



Fairbanks Fish & Wildlife Field Office

Salmon Watersheds Environmental Education Project

Background:

The 4-H Fisheries, Natural Resource and Youth Development program was started by the Cooperative Extension Service in rural Alaska in 1991 as a response to the Yukon River salmon crises, and to help increase math and science literacy in village schools. The U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service and the Alaska Department of Fish & Game have been educational partners since the program's inception.

As part of the program, rural educators attend an annual in-service training that provides them with the resources, tools, skills and hands-on learning necessary to operate an in-classroom incubator system where they hatch coho salmon and raise them through the fry stage in the classroom. With experiencing the pacific salmon life cycle as the program's core, participating educators incorporate fisheries and watershed studies and other relevant natural resource education into their classroom curricula throughout the year.



Participating teachers develop lesson plans based on workshop content, which they share with their peers.



Researchers work closely with participating teachers to bring their research into the classroom.

Program Goals

As a result of participating in the Salmon in the Classroom workshop, rural educators will:

- Incorporate place-based and science-based education and a better understanding of the local environment into their classroom curricula including:
 - Salmon life cycle, habitat requirements, and management
 - Marine ecosystems and climate change
 - Sustainability
- Include information about science and natural resource career education.

Program coordinators strategically focus on:

- Meeting teacher and school district needs to provide effective education about this content while meeting all other requirements.
- Providing meaningful and effective outreach opportunities for scientists and natural resource managers

Long-term Program Goals

Maintain focus on salmon as:

- A means to teach ecosystem, climate change, and sustainability concepts
- Significant to the resource-dependent economies of rural Alaska communities
- Significant to cultural identity (Native Alaskan and rural residents)
- Increase Native/rural involvement in natural resource careers, including jobs that provide the means to stay in the community
- Improve understanding of resource management as a means to better-informed citizens
- Contribute to improving the quality of education in rural Alaska



Workshop participants learn hands-on science activities that they can take back to their classrooms.

For information about participating in this program, contact:
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