New Tool Will Calculate Carbon Impacts of Habitat Projects

By Angela Seguel, ERM Project Manager

NSEA is partnering with the ERM Foundation to help develop the foundation's North American Flagship Project, a carbon calculator tool. This tool will enable habitat restoration groups and others to calculate and communicate the net positive carbon impacts of habitat investment. Being able to quantify the carbon sequestration of restoration projects has the potential to bring more attention and support to habitat restoration.

In addition, the tool – and the website where it is housed – could be used in education programs to teach students about climate change and carbon sequestration, while providing a calculator for students to find the actual carbon sequestration of the trees they planted. As a local habitat restoration organization, NSEA has provided valuable insight into the tool's development based on user needs. As the project continues, NSEA will be a key user to test the online tool as it is developed and to give input regarding the kinds of reports the tool can generate.

"This project is an exciting opportunity for NSEA to begin to quantify the benefits of the salmon habitat restoration work that we are doing in ways that are larger and more encompassing than salmon," said Rachel Vasak, NSEA executive director. "From what we see on the ground, we know that restoring salmon is important to the Pacific Northwest. This tool will give us powerful data to measure the success of our work in terms of helping improve the environment on a larger level, which ultimately helps us all."

In addition to partnering on the tool's overall development, NSEA is looking at ways in which the tool can be applied to its education programs. The tool could be a way of integrating applied math into NSEA's Students for Salmon curriculum, which is annually provided to 1,600 fourth-grade students in Whatcom County. As the tool is developed, fourth-grade students are being considered as one of many possible end users of the tool.

Sidebar: How Sequestration Works

Trees and shrubs use photosynthesis to convert carbon dioxide (CO2) into sugar, cellulose and other carbon-containing carbohydrates used for food and growth. They capture CO2, pulling it out of the atmosphere and putting it into long-term storage.

Earth Day Volunteers Pot Nearly 6,000 Plants and Celebrate World Fish Migration Day

By Amy Johnson, Advancement Manager

Thank you to all the amazing volunteers who celebrated Earth Day and World Fish Migration Day (WFMD) with NSEA on April 21st. One hundred and eighty stalwart volunteers came to NSEA's campus to make a difference in the lives of salmon. They worked hard potting 5,800 bare-root plants for our nursery and still had time to hula hoop, play corn hole, get their faces painted, take pictures in a photo booth, and get hands on learning from the Whatcom Conservation District’s Mobile Watershed Explorer. All the while, accompanied by great music and delicious food.

These plants will reside in NSEA's nursery before they are placed at a restoration site to live out the rest of their days along a salmon-bearing stream, creating a healthy and diverse riparian zone. Their branches and leaves will one day offer shade to ward off invasive weeds and keep the water cold. Their roots will filter out storm water runoff to help clean the water and provide bank stabilization to keep the stream clear of silt.

In conjunction with the potting party, NSEA celebrated World Fish Migration Day, a one-day global recognition of the importance of open rivers and migratory fish, coordinated by the World Fish Migration Foundation. Over 60,000,000 people at 522 events in 63 countries across the globe organized around the theme “Connecting Fish, Rivers and People.”

By working together, we create a greater driving force to raise awareness that migratory fish all over the world depend on free-flowing rivers to travel upstream, increase fish populations and assure healthy river life – for fish, wildlife and humans.

Thank you to NSEA's event sponsors Yeager's Sporting Goods, Lummi Island Wild, Tony's Coffeehouse, The Bagelry, Starbucks, The Community Food Co-op and Boundary Bay Brewery, as well as Crooked Constellation for providing the music and Whatcom Conservation District for the awesome watershed display and donated plants. Also, huge thanks to Gato Verde for the Sunset Cruise raffle prize. We appreciate your support!
From the Director:

**Grit Leads to Success in Salmon Recovery**

I believe that NSEA has a supremely difficult mission – to restore sustainable wild salmon by engaging our community in restoration, education and stewardship – and every day we strive to do that hard work and to do it well.

The passion that we have for salmon recovery drives us, and seeing salmon come back to the stream habitat that we have restored fuels our energy and our spirits.

The belief that students are the future decision-makers in our community and the satisfaction that we get when kids share their appreciation for salmon, thanks to what we have taught them, get us going early in the morning on long days.

The shared camaraderie that comes from being at a community work party with dozens, perhaps hundreds, of cheerful volunteers inspires us every day to work as hard as we can.

