed with his knowledge about water quality and fish passage, and I hope to see him at more events in the future.

It is important to me to note that I learn something at each of our events, and I hope to share that in our newsletters. *Alder Clean-Up Lesson Learned: When you have enough people working toward the same goal, a whole lot of work can be accomplished in a short amount of time!*



Thank you to ALL the volunteers, including the City of Aberdeen crew led by Kyle Scott, Joshua Francy with Clean Streams and Memes, Joe Kalisch with Grays Harbor Stream Team, Echo Hahn for GHC Natural Resources, and Todd Bates with GHC Forestry, along with all the volunteers (uncategorized) Kariann Pentilla, Erik Larson, R. Flarik, S. Leggett, Analiese Flores, Tyler Marchese, Zach Deditius, Alysia and Raina Day, Alex Islas, Anita Plagge, Tim Plagge, Jennilyn Franklin, Craig Zora, Kasia Tugaga, Ted Elson, and Christie Barchenger. I know I missed a few names because I could not read them all on the sign in sheet, but every person absolutely counts! Thank you all for giving up a Saturday to make sure our fish have a safe passage!



Seaport Tour. Our next event was a tour of the Historical Seaport, given by Christie Barchenger, Director of Science Education. We met at 8am to handle the hatchery work, then carpooled over to the Seaport to learn all about the future plans for the space. Christie started us off with a quick talk about the large-scale plans to renovate the space,

then took us all around the property. During our tour, she systematically introduced a variety of concepts related to mitigation of a “brown site” for public use.

What’s a brown site? This is basically a phrase for a site that has been used for industrial purposes in the past, but will be open to the public in the future. Although testing has shown this area to be relatively innocuous to humans, the Seaport has used this as an opportunity to set the standard for conversion of such sites. I found the discussion during the tour to be an incredibly organic think tank about how our volunteers see conversion of the site. When you gather a group of people from different backgrounds, you can come up with the best solutions. *Seaport Tour Lessons: Bacteria are a great way to remediate chemical spills, Grays Harbor has a long list of citizens skilled in construction and wood working, and despite miles of shoreline in Aberdeen we do not have a designated kayak/canoe launch point or public fishing pier.*



Huge thanks to Christie for giving our volunteers a voice, and for guiding the conversation to a productive thought process on a very important topic to the Harbor. Thanks also goes to our volunteers who attended the tour, and participated in these discussions: Anita and Tim Plagge, Joe Kalisch, Zach Deditius, Echo Hahn, Alex Islas, Faith Matthews and her family, pictured with Christie Barchenger.

Satsop Springs Surplusing. For Veterans Day, the Fish Labbers decided to honor service with service. Although not a scheduled day for us, we received word from Steve Franks that there was a need for volunteers to help surplus at Satsop Springs. At the last minute we were able to rally, and I want to thank Alex Islas, Maria and Zach Deditius, and Faith Matthews and her family for dropping everything to help.



I want to pause the updates here for a moment to note that I am so truly proud of our volunteers. It made my heart so happy to see them show up and pitch in. Faith, in particular, donned her waders and literally jumped right in. While she learned how to wrangle fish, her son and daughter asked questions and learned more about what was happening. Maria and Zach helped me answer the questions, and we got down to business hauling fish to the bins. By the end of the day, all our volunteers were able to handle the fish, along with calling out species and gender for the counter. *Surplusing Lessons: Children pay more attention to details than you would think, and if you pay attention to them they will teach you something.*

Invasive Species Removal. This weekend Grays Harbor Stream Team teamed up with GHC Natural Resources to educate the Fish Labbers on invasive species. Echo Hahn, Ted Elson, Travis Torset, and Alexander Islas from GHC Natural Resources along with Whitney Lee took the group on a trail walk and pointed out the differences between invasive and native species. Before our walk, everybody took a quiz put together by Joe Kalisch to put everybody in the right mindset.



Can you name five invasive species? Let's start with what an invasive is. Invasive species are organisms that have been transplanted to an area, and flourish to the point of taking over. A native species is an organism that has evolved within an ecosystem and has already maintained equilibrium. Most invasive plants are brought into an ecosystem, initially, because they are pretty. The ornamental plants planted in gardens can be spread by birds or the wind, and often have detrimental

consequences to the ecosystem. Plants that we identified on our trail were Knotweed, English Holly, English Ivy, Laurel, and Creeping Buttercup.

After our tour, we put our sweat equity toward removing claves of English Holly. Extra thanks goes to Grays Harbor Noxious Weeds for loaning their weed wrenches to the Stream Team. They were a huge help as we attacked several large patches. Additional thanks goes to the City of Aberdeen for picking up the invasives for proper disposal. Of course thanks must also go to the hard working volunteers: Zach Deditius, Travis Torset, Alysia Day, Echo Hahn, Alex Islas, Ted Elson, Whitney Lee, Craig Zora, Joe Kalisch, and Tim Plagge.



Lesson learned: If you are at a nursery shopping for your garden, pay special attention to the tag. If it says "naturalizes", this is not a good thing. What that means is the plant will adapt a little too quickly to its environment, spread easily, and can contaminate our ecosystem. If it is not a plant native to Washington, this can have detrimental consequences. Not only can these plants out compete our native species in parks and forests, if they contaminate

the field of an organic farm there is little the farmer can do about it. When shopping for your garden, take care to choose native species. If the tag says "naturalizes", think twice or take precautionary measures to ensure the plant will not spread.

Upcoming Events. What are we going to be doing for the remainder of Fall Quarter?

-November 19th, Bring your own T-Shirt and we'll paint this year's Fish Lab logo design on for you. The stencil design is courtesy of Erik Sandgren and his amazing work study, who created it with inspiration from the students in the design course. While the paint dries, we'll be joining the GHC Natural Resources Club to walk Lou's Loop on the trail system. Let's honor Lou Mesmer and all of his amazing work by paying particular attention to maintaining his namesake.



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All our events, unless noted otherwise are on Saturdays at 8am. We also meet for water quality and regular maintenance work on Mondays and Wednesdays at 3pm. No appointment necessary, no need to RSVP. If you are new, we will give you a tour and show you the ropes. All you have to do is show up.



Fish Lab News
November 14, 2016

