

Newsletter #20 – February – April 2014

- 1) Next Members Meeting:** The next meeting of the members will be the Annual General Meeting to be held on Thursday, May 8, 2014 starting at 7:30 p.m. at St. Stephen's Anglican Church. Following the business part of the meeting, which will include the election of the board of directors for the coming year, we will have a guest speaker. Ken Ashley, Director of the Rivers Institute at BCIT, will provide insight into the restoration of the lower part of the stream and the estuary of Mackay Creek in North Vancouver.
- 2) Streamkeeper Course:** The Streamkeeper training course which will run on May 24 and 25 is fully subscribed. If you would like to put your name forward for the next course please contact John Barker at jrbarker@shaw.ca.
- 3) Adopt-A-Fish:** On April 26, in partnership with the Coho Society of the North Shore and West Vancouver Memorial Library, Streamkeepers helped host the annual Adopt-A-Fish community event. This year 200 children each adopted a coho smolt which was released into McDonald Creek at Memorial Park. This festive event attracts families who come to celebrate the departure of coho smolts to the ocean for a further two years of growth before returning to spawn. Information kiosks highlighted the work of the Society and provided insight into the hatchery operated by a volunteer team of Streamkeepers. A big thank-you goes to Celia Utley, Coordinator of Community Events, who managed much of the organizing of this most successful and enjoyable day at McDonald Creek. More than 30 volunteers made this activity run smoothly for the enjoyment of the children and families. Photos of the event are posted on the West Vancouver Streamkeeper Society Facebook page.
- 4) Other Student Outreach:** At the elementary level we will be painting storm drains with West Bay and Pauline Johnson Elementary Schools in May. At the senior secondary level, EPN students will be performing beach clean-up at Dundarave, John Lawson and Ambleside weekly for the month of May. EPN students also assisted with Adopt-A-Fish and will be undertaking a Hay Park weed pull in mid-June. The StreamTeam, comprised of university students, will be performing their citizen science in several creeks checking water quality (turbidity, dissolved oxygen and PH), temperature variations and macro-invertebrate sampling throughout the summer. They have been busy lately performing emerging fry surveys.
- 5) Nelson Creek Hatchery:** About 120,000 chum eggs were received in early January and 40,000 coho eggs early February. The chum fry were ponded in early April and released into local creeks on April 24. The coho were ponded on May 2 and will be released later in the month. Many thanks to the Hatchery team of volunteers for another successful season raising chum and coho eggs to the fed-fry stage, ready for release into local creeks, to help build our salmon stocks.

6) Nature Centre: The Navy Jack Nature House project is proceeding nicely. District Council gave the go-ahead to move to the next level of the presentation of a sustainable business plan. This is close to being finalized. The five stewardship partners will be making an application to form the West Vancouver Nature House Society. They have approved a constitution, the by-laws and each of the five groups has appointed a director to the new board. The Advisory Team, with specialists in law, finance, architecture, grant writing and planning, continue to assist the member stewardship groups. The stewardship groups are Lighthouse Park Preservation Society, Old Growth Conservancy Society, North Shore Wetland Partners Society, West Vancouver Shoreline Preservation Society and West Vancouver Streamkeeper Society. Many thanks to Bill Chapman and Liz Leduc for their leadership roles in continuing to move this exciting project forward.

7) McDonald Creek Estuary Improvement Project: Funding totalling \$123,400 has been confirmed for the estuary enhancement project for McDonald Creek. Major donations have been received from the DFO Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnerships Program and Pacific Salmon Foundation. Additional funding has also been received, including grants from the Coho Society of the North Shore and West Vancouver Community Foundation. The planning is underway and the cost of the heavy equipment work, rock supply and transportation will be confirmed once the bio-physical survey has been completed. Construction is expected to commence in mid-June with completion scheduled for late July. On-site information sessions and signage at the estuary will be undertaken by Streamkeepers to provide the public with the details of this important salmon enhancement project.

8) Other Work Plan Projects: Several key projects are underway, including:

- a) Improvement to the culvert to allow fish passage in McDonald Creek past Fulton Avenue.
- b) New water intake box on McDonald Creek in Hay Park to improve water flow to the rearing pond. The District is also constructing a new footbridge in the same location.
- c) Habitat improvements to Wood Creek in Parc Verdun will expand spawning and rearing habitat.
- d) Monitoring of Larson Creek of water quality testing, macro-invertebrate sampling and fish trapping to determine the health of this stream and the potential for a future enhancement project.

9) Creek Violations: Dumping of refuse into local streams is still a problem in the community. A summary of debris found in local creeks includes a computer, wire, aluminum sheeting, garden hoses, toys, cooking pots, garden planters, miscellaneous plastics and demolition wood. In addition, some gardeners, whether residents or contract gardeners, continue to use streams or the riparian area as handy areas to dump garden waste. At the end of April the District included a flyer with the quarterly municipal services fee notice. Included in this flyer was an advisory to residents to Keep Our Creeks Clear. If you observe any such infractions please report this to the District - during office hours at 604-925-7101. After office hours and on weekends, please call 604-925-7100.

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