NSEA is committed to salmon recovery and we are committed for the long haul. We are collectively devoted to persevering to see our mission through.

I believe that this intersection of passion and perseverance is what researcher Angela Duckworth calls grit. In her research, she explores the idea that grit is the determining factor that can predict success. Grit is what keeps us going when the headlines are discouraging, when the work is hard, when our resources are limited.

Sometimes the headlines regarding salmon declines can be discouraging. But when we look at individual restoration sites, we can see evidence of more salmon returning to those sites, and we know that our work is making a difference. So we keep working.

NSEA is more than any one person. While our staff and board are all dedicated souls, individually in their own right, the organization as a whole is far greater than the sum of the parts. And as a communi-
ty-based organization we are involved, the stronger and more resilient we can become. From volunteering to plant a tree, to sharing your knowledge and expertise, to donating to support NSEA’s mission and or with planned giving, there are many important and helpful ways to ensure that we are working as hard as we can for salmon recovery.

I hope you will join us on this difficult, but rewarding, path as we strive to recover salmon as well as we possibly can. Please let me know if you have questions or want to learn more about NSEA’s work. I always enjoy hearing from you.

– Rachel Vasak
NSEA Executive Director

Meet the New NSEA Board Members

**Leo Bodensteiner**

*Professor, Western Washington University*

I have benefited from NSEA’s work and I want to give back.

Dr. Leo Bodensteiner has been around NSEA for years. He has been a conduit for interns from Huxley College of the Environment at Western Washington University, was a board member of the Lium Wood Flyfishing School and has taught two fly-fishing courses annually under the auspices of NSEA since 2004. He participates in stream restoration and river cleanup projects and figures at least one of his students has done master’s thesis research with NSEA.

Leo has a Ph.D. in Zoology with a specialization in fish ecology, management and culture; three years of post-doc experience studying fish behavior in the winter; and 24 years of teaching undergraduate and graduate students about water quality, aquatic ecosystems and fish ecology. Leo has joined the Habitat Restoration Committee and we are excited to teach him a thing or two (just kidding!). He will be a wonderful asset to that committee.

**Rose Anne Featherston**

*Visual Artist, Graphic Designer, Mediator*

NSEA has an extraordinary success at efficiently getting the job done while prioritizing respectful and healthy personal interaction. That is something I want to be part of.

Rose Anne Featherston first participated with NSEA in the early 1990s when she volunteered at a streamside tree-planting project with her children. Then, in 2016, her property was part of the Goodwin Creek Tributary Fish Passage Project, which NSEA removed a culvert and installed a bridge.

Rose Anne has a background in art, teaching and conflict resolution. She’s currently involved in and donates services as a trainer and mediator to the Whatcom Dispute Resolution Center. Rose Anne owns a small graphic design business and has taught 2-dimensional design at Western Washington University and Whatcom Community College. She has joined the Advancement Committee and is advising on the creation of outreach materials.

**Mike Stoner**

*Environmental Director, Port of Bellingham (retired)*

NSEA is creating a legacy of habitat restoration and community connections: great people, fun work and tangible results. I thought, sign me up!

As Port of Bellingham’s Environmen-
tal Director, Mike Stoner was responsible for environmental and habitat restoration of marine shoreline in Bell-
ingham Bay and associated estuaries. His professional experience dovetails well with NSEA missions, goals and approach.

While working with the port, Mike collaborated with NSEA on upstream proj-
ects and goals. He is also a certified soil scientist in forest soils and expert in project management of environmental moni-
toring, restoration and habitat mitigation. Mike will be an excellent asset on the Habitat Restoration Committee.

**Rachel Vasak and son Fenton Vasak**

If you know NSEA, you know we are not a political organization. Yet, I have found myself pondering a quote from polit-
cian Theodore Roosevelt lately:

“Nothing in the world is worth having or worth doing unless it means effort, pain, difficulty. … I have never in my life envied a human being who led an easy life. I have envied a great many people who led diffi-
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– Rachel Vasak
NSEA Executive Director
NSEA completed its first Fishtrap Creek riparian planting project with Harlan Kredit and Lynden Christian High School (LCHS) students in 1995. This would be the beginning of a long-term relationship with the creek, the high school and many landowners between the Canadian border and south Lynden.

