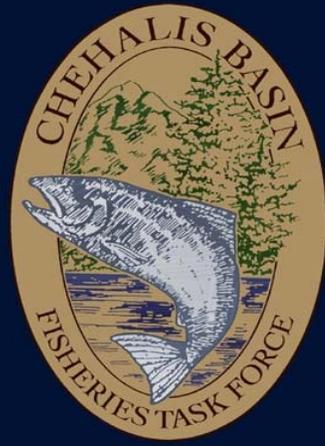


# 2006 Spotlight Showcase: Community Partnerships

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CHEHALIS BASIN FISHERIES TASK FORCE

CBFTF NEWS REEL

For 26 years, the volunteers of the CBFTF have successfully unified their efforts with private citizens, community businesses, and governments. Working examples of this are the enhancement efforts on Smith Creek, a major tributary to the Middle Fork Satsop River that historically provides habitat for Winter Steelhead, Coho and Chum.



Coho spawning in Smith Creek just off of the B-line Bridge on Weyerhaeuser property this year (11/9/06). Their offspring will directly benefit from the ocean derived nutrients provided through nutrient enhancement in two ways, (1) by providing a food source for smolt, and (2) by providing a food source for the insects salmonids consume.



Fish carcasses are deposited by chute from the back of a dump truck for nutrient enhancement on Smith Creek.

The CBFTF annually conducts nutrient enhancement in the Satsop sub-basin. As part of the program, two carcass distribution sites were chosen on this tributary, not only because they meet the criteria of the protocols and guidelines for distributing salmonid carcasses in Washington State, but because the area is prime for spawning and overwintering habitat.

In tandem, Weyerhaeuser Company in Twin Harbors has opened four fish blockage culverts directly between both distribution sites, as well as re-aligned one road that directly crosses one of the replaced culverts. These culvert replacements are important because they provide an additional 4,000 lineal feet of off channel rearing and overwintering habitat, of which Coho depend heavily. The road that leads into this 1,800 acre drainage area is tentatively scheduled to be abandoned in 2009, which will eliminate barriers and road access to 9.7 miles of stream that provide habitat for salmonids.

It is through this type of partnering that we realize individually, each effort is a benefit to the resource; however, the overlapping of efforts between parties provides a larger boost for the resource. In this case naturally spawned and reared salmonids have a greater chance of completing a life cycle by the improvement of access to spawning and overwintering habitat, and through mimicking nature by providing ocean derived nutrients necessary to improve the ecosystem that would historically have been available through larger numbers of spawning fish.



BEFORE and AFTER shots on Smith Creek: One of four culvert replacements in fish bearing streams draining into Smith Creek conducted by Weyerhaeuser Company in Twin Harbors this year. This project replaced an undersized 30" round pipe with a 6' culvert. Both photos were taken in the summer. As you can see, the replacement has repaired the large outfall drop, allowing for adequate passage of salmonids during periods of high flows.

# Community Partnerships (continued)

Another great working example of community partnership is the local participation in the Westport Net Pens Project (WNPP). The WNPP,



The storage container donated through partnership of the Port of Grays Harbor, SSA Pacific, and Quigg Bros., Inc. This container provides dry storage for the Westport Net Pens Project during the months the pens are not used to rear Coho in the Westport Marina.

began in 1987, and is located in the Westport Marina, in Westport, Washington. The net pens sit inside boat slips in the marina, where Coho are raised and released to return in to the basin in the fall. The CBFTF sponsors the WNPP as a Volunteer Cooperative Project, and the Ocosta High School, Kiwanis Club, and Port of Grays Harbor all assist in the operational procedures to carry out the project's purpose.

19 years ago the pens were slipped into the water for the very first time, and far outlasted their 10–12 year life expectancy. Over the years they were cared for and hand mended by students and WDFW staff, however, due to the age of the net pens, by the end of 2005 they had deteriorated so badly they could not be used for another year.

The importance of these pens is that they provide protection from opportunistic predators such as sea lions. Without new pens the project would not be able to uphold a secure environment for rearing the intended Coho, and without proper storage, the pens would not last.

The CBFTF applied for funding through the ALEA Volunteer Cooperative Grants Program and was funded \$4,767 for the purchase of three 40' x 40' x 10' net pens for the WNPP. To accommodate the requirement of dry storage, the Port of Grays Harbor stepped up, specifically, Commissioner Stan Pinnick, who was able to partner with SSA Pacific and Quigg Bros., Inc. for the donation and delivery of a steel storage container for the WNPP. In sequence, Randy Aho, Twin Harbors Complex Manager for WDFW, assisted the project by arranging for the container to be securely positioned on concrete footings at the Humptulips Hatchery (where it can remain indefinitely). Because of these partnerships, the WNPP can continue to focus on enhancing fish populations, providing fish related recreational and commercial opportunities, and make connections with young people who are interested in the local fishery resource.

Yet another project that illustrates the partnerships in our watershed is the Vance Creek Bridge Project (VCBP), on Vance Creek, a tributary to the Chehalis River. The VCBP was conducted through a collaborative effort organized by the CBFTF.

This project removed an undersized culvert 4 ft. in diameter and installed a bridge, donated by Grays Harbor County (GHC). The installed bridge now allows the 13 foot wide stream to function normally without restrictions and has increased over 3 miles of fish habitat for spawning and rearing. Prior to repair, fish populations affected by this barrier were coho, potentially chum salmon, and cutthroat trout.

Now corrected, the stream no longer backs up during high flows, trapping sediments, impounding spawning gravels, flooding neighboring properties, or stranding juvenile salmonids at water recession.



The Vance Creek Bridge Project nearing end of construction. This photo illustrates the bridge slabs that were donated by Grays Harbor County.

With the donation of the bridge slabs from GHC (valued at \$11,000), the use of a loader from Northwest Rock to load the slabs onto a truck, reduced contractor rates,

donated labor from the CBFTF consulting biologist, the time and machinery donated by the landowner (Mr. & Mrs. Potts) to clear, haul and provide gravel for the bridge approach, and sow grass seed in exposed soils on the project site, along with other labor donated by East County students and teachers for riparian planting and water quality monitoring, this project was conducted on a budget of \$21,200.

**Membership is vital to the ongoing work of the Task Force.** If you or your organization would like to become involved with the CBFTF to better our watershed please contact (360) 533-1766, [cbftf@reachone.com](mailto:cbftf@reachone.com), or visit us at <http://www.cbftf.com>.

**CBFTF Members:** Bob Balcombe, Boat Seafoods, Steve Berggren, Carlisle Environmental Ed., Lloyd Case, Chehalis Tribe, Elma Game Club, Friends of the Chehalis, George M. Duncan, Grays Harbor Council of Governments, Grays Harbor County, Grays Harbor Gillnetters, Grays Harbor Poggie Club, Grays Harbor Trout Unlimited, Dave Hamilton, Heernett Environ. Foundation, Long Live the Kings, Montesano Moose Lodge, Port of Grays Harbor, Trans Alta Centralia Mining, LLC, Washington Trollers, Westport Charterboat, and Weyerhaeuser Company in Twin Harbors.