WEST END NATURAL RESOURCES NEWS

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NPC MRC

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Salmon Habitat Restoration Projects Then and Now

By Kim Clark, University of Washington, Olympic Natural Resource Center

Some of the first salmon habitat restoration efforts were implemented over two decades ago in response to declining Coho runs. By the 80s, it was recognized that more ponds and side channel habitats were needed by salmon and, in the early 1990s, the WDFW Habitat Program developed about sixty habitat restoration project sites within the Sol Duc, Bogachiel, Dickey, Hoh and Clearwater basins as part of their new Salmonid Screening Habitat Enhancement and Restoration (SSHEAR) program...

Dr. Mara Zimmerman, Coast Salmon Partnership executive director, navigates obstacles during a snorkel survey in a SSHEAR site. ***Photo: Kim Clark***

02.

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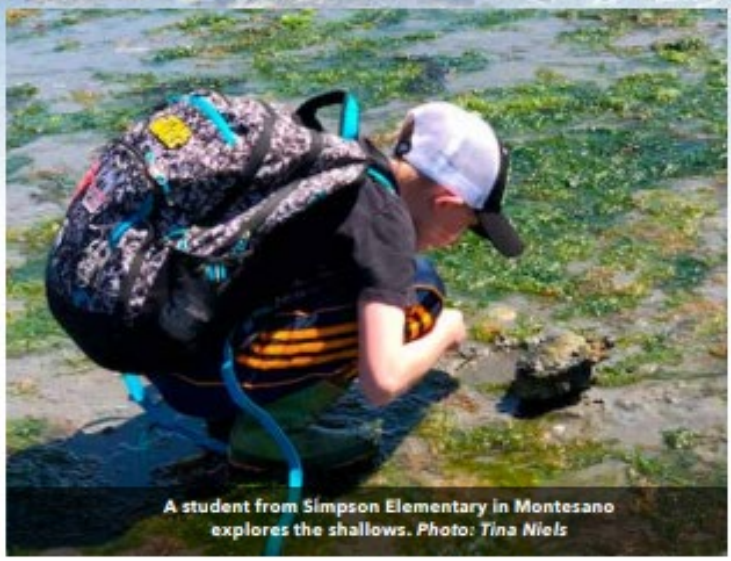
Marine Advanced Technology & Education Competition (MATE)

By NPC MRC Members Alice Ryan, Quileute Tribal School, and Katie Krueger

Around the world, MATE ROV competitions engage students in the sciences and help prepare them for technical careers. For two years (2017 and 2018), Forks hosted a "satellite" MATE ROV competition while the official competitions took place in the Puget Sound area. In 2019 though, the Forks event became fully certified and internationally recognized as an official "MATE Olympic Coast Regional ROV Competition". Now our local schools can fully engage much closer to home – at the Forks Aquatic and Athletic Club...

Nicole Harris of OCNMS Foundation works with area teachers to study plankton diversity. *Photo: Julie Tennis*



A student from Simpson Elementary in Montesano explores the shallows. *Photo: Tina Niels*

07.

"Plankton Close to Home" a Success, Thanks to Funding from the NPC MRC!

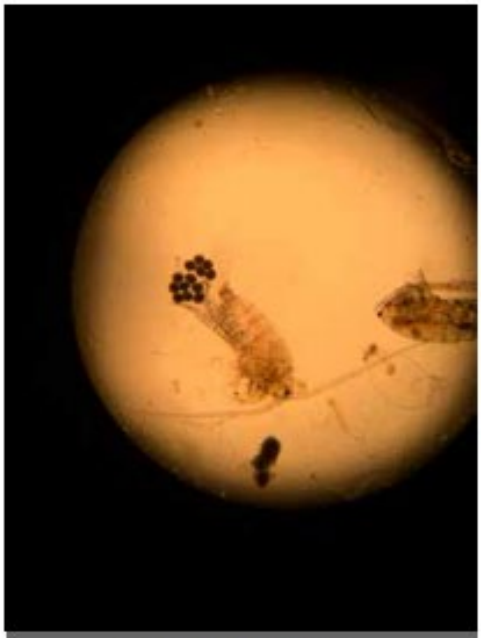
By Julie Tennis, PEI

Last July, eight teachers joined facilitators from Olympic Coast National Marine Sanctuary and Pacific Education Institute at the Olympic Natural Resources Center (ONRC) for four days of professional development. These teachers came to learn about plankton, and how to incorporate plankton studies into their curriculum.

The participants crafted their own plankton nets and utilized them in three locations along the Quillayute River Watershed: Lake Pleasant, the Calawah River, and the La Push Marina. They studied their samples under microscopes and drew conclusions based on evidence regarding which site had the most biodiversity in planktonic organisms. Throughout this process, the facilitators modeled a variety of activities to help connect the organisms under the microscope to the Next Generation Science Standards' "Science and Engineering Practices," and to other curricular subject areas.

Dr. Rich Osborne of the ONRC and Dr. Steve Fradkin of Olympic National Park provided broader perspectives on the importance of plankton, showing its relationship to the entire food web of the Straits and Pacific Ocean ecosystems and reminding us that plankton is very diverse and can be found just about everywhere.

Six of the eight participants were able to incorporate what they learned at the workshop into their curriculum during the 2018-19 school year. Almost 200 students, from kindergarten through high school, got to participate in field experiences gathering plankton from the freshwater of North River to the salty waters of the Sekiu Marina. Students enjoyed the experience and, in the words of participant John Hunter, "They are much more aware of plankton and their role in the health of the ocean and the safety of our food supply. Many are also fascinated by the diversity of life where they just saw cloudy water before."



Copepod from Beach #4. *Photo: John Hunter*