Working with the Fishtrap Creek Watershed Improvement District and then Washington State biologist Steve Seymour, NSEA submitted a grant application to the Washington Department of Ecology’s Centennial Clean Water Program to remove invasive plants and install native plants along the creek, from the Boundary Road to East Badger Road just north of Lynden.

NSEA received the grant in 2003 and, over the next five years, worked with LCHS, two Washington Conservation Corps crews and 10 agricultural landowners to complete work along 2.8 miles of the project reach.

The partnerships developed during this project also allowed NSEA to replace two agricultural instream crossings with bridges.

During this time, NSEA also started to assist Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife with its Fishtrap Creek spawning surveys, which collected valuable data about salmonid species utilizing the creek.

Through the years, NSEA has continued partnering with numerous private landowners, LCHS teachers and students and Lynden City Parks to complete more than 20 planting and large woody debris (LWD) placement projects along Fishtrap Creek through the city of Lynden.

In spring of 2017 and this past April, NSEA worked with LCHS, the Fishtrap Creek Watershed Improvement District, Rader Farms and the Heeringa family to complete the last 800 feet of the Boundary-to-Badger road, 3-mile project.

To date with all its amazing partners, NSEA has improved salmon habitat along 4.5 miles of Fishtrap Creek and LCHS has worked hard to install a sense of stewardship for the creek and its salmon in all the students who participated in this work.

The majority of this year’s project funding comes from the Natural Resources Conservation Service’s (NRCS) Environmental Quality Incentive Program.

NSEA would like to thank Frank Corey at the Whatcom Conservation District and Melissa Erkel at the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife for all their work coordinating the fish passage projects, as well as the staff at NRCS and WDFW for their help with engineering.

### NSEA 2018 Instream Projects

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>CREEK</th>
<th>LANDOWNER</th>
<th>PROJECT</th>
<th>PROJECT LENGTH (FT)</th>
<th># OF LWD STRUCTURES TO BE INSTALLED</th>
<th>IMPROVED ACCESS TO UPSTREAM HABITAT (MILES)</th>
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<tr>
<td>California trib</td>
<td>Devernon LLC</td>
<td>Replace 1 barrier culvert with 35’x14’ bridge. Regrade channel. Install LWD.</td>
<td>100</td>
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<td>Deer trib</td>
<td>Yurjevich, Tamara</td>
<td>Replace 1 barrier culvert with 40’x14’ bridge. Install LWD</td>
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<td>0.2</td>
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<td>Bird, Larry</td>
<td>Replace 1 barrier culvert with 50’x16’ bridge. Regrade channel</td>
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<td>0</td>
<td>1.1</td>
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<td>High trib</td>
<td>Freyinger, Alan</td>
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<td>16</td>
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<td>Kern trib</td>
<td>Riva, Purn</td>
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<td>Scott</td>
<td>Van Dyk, Grant</td>
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<td>Squalicum trib</td>
<td>Clark, Chad</td>
<td>LWD placement.</td>
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<td>Grantham, David</td>
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<td><strong>Total</strong></td>
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<td><strong>29</strong></td>
<td><strong>15.6</strong></td>
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### Busy Instream Project Season Ahead

By Darrell Gray, Project Manager

NSEA is looking forward to another productive instream habitat restoration season. There are plans to remove 9 fish passage barriers, improving fish access to over 15 miles of upstream habitat, and install 29 large woody debris (LWD) structures along 1,250 feet of stream, enhancing instream habitat diversity (deeper pools with cover and increased spawning habitat).

One of four fish passage barriers to be removed on High Creek in the North Fork Nooksack River Watershed near Maple Falls, Wash.
Teacher Training Focused on ‘Fresh Air’ Time for Students

By Annitra Peck, Program Director

Thanks to NOAA BWET grant program for sponsoring this series.

Did you know that students spend close to 3,000 hours inside the four walls of a classroom each year? Young people spend less and less of their lives in natural surroundings in general, which narrows their senses, physiologically and psychologically, reducing the richness of the human experience. Within the space of a few decades, the way children understand and experience nature has changed radically.

Nature offers a laboratory for educators and fresh air increases students’ understanding, decreases stress and other mental health issues, improves concentration and connects young people socially. Therefore, NSEA staff recently collaborated with RE Sources for Sustainable Communities to host a teacher-training workshop series at NSEA’s new campus.

