

# Success Story: Invasive Species Diving DEEP in Salmon Education for Science and CTE Teachers

August 2nd – 4th, 2021  
LaSalle High School



It was a hot and smoky early August, but that didn't stop teachers from Yakima, Warden, Granger and Naches from gathering to learn more about their new salmon tanks. Thanks to funding from a NOAA Bay

Watershed Education and Training (BWET) Grant, and the generous in-kind donation of space from La Salle High School in Yakima, 10 science and CTE teachers were able to do just that. From August 2-4th, 2021, these teachers worked to earn 15 STEM clock hours and explore the use of salmon in the classroom. Tiffany Bishop of the Yakima Basin Environmental Education Program got participants trained in the set-up and maintenance of classroom tank systems, and teachers even competed in prime the pump feats of strength!

Todd Newsome, Yakima Klickitat Fisheries Project Research Scientist, hosted participants at the nearby Coho mini-hatchery, touring the teachers through the system and the use of the system for education. This includes, for some students, participating in pit-tagging and spawning salmon. "We love having visitors. Just contact us and make a time."

The majority of the 2.5 day adventure was spent on Meaningful Watershed Educational Experience (MWEE) training and planning. After a tutorial and

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overview of the essential components of MWEEs, teachers met in small groups to initiate the planning and integration process. "Remember, this is something you want to sustain all year," Emily Smith, Mid-Columbia Fisheries Enhancement Group Education Coordinator reminded participants. In the 90+ degree heat before noon, participants were given waders and tools and sent out to the creek to practice collecting data, and learn about the types of data their students could collect. This MWEE education culminated in reflection and planning for implementation.

Other highlights from the workshop include an activity geared toward understanding the impact of warming waters on salmon and analyzing the engineering solutions humans have come up with to keep salmon alive. The activity was written specifically for this group by Pacific Education Institute Central Washington facilitator Megan Rivard, and is ready for students to explore this coming school year. Participants also heard from community partners and educators about internship programs, and spent time brainstorming ways they might develop similar programs at their home districts.

"I used to think outdoor, field-based learning was important," said one participant. "But now I think it is absolutely critical." Participants left the workshop eager to take their students outdoors, and with resources to make it happen. "Honestly, I came to this expecting just to learn how to maintain the tank and rear the eggs. I was pleasantly surprised at how much more was covered and how to integrate everything for our kids."

