



# Columbia Gorge Outreach Notes 2010

*Columbia River Gorge National Fish Hatchery Complex*

## 2010 Events

- HUGS (Help Us Grow Safely) Fair (500 contacts)
- Clark County Home and Garden Show (6,000 contacts)
- Wagons to Wildflowers (100 contacts)
- Water Jam 2010 (330 participants)
- ODFW Free Fishing Clinic (1,200 participants)
- USFS Fish Education Day (500 participants)
- Hood River County Fair (400 contacts)
- Trout Lake Community Fair (150 contacts)
- Carson NFH Fishing Day (350 contacts)
- Spring Creek NFH Open House (300 visitors)
- Yakima Greenways Festival (400 contacts)

## *Our Mission...*

The Columbia River Gorge Information and Education (I&E) staff work to promote public stewardship of fish and wildlife resources and support for the U.S. Fish and Wildlife Service. The I&E staff work for the Spring Creek, Little White Salmon, Carson and Willard National Fish Hatcheries (NFH) and the Lower Columbia River Fish Health Center.

## *Educational Activities 2009–10*

Our office provided 25 classrooms in the mid-Columbia region with the **Salmon-in-the-Classroom** opportunity. Students involved in this project learn first-hand about the salmon life cycle, water quality and current salmon issues. I&E staff also lecture on salmon life history, habitat importance and hatchery roles; salmon dissections, adaptation and watershed model lessons are also provided. This program continues to grow through partnerships with the Yakama Nation Fisheries Program providing tanks/chillers in the Klickitat Basin and the Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs providing tanks/chillers in the upper Hood River Valley. We are working closely with both entities to provide classroom programming for these schools.



We also partner with other agencies to provide a variety of outdoor schools, field days and stream adoptions to get hundreds of students outside for hands-on learning opportunities.

## *Spring Creek NFH Improvements*

Summer 2010 was busy with a variety of hatchery improvements. The Visitor Center upgrades were funded through 2009 and 2010 Visitor Facility Enhancement monies. Improvements include: carpeting, elevator lift, new stairs, front desk, interpretive panels, two touch screens with programming, banners, large screen television and new visitor sign in area. New carpet imitating water allowed us to rearrange the visitor area, allowing better flow to a new welcome desk/office area. A large mural depicts river and ocean phase salmon on the upper level of the visitor center.



Front desk and touch screen



Mural by I/we Interpretive, Inc.

## *Volunteers...*

The focus of volunteer efforts this past summer was invasive weed removal. In preparation of a new accessible interpretive trail several groups provided service to assist with the task. Middle school students from The Dalles, OR satisfied a community service requirement by removing scotch broom from the interpretive trail area at the hatchery.

## Partnerships

- Columbia Gorge Ecology Institute
- Columbia Riverkeeper
- Conboy Lake NWR
- Confederated Tribes of the Warm Springs
- Educational Service District 112
- Hood River Soil Conservation Service
- Klickitat County Solid Waste
- Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group
- National Marine Fisheries Service (NMFS)
- Northwest Service Academy, Americorps
- OR Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- OR State Parks
- Port of Stevenson
- Skamania County Solid Waste
- Stevenson Parks & Recreation
- U.S. Army Corps of Engineers
- U.S. Forest Service
- Underwood Conservation District
- Vancouver Water Resources Education Center
- WA Dept of Fish and Wildlife
- WA State Parks
- WA State University Vancouver
- Whitson Elementary PTO
- Yakama Nation Fisheries Program

Conboy Lake NWR loaned us a five person Youth Conservation Crew for a week in July. The crew's main task was invasive weed removal along the interpretive trail site. A massive mound of scotch broom, blackberry and false indigo was heaped onsite. The mound was burned by the Mid-Columbia Refuge fire crew in December.



YCC crew removes invasives

## National Day of Service

Two independent projects were carried out as part of the AmeriCorps National Day of Service on August 5, 2010. A five-person crew worked to remove blackberries at the Spring Creek Fish Hatchery State Park, under the supervision of Washington State Parks. Another seven-person crew worked at the Whitson Elementary School nature trail to remove invasive vinca vine and define the nature trail through trail clearing and spreading ten yards of wood chips. This crew improved the trail for student use this fall. The projects were fantastic. Native plants for future restoration were secured for these projects through the Regional Youth in Careers small grant proposal procedure. \$500 was obtained for the hatchery project, and \$800 was obtained for the nature trail project.

## Schoolyard Habitat Update...

A Native Pollinator Garden was initiated this past year to compliment an Insect/Pollinator unit at Whitson Elementary School, White Salmon, WA. Plans were drawn up and approved, work parties organized and over 800 native pollinator plants were put in the ground by partners and community volunteers. In addition, second grade students painted large wooden cutouts of various pollinators that adorn the garden. Picnic tables located throughout the pollinator garden area provide the perfect outdoor learning space for students of all grades.



Native Pollinator Garden Volunteers



Cut-outs create a fun atmosphere!

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