Overcoming Barriers

Over the course of several months, three four-hour Saturday sessions were held with teachers, aimed at increasing their confidence and willingness to utilize outdoor field experiences in their everyday classroom instruction. Research has shown the most common barriers for teachers in utilizing outdoor education are time, challenges of curriculum integration and lack of confidence in managing students in an outdoor setting.

The training provided solutions for teachers to overcome these barriers through hands-on instruction. The workshop was sponsored by a NOAA BWET education grant, making the course free for participants with a $200 stipend and teacher kit upon completion. Sign-up was open to all K-12 grade teachers in Whatcom County. In total, 18 teachers completed the series.

The first session focused on identifying barriers and learning peer-to-peer solutions, tips and tricks to remedy the common fears. Teachers also learned how to conduct a risk assessment for outdoor activities and how to build admin and parental support.

The second session was spent rotating teachers through various learning stations led by inner organizations. Wild Whatcom facilitated one station, walking teachers through the art of reflection, tying outdoor experiences back to the classroom. Another station worked to provide classroom management tips to get students outdoors efficiently, plus tricks to turn distractions into “teaching moments.”

The third session focused on communication in the outdoors. Teachers were tasked with the homework of taking their students outside at least once before the final Saturday session. During the final session, teachers were asked to “speed date” with each other, sharing homework outcomes and lessons learned.

Speed dating turned into “speed mentoring.” Teachers paired up to plan for future outdoor classroom time and wrote each other postcards of encouragement to follow through with their commitment to build the habit of incorporating “fresh air” into their curricula.

Workshop Results

A post workshop survey collectively identified that 100% of the participants were encouraged to utilize the outdoors in the future, with 67% increasing their teaching in the outdoors due to their participation in the workshop and 78% of the participants demonstrating an increased confidence in utilizing outdoor education pedagogy.

Teacher Training Focused on ‘Fresh Air’ Time for Students...
Young Professionals Find Their FLOW with NSEA

By Vilina Sandburn-Bill, AmeriCorps Education Coordinator

NSEA has numerous programs dedicated to educating and engaging the community in local salmon recovery.

One of the major internship opportunities is leading learning stations during the Stream Exploration Field Trip component of NSEA’s Students for Salmon Program. At learning stations, interns teach fourth-graders about water quality, macroinvertebrates and riparian vegetation through the lens of salmon.

"Huge Impact"

This year, FLOW intern Zack Pattek started his internship looking to inspire young minds and connect to his new community. Having recently moved from Florida, his knowledge of salmon ecology and the Pacific Northwest flora and fauna was limited.

His participation in Students for Salmon exposed him to Whatcom County natural history. Zack has been able to build community through his acquired knowledge of plants, salmon and Pacific Northwest habitat through teaching.

Zack is not the only intern who has found his or her "flow" through NSEA. Haley Duran interned in the fall of 2017 and "realized how hilarious, rewarding and exciting teaching young, creative minds can be. Seeing students progress through the Students for Salmon Program made me realize I can have a huge impact on students’ lives, and that alone has motivated me to pursue my goals as an educator."

Haley dedicated over 150 hours through FLOW and is hoping to continue her journey as an educator through an AmeriCorps position next year.

Megan Rosce, a spring 2018 FLOW intern, remarked, "I’ve gained confidence in my teaching skills and developed a more distinct teaching style. I love seeing the enthusiasm for science and stream restoration on every field trip!"

Megan hopes to continue working as an environmental scientist and educator after graduation.

More Than Education

The list of applicable experience to be gained through these positions is not limited to education. Jessica Oman assisted with an ArcGIS mapping project detailing the location of Students for Salmon schools and field trip sites during her internship. This experience inspired her to apply for, and be accepted into, a graduate GIS certification program.

Intern involvement is essential to the success of this organization. Without bright, enthusiastic interns, programs at NSEA would not be as successful or as beneficial to the community. After all, 17 FLOW interns have dedicated over 1,100 hours to the Students for Salmon Program since September of 2017.

Each of these individuals has not only played a role in furthering NSEA’s mission, but it is clear that FLOW, thanks to funding from Alcoa, has allowed NSEA to provide robust opportunities that reciprocally benefit the interns’ personal and professional lives.

All Kinds of People Support Salmon at Work Parties

NSEA community work parties are inspiring and this season was no exception.

