

...and the winners are

2008 Sammy Award Winners



Dean Creek Culvert Replacement Project

For many years, vital spawning access for salmon, steelhead and cutthroat trout was blocked on Dean Creek at 66th Avenue near Battle Ground. The fish were met with a six-foot pipe that poured stream water into a deep, creek dug pool. When it came time to replace the culvert and road, the surrounding neighbors decided to do something to resolve this barrier issue.



Project originator, Terry Miller, began coordinating with the many neighbors who utilize 66th Avenue as the sole access to their property. Terry and project managers Kier Gombart, Josh Soske, Jeff Miller and Albert McClure received guidance from fish biologist Donna Bighouse regarding relocating the fish to other streams prior to construction of the culvert. Clark Conservation District was the project sponsor and managed all aspects of the project, including engineering, permits, contractors and accounts. Engineer Sam Giese worked with the Dean Creek neighbors to design the culvert. With funding from the Family Forest Fish Passage Program, a cost-share program for small forest landowners to improve fish passage on their natural resources, the neighbors and volunteers embarked upon the process of making the replacement culvert fish-friendly.

John Karpinski

As a kid growing up near Chicago, John Karpinski's childhood memories include polluted rivers that caught fire and air quality so poor it produced orange snow. These memories are what compelled him to do something about the environment. After moving west and witnessing a more pristine environment, John was inspired to work hard to keep it that way. Using his skills as an attorney John has donated countless hours of pro bono work for environmental and salmon protection projects. His efforts include working on critical area ordinances for Clark County and the City of Vancouver, helping to establish "Best Available Science" as a substantive requirement of the state Growth Management Act, and working with many entities on the Woods Landing project protecting vital chum salmon spawning



ground along the Columbia River. John has also worked diligently to protect habitat and prevent degradation of salmon-bearing streams and wetlands. Much of John's work has been getting others involved in the process. He urges citizens to serve on various committees and to attend hearings to give their input into the public process.

John's persistence and dedication to environmental protection in Clark County is good news for the Northwest's iconic salmon.

York Elementary

Fifth grade teachers at York Elementary Stephanie Land, Amanda Pemberton, and Todd Graves understand the importance of hands-on education. In addition to running the salmon in the classroom program, Land, Pemberton, and Graves had students monitor water quality indicators monthly in three Clark County streams to determine which one met the criteria for the best salmon habitat. Students presented their findings at the Student Watershed



Congress in June 2008. They also had the students participate in the Watershed Steward's "Dump No Waste, Drains to Stream" stenciling project. Land, Pemberton, and Graves took over eighty 5th grade students to a nearby neighborhood where they stenciled storm drains to educate citizens of the hazards that pollution can pose to salmon. This hands-on approach can make a big impact on

students. One student commented, "this is something I'll remember for the rest of my life." The fifth grade teachers at York Elementary are an excellent example of community action for the protection of salmon and watersheds through education and service.

David Brown

An overheated or dry streambed are deadly conditions for salmon. Fortunately Clark County fish have Dave Brown's Wild Fish Rescue Program to rely on. When listed species of native salmon are stranded in drying creeks



during the summer months, Dave, with the help of volunteers, gathers the juvenile fish and brings them to his property where they are reared until the streams are full of water again. Dave's property along Mill Creek is kind of like a spa for the salmon. Beginning with his own money and later receiving grants from Fish First, Clark Skamania Flyfishers and the Native Fish Society, Dave built several pens to hold and rear the salmon he rescues. He receives guidance and permit assistance from the Washington State Department of Fish and Wildlife. Dave engineered an innovative feeding system involving a series of pipes that run down the hillside and allow the fish to be fed from his garage. The spring-fed water in the pens is kept aerated to provide oxygen to the salmon. The number of salmon rescued by Dave's program is impressive. In the spring of 2008 he released over 20,000 wild Coho salmon and steelhead juveniles. With a donation of wire tags from Northwest Marine Technology, the salmon rescued by this project can be measured over time. Dave's efforts set an example as to how each of us can truly make a difference in recovering salmon. He may don a cap and rubber boots instead of a cape and mask, but Dave's fish rescue program has made him a superhero for Clark County salmon.

Edward Wickersham

An avid angler, Ed Wickersham understands the importance of nutrient enhancement. Ed spearheads the nutrient enhancement project for the Clark-Skamania Flyfishers. Because of the decline of naturally spawning salmon in Clark County's rivers and streams, there are fewer salmon carcasses available to provide the nutrients necessary to support the fry and smolts. The nutrient enhancement program puts salmon carcasses back into streams in Clark County. Ed's desire to have native salmon back in our streams is evident in his persist work on the nutrient enhancement program. He negotiates with the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife to obtain carcasses for the project and petitions the Clark-Skamania Flyfishers Board of Directors to support his endeavors. Ed recruits volunteers and then organizes outings with the Clark-Skamania Flyfishers to place the carcasses in the streams. He maintains contact with the hatchery management in order to retrieve the carcasses when available and then schedules the volunteers at the right time so as to not jeopardize the supply. In addition to this type of diligent coordination, Ed is currently seeking funding for storage and maintenance of a trailer which will help with moving the carcasses to the streamside. Ed's passion for fish is evident in the hard work and many volunteer hours he puts into the nutrient enhancement project. In an effort to bring native salmon home again Ed gives nature a helping hand.



Michael Hutchins

Michael Hutchins has a strong desire to help restore the habitat for native Northwest salmon. Combining his love of construction with his Watershed Steward training Michael has provided over two thousand volunteer hours with the Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group working on salmon restoration projects. This volunteer time accounts for \$28,000 of in-kind donations toward grant funded salmon restoration projects. Michael has worked on 13 restoration projects including construction of in-stream structures for the Washougal River. Michael's volunteer efforts don't end with construction projects. He supervised a ten-person Department of Corrections Crew, worked on nutrient enhancement projects and was responsible for the maintenance of the Enhancement Group's tools and equipment. Michael then took his interest in salmon restoration to an even higher level by pursuing an accredited River Restoration Certificate through Portland State University and attending classes through River Restoration Northwest. Salmon in Clark County are lucky to have an advocate like Michael Hutchins on their side.



2008 Certificate of Merit Winners

- ✚ **Discovery Middle School Student Leadership Class** led by April Whipple for their efforts in launching the composting and recycling programs at the school.
- ✚ **Valerie Alexander** for her participation with various environmental organizations and her contributions serving on numerous ordinance committees.
- ✚ **The Vancouver Hilton Hotel** for being the first LEED certified Hilton in the world and conducting a salmon and environmentally-friendly business.