

Elma School Students Help Restore Vance Creek

With the assistance of their teachers; Lonnie Crumley, a biological consultant to the CBFTF; and Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, the Director of the Heernett Environmental Foundation and Vance Creek Riparian Project Manager, a large group of students from the Elma School District provided helping hands by planting native vegetation along the banks of Vance Creek. These plantings will provide shade to cool the water for salmon during times of high temperatures, which presently deter salmon from entering the creek. The plants will also provide bank stabilization, and habitat for indigenous animals, while also providing a barrier to keep farm animals away from the creek.

Funded by the SRFB, this project provides 12,500 feet of fencing and 16,000 feet of riparian planting to improve fish habitat in Vance Creek, a tributary to the Chehalis River. The creek is 8.6 miles long with 6 miles of documented salmonid spawning and rearing habitat. With the help of volunteer and student labor from the Elma School District and the support of the Chehalis Basin Education Consortium, the lower portion of the stream will be replanted and fences installed to exclude livestock.

Integrated into their curriculum, the East Grays Harbor Learning Opportunity Center (EGHLOC) has made the Vance Creek Riparian Project a centerpiece of a multidisciplinary curriculum that has given students a hands on opportunity to take part in an effort that will allow them to develop leadership, research, planning, outreach, and organizing skills.

As part of phase one of this project, the students arrived to the project location by bus in late February. "Besides the pouring rain, and everyone being soaked to the bone within fifteen minutes of getting off the bus - the kids appeared to be very prepared with knowledge about fish habitat, ecosystem function, and how to plant trees properly," said Chanele Holbrook-Shaw, Vance Creek Riparian Project Manager, "Even though we were all cold and wet, the kids were really good about making sure the trees were planted properly and that they all made it in the ground. The parents were great helpers as well. They helped the kids dig in the difficult spots and assisted with getting the trees in correctly. We were done planting about 400 trees in 3 1/2 hours. That's pretty impressive."

In conjunction with this project, the CBFTF is also sponsoring a barrier removal on Vance Creek that will aid in complete restoration of this (continued on p. 2)



Taryn Kayser and her teacher, Scott Rocky break for a picture while planting native trees along the banks of Vance Creek. Taryn is one of several students that volunteered to plant approximately 400 trees to assist with the riparian effort for this area.

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Membership is vital to the ongoing work of the Task Force. Invite a friend to join you with our efforts for producing salmon for sport and commercial fisheries; enhancing Steelhead and Cutthroat trout resources; and restoring, enhancing and protecting stream habitat critical to these anadromous species. Please pass this monthly newsletter on to someone who may be interested...



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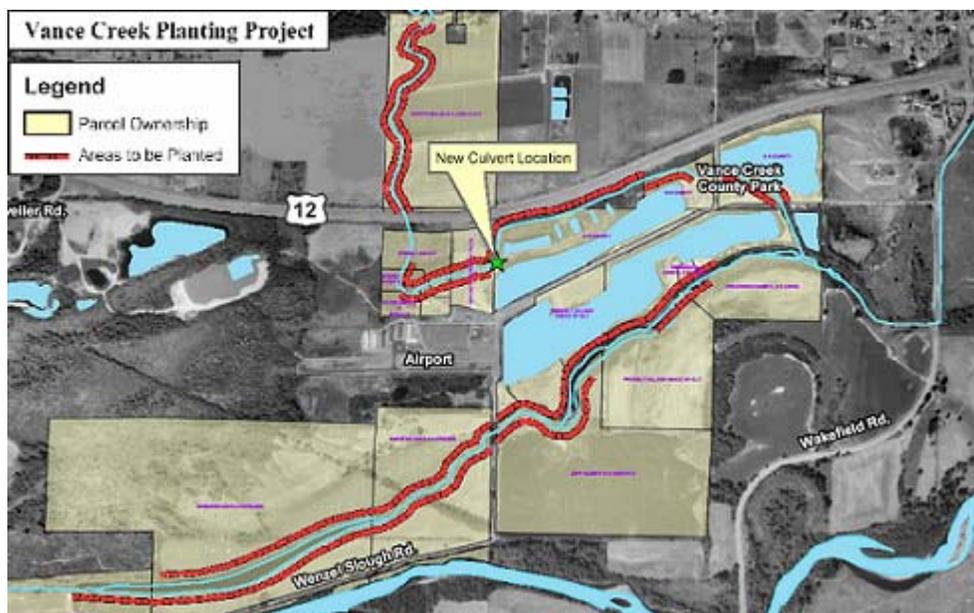
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Elma School Students Help Restore Vance Creek (continued)

creek by replacing an undersized culvert with a bridge donated by Grays Harbor County. The Vance Creek Fish Barrier Culvert Correction, funded by the Community Salmon Fund, also partners with the EGHLOC.

The replacement of this culvert with a bridge will allow the 13 foot wide stream to function normally without restrictions. Phase one of this project has already begun, with the surveying and drawings completed under the direction of Lonnie Crumley and the students. Soon the students will begin staking out the location for the footings based off of these drawings. Once the installation of the bridge is completed, the students will monitor the bridge through the first winter to insure proper function and fish passage.



This map illustrates the Vance Creek Riparian Planting Project and Fish Barrier Culvert Correction Project. The red lines designate planting areas, and the green star represents location of the undersized culvert that will be replaced with the bridge.

At a cost of \$93,841 for both projects, \$46,580 were leveraged through volunteerism and donated materials.