Volunteers spent an hour digging up a rusted hood of a car at the Squalicum Creek Work Party.

By Raena Anderson, AmeriCorps Volunteer Coordinator


From seasoned volunteers – some of whom have been volunteering for over 20 years – to first-time volunteers, everyone is welcomed into the NSEA family and everyone has the opportunity to restore salmon habitat and build a more resilient environment and community.

These community work parties reflect the epitome of teamwork, selflessness, hard work and the drive to make our little corner of the world a better place.

Volunteers make this work possible. AmeriCorps service members and Stream Stewards Interns volunteer their time to coordinate and execute restoration projects. Community volunteers donate their time to complete the restoration work.

Impressive Stats

In 2018, 724 volunteers donated nearly 2,200 hours to restore salmon habitat across Whatcom County, despite snow, wind and rain. More than 2,100 native trees and shrubs were planted along stream banks, demonstrating that individually we can plant trees, but together we can build a forest. In addition to planting, volunteers removed over 3,500 pounds of invasive vegetation and 540 pounds of garbage. Over time, these efforts will help keep the water cold, clean and clear – ideal habitat for salmon.

All this could not have been accomplished without NSEA’s Stream Stewards Interns, a branch of the FLOW Internship Program, who host the work parties. These 10 interns selected one of four specialities to focus on throughout the season: vegetation mapping, stream monitoring, communication or horticulture. These specialties provide hands-on experience in monitoring, educating and communicating results and information in a way everyone can understand.

Takes a Village

The work party season came to a close with a series of open house Garden Parties and an Earth Day Potting Party, where volunteers potted more than 5,800 bare-root plants and restocked the NSEA Northwest Nursery for future restoration projects.

The Earth Day Potting Party was a chance to celebrate not only Earth Day and World Fish Migration Day, but a chance to celebrate everyone who makes the work parties possible: community volunteers, interns, AmeriCorps members, NSEA staff and board members, plus NSEA’s sponsors and supporters. It truly takes a village.

Inspiration from work parties comes in many forms: being able to see the difference you have made; witnessing the teamwork, dedication and enthusiasm for restoring salmon habitat; and hearing stories of how NSEA community work parties can provide a sense of belonging by bringing all types of people together.

Work parties foster stewardship and empowerment across all age levels. At the Earth Day Potting Party, a younger volunteer was having such a great time that he proclaimed at the top of his lungs, “I love volunteering!”

It’s moments like these that give us hope for future generations and hope for the wild salmon that call Whatcom County their home.
Surveyors Monitor Streams in Search of Salmon

By Katie Storrs, AmeriCorps Habitat Restoration Coordinator, and Eli DeWitt, Project Coordinator

This vibrant red coho carcass was found in December during an NSEA spawner survey of Goodwin Creek, a tributary to the Fraser River.

Since September 2017, Project Coordinator Eli DeWitt and Habitat Restoration Coordinator Katie Storrs have led NSEA monitoring programs. Additionally, four habitat monitoring interns through the Future Leaders Surveyors Monitor Streams in Search of Salmon program.

The City of Ferndale was concerned about fecal coliform and high temperature of Schell Creek. So, the city partnered with Windward High School and NSEA to conduct water testing for the City of Ferndale Water Treatment Lab. Windward students provide import-

ment techniques to recover wild salmon. The students survey five different sites along the creek. At each site, the students use a water quality sampling instrument to collect data in the field, and collect two water samples which they take to the Ferndale Water Treatment Lab.

Every 10-14 days at each survey site, surveyors walked upstream, counting each salmon. If alive, the salmon was identified by species, when possible, or counted as unknown. If dead, its carcass was counted and identified by species, when possible.

Surveyors noted other aspects as well, such as sex, whether the adipose fin had been clipped and, in the case the salmon was female, whether it had spawned. They cut off the tails of carcasses to avoid them being recounted in future surveys and flagged any identifiable redds with the date. Surveyors also took notes about flow and visibility during each survey to indi-

cate the percentage likelihood of seeing a fish.

The NSEA monitoring team surveyed stretches totaling 4.46 miles along 13 different streams in Whatcom County during the 2017-18 spawner season. Surveyors detected salmonids above five of the 13 barrier removal project sites, indicating the salmon could spawn in habitat previously inaccessible to them. It’s important to note just because surveyors did not detect the presence of salmonids at the other survey sites does not mean that salmon were not there.

In order of abundance, the NSEA monitoring team found evidence of coho, kokanee, steelhead and chum in the creeks surveyed. This season, spawning salmon, or spawners, began showing up in streams in mid to late November and spawned until early January.

NSEA plans to continue monitoring above fish passage barrier removal sites for at least three consecutive years after removal. Hopefully, surveyors will see spawners accessing habitat above all sites in future years.

Windward Students Monitor Changes to Local Creek

By Katie Storrs, AmeriCorps Habitat Restoration Coordinator

For many years now, Windward High School has partnered with NSEA to conduct water testing for the City of Ferndale.

The students survey five different sites along the creek. At each site, the students use a water quality sampling instrument to collect data in the field, and collect two water samples which they take to the Ferndale Water Treatment Lab.

This season, NSEA took two students, Zazel Deming and Charlie Goggins, out once each month to collect and report data about the creek’s temperature, dissolved oxygen, pH and conductivity. Zazel Deming also assisted with this program during the first semester.

The students survey five different sites along the creek. At each site, the students use a water quality sampling instrument to collect data in the field, and collect two water samples which they take to the Ferndale Water Treatment Lab.

At the lab, City of Ferndale employ-

ees analyze the samples for turbidity (the amount of sediment in the water) and fecal coliform (a bacteria that lives in the intestines of warm-blooded animals).

Thank you to these students – and the many who came before them – for assisting with this program. They’re work provides valuable insight into the health of their local creek.

WEED AWARE
Take Steps to Mitigate Poisonous Hemlock

By James van der Voort, Washington Service Corps Supervisor

Spring is an ideal time for identifying poison hemlock (Conium maculatum).

This plant is found in disturbed sites and pastures and along roadsides and waterways. It is often found in disturbed sites and pastures and along roadsides and waterways.

The plant is a biennial that can grow up to 8 feet tall, but is most often seen about 4-6 feet tall. It can be identified by its smooth, hairless, hollow stem that has purple blotches. Its leaves are fern-like, and it has numerous white flowers in umbrella shaped clusters.

At this time of year, poison hemlock should be flowering, reducing the effects of herbicide, so removal of flowers and seed heads can help reduce next year’s plants. Dispose of cut parts in a sealed plastic bag and put them in the garbage. Poison hemlock may re-flower at a shorter height, so monitoring throughout the season is recommended. Be sure to

wear gloves when handling the plant.

Please see the website for What-

com County Noxious Weed program for information on other noxious weeds and methods of control.
Tell us about yourself and your work at Parkview Elementary School.

I am a fourth-grade teacher of math and science at Parkview Elementary. I have taught third-fifth grade at Parkview for the last 12 years and I LOVE being a Panda. Our community is full of enthusiastic learners who show kindness, tenacity and ingenuity every day. When I am not at school, I love to travel with my family: Doss (also a fourth-grade teacher) and my daughters, Willa and Rozza. We love to hike, surf, ride bikes, eat at restaurants and play games at new and exciting places. We especially love to do all of these things in Bellingham! My favorite day outside of school would be celebrating with a bigger sense of how their classroom experience works really well for my students. Our focus on the life cycle and riparian system creates a foundation for the fieldwork with water quality, macroinvertebrates and plant species.

Students arrive at the park with the content and vocabulary to understand the scientific tests they’re running and analyzing. They always end the day feeling inspired to choose a career with that perfect mix of planning, learning and working in their environment.

What is a memory you have from a Students for Salmon experience?

My favorite part of the Students for Salmon experience is the afternoon portion of the field trip, in which the kids get to remove invasive species from the park where they just spent the morning learning. It’s not often that 30 kids are cheering about filling three garbage cans with weeds! Their feeling of accomplishment and pride makes all of us smile.

Tell us about yourself and why you volunteer for NSEA.

I enjoyed working on the annual report. It was a pleasure to create something beautiful to help tell NSEA’s story and reflect the high quality of its programs. I find that very satisfying.

What is a special memory you have about volunteering with NSEA?

Everyone at NSEA has been very welcoming and appreciative, and I’ve loved working at the beautiful new campus.

Do you have a special memory of NSEA?

I was so impressed with the organization, its goals and accomplishments, that when I met NSEA’s Advancement Coordinator, Amy Johnson, that day while planting a cedar seedling, I volunteered to help out in any way I could.

What do you do as a volunteer for NSEA?

My expertise is in graphic design, so Amy gladly accepted my offer to collaborate on several design projects, notably the 2017 Annual Report.

Tell us about your current volunteer project with NSEA. What is your favorite part about it?

How do you think your internship at NSEA helped you on your way to your degree?

All it started because of my dad, really. Growing up, he worked long hours on a farm. My dad spent his spare time in the outdoors, hunting or fishing. At that time, I never understood why he would leave for a weekend for a hunting trip, so I went with him once.

And once was all it took to understand. Watching the sunrise over the hills, feeling the chill of the wind on my face, hearing the quack of cackling ducks nearby, I was hooked. Dad taught me to be ethical, respectful and, most importantly, to conserve and protect what’s around us, otherwise it could all be gone one day.

How do you think your internship at NSEA helped you on your way to your goal?

NSEA helped me grow professionally, refining my skills in data collection and data entry, but what I didn’t expect was how much it would help me grow personally. My confidence in myself has grown and I have become more outgoing. I learned how to network and make connections with others in this field.

NSEA really believes in its interns, offering value wherever it can. For me, NSEA offered a chance to improve my interview skills. A mock interview was held for a job I was applying for at the time. I took all the comments and suggestions to heart and as it turned out, I was selected for the job we had prepared for in the mock interview.

NSEA has helped me in numerous ways on my journey to becoming a wildlife biologist. I am grateful for all the tools and support NSEA has provided me and I look forward to continuing to work with NSEA in the future.

Do you have a special memory of NSEA?

At one work party, I got to pull a whole mess of mulch on a sled, which fulfilled a lifelong dream of mine to become an amateur sled dog.

Tell us about your current volunteer project with NSEA. What is your favorite part about it?

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NSEA’s Finances: A Tapestry of Numbers

By Kate Underwood, Finance and Office Manager

Ofen when I talk to people about financials, their eyes glaze over. Numbers can be intimidating and once you throw in a few accounting terms, people are sure to be snoring.

So, I’ve been trying to think of a way to explain how I designed my new accounting system and budget without putting everyone to sleep. The best analogy I have come up with is weaving.

I present each day with different threads and it is my job to weave those threads together. I could braid them, to make sure they don’t get tangled and keep them together, but it doesn’t show us anything. There might be a brilliant blue thread hidden behind black and brown threads, but in the end it is just a braid of random colors.

If instead I take the threads, sort them by color and plan the composition, I can use those same threads to weave an intricate tapestry that tells a story.

Quicklooks is my loom and I carefully thread the weft strands, which are my chart of accounts, classes and tracking systems, so that together they provide the support and structure I need to create a weaving. The budget is my composition; it provides the guidelines I need to decide how to weave each new thread into my tapestry.

Often when I talk to people about the three-dimensional nature of nonprofit accounting, Kate Underwood smiles big.

The tapestry shows a picture of NSEA, children planting trees or shouting with excitement when they see a macroinvertebrate; volunteers with muddy boots installing bridges; and salmon swimming up a stream for the first time in 50 years. This is the story the numbers tell.

NSEA respects the earth’s natural resources. We will do our best to conserve current salmon spawning habitat and enhancing areas of degraded habitat is paramount for a future where those to come can enjoy these sublime surroundings. This is why the work of NSEA is so important. By replanting riparian areas, installing large woody debris into waterways and removing culverts that block fish passage, we are slowly restoring spawning habitat that was once lost and, in doing so, giving salmon populations the best chance possible to recover in the Anthropocene.

You Make the Salmon Recovery Possible!

Your contributions make the work we do possible. Please consider donating, its easy!

• By phone, call (360) 715-0283
• Online, at www.nsea.org/take-action/
• By mail, complete the form below and return to NSEA, 3057 East Bakerview Rd., Bellingham, WA 98226

NSEA respects the earth’s natural resources. We will do our best to not clutter your inbox or mail box unnecessarily.

Name: ___________________________ Phone: ___________________________
Address: __________________________________________________________________________
Email: ___________________________
I would like to contribute $____________
I would like my donation used for:
❑ Habitat Restoration  ❑ Education  ❑ Endowment
❑ Please use my donation for NSEA’s greatest current need

Payment Details
❑ Cash Enclosed  ❑ Check Enclosed (Payable to NSEA)
Please charge: ❑ Visa  ❑ Mastercard  ❑ Discover
Card Number: ___________________________
Expiration: ___________________________
Code: ___________________________

THANK YOU!

All donations are 100% tax deductible. The Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association respects your privacy and will not sell, trade, or share your personal information. Ever.

NSEA Mission Statement

Nooksack Salmon Enhancement Association strives to recover salmon by engaging our community in restoration, education and stewardship.

NSEA is an independent nonprofit organization (501c3) and is one of fourteen Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups (RFEGs) in Washington State. Base funding for the RFEG program comes from a grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service’s Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, a portion of state commercial and recreational fishing license fees, and excess egg and carcass sales administered by the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife.

By Damian Howder, AmeriCorps WCC Assistant Supervisor

Working for NSEAs Washington Conservation Corps crew has given me the opportunity to experience some of the most beautiful scenery this country has to offer: snow-capped mountains transitioning down into alpine and then temperate rainforest, laced with streams consolidating into powerful rivers that push endlessly toward the sea.

These rivers, such as the Nooksack and its tributaries, provide a gateway for the anadromous life cycle of the most iconic of all Pacific Northwest wildlife, the salmon. Along with the yearly runs of salmon, another famous animal makes a robust appearance.

Iconic Species

Bald eagles gather in large numbers to scavenge salmon remains in places such as the eagle sanctuary near Welcome, Wash., situated along the North Fork Nooksack River. Having spent many lunch breaks at this spot, watching chump swain in small side channels while eagles perch majestically above, I’ve had time to reflect upon the life cycles of these magnificent creatures.

Salmon are the lifeblood of our fishing economy here in Washington State. Their yearly runs have been an important part of the local Native American cultures for as far back as their oral histories go.

Every year, the salmon make their pilgrimage from the sea back up river and into the very streams and side channels they were born in to spawn and create the next generation. The harvesting of these wild fish provides sustenance and sport for many in our area, but the most crucial component of these runs is the environmental impact the nutrients left behind by the decomposing adult salmon have on the ecosystem.

After spawning, salmon die and their bodies become nourishment for many creatures, small and large, including one of the bigger populations of bald eagles in the country. Some eagles are year-round inhabitants, while many others stop here only in the fall to scavenge the remains of the spawning salmon on their way to Alaska.

Enchanting Scene

While these raptors are just one of the many beneficiaries of the life cycle of salmon, there is a feeling of enchantment at the sight of dozens of eagles congregating around a single bend of a river. It is my hope that the citizens of this community, who also appreciate these incredible sites dotting our waterways every fall, will continue to fight for the protection of these animals and their ecosystems.

Conserving current salmon spawning habitat and enhancing areas of degraded habitat is paramount for a future where those to come can enjoy these sublime surroundings. This is why the work of NSEA is so important. By replanting riparian areas, installing large woody debris into waterways and removing culverts that block fish passage, we are slowly restoring spawning habitat that was once lost and, in doing so, giving salmon populations the best chance possible to recover in the Anthropocene.

Crew Corner

A Seasonal Reflection

Photo credit: Brett Baunton

Holding hand-made card stock cubes that she used to teach NSEA staff about the three-dimensional nature of nonprofit accounting, Kate Underwood smiles big.

The successful workshop identified an important niche for NSEA to fill in our community – building a confident community of educators in outdoor education pedagogy. Brave to these passionate educators, now more inspired to lead the charge of bringing more fresh air into their classrooms, and brave to our community for creating a permanent home for NSEA so that important work like this can continue.

By Kate Underwood, Finance and Office Manager

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So, I’ve been trying to think of a way to explain how I designed my new accounting system and budget without putting everyone to sleep. The best analogy I have come up with is weaving.

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Immediately following the final Saturday session, Sehome High School science teacher Chuck Schelle emailed photos of his students conducting an experiment about robotics detecting light outside with blindfolds on!

Another workshop participant, Sarah Nyman from Geneva Elementary, walked her class to Euclid Park and had students conduct a sound map, imagining what it would be like if they were colonists conducting an experiment for creating a permanent home for our community – building a confident community for creating a permanent home for our community – building a confident community for creating a permanent home for our community – building a confident community. So, I’ve been trying to think of a way to explain how I designed my new accounting system and budget without putting everyone to sleep. The best analogy I have come up with is weaving.

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