



August, 2025

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Upcoming Events

- **Wild times with the neighbors open house, September 21, 11AM-2PM, Stewardship Center**
- **Return of the Salmon, October 19, 10AM-2PM, Fish fence**
- **Let the Egg-citement Begin open house, November 2, 11AM-2PM, Stewardship Center**



KEEPS Education Programs

The late winter to early summer period saw some good variety of programming and age groups, either carried out on our own or in partnership with Metro Vancouver Regional Parks interpreters for certain programs. Although the amount of detail varies with the grade level, a common theme throughout is to examine the riparian habitat and the ways that it interacts with the stream. We also re-inforce park etiquette such as staying on trails, not providing food attractants and leaving wild edibles for nature. Students can then take those lessons with them on family nature outings or camping trips. Many of our students live in neighborhoods where bear encounters occur on a regular basis, consequently we discuss basic techniques to help ensure that these encounters either end peacefully or do not occur altogether.

WE THANK VOLUNTEERS, TEACHERS AND PARENT DRIVERS!



Forest explorations, April 16th.



Watershed Road Show, May 30th.

Resource restoration

The spring season is always a peak time for work parties at the various restoration sites that Metro Vancouver Regional Parks has reclaimed from previous land uses. Certain schools such as Haney Christian return year after year to either plant native vegetation, or to protect the plants by mulching around them. It is pleasing to note that these sites are attracting wildlife as they were intended to.

Right: restoration sites near North Kanaka, May 22.



Did you know?

Anywhere upstream of Cliff Falls in Kanaka Creek, you may observe cutthroat trout. These are resident fish that never leave the stream, and they may be as small as 15cm long when they spawn.

Hatchery Happenings

The first half of any year is all about the young fish and where they are going. It's often a surprise to many that the majority of fish raised at Bell-Irving Hatchery are not actually released into Kanaka Creek. For example, this spring 195,000 of the chum fry were headed to streams in Burnaby and Vancouver, with 30,000 of those going to Byrne Creek, which drains from South Burnaby directly to the Fraser. And once again, Bell-Irving Hatchery assisted Stoney Creek's annual smolt release by providing them with 1,000 of those smolts. Not to say Kanaka is ignored: 41,000 coho fry were released upstream of the hatchery this year. By mid August, 31,000 coho juveniles were moved to the hatchery ponds, where they'll stay until next May.

Top: The first fry of the year in March.

Bottom: Adipose fin clipping of some of the 72,240 coho that had this procedure for the purpose of a limited retention fishery when these fish return.



Goodbye Chums 2025

Over 500 visitors took in our April classic.



Going down in frames

Which is precisely what has been occurring at the fish fence location this summer, as the aging and dilapidated wooden A frames are being replaced. Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Metro Vancouver Regional Parks and KEEPS are working together so that the rejuvenated fish fence is ready for action for the fall salmon season.



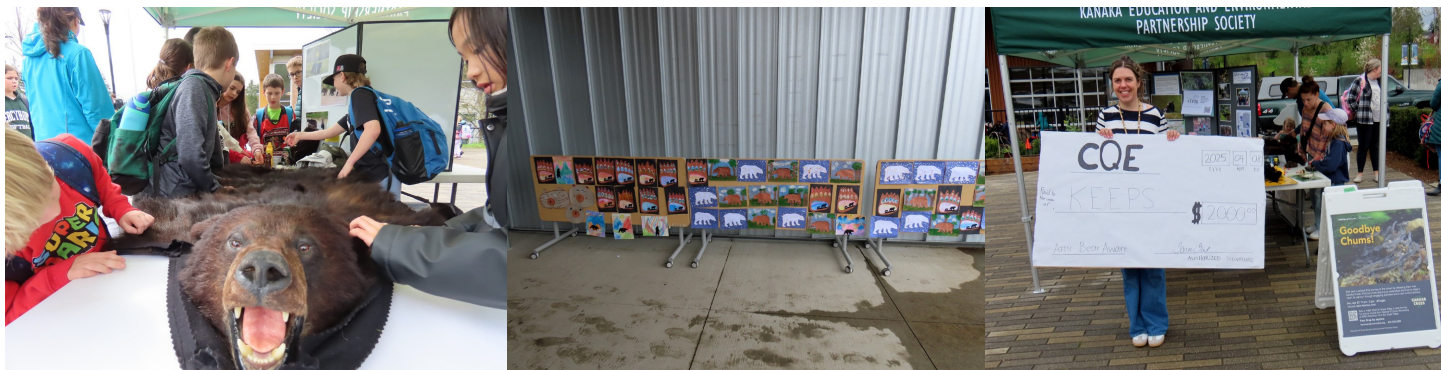
Happy Earth Day

While the City Of Maple Ridge has its Earth Day celebration every year in town at the Memorial Peace Park, the official date is April 22nd. That day was alive with activity, as basically an entire school visited the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Center before Melissa and her gang joined us in the afternoon at the fish fence location for a Salmonids in the Classroom fry release.



Bear Necessities

It was all things black bears April 8th at Albion Community Center, as we teamed up with c̓əsq̓ənələ elementary and Metro Vancouver Regional Parks with our traveling Bear Necessities program.



Spring / early summer Open Houses

Left to right: How the mighty have pollen, March 16th; Smolts on the water, May 25th; Get your plants on, July 13th. Many thanks to our great volunteers!



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About our organization: KEEPS was formally incorporated as a Society in December of 1998. We are involved with a wide variety of activities including habitat monitoring and restoration, GPS mapping, and of course public education and awareness. The Bell-Irving Hatchery was rebuilt in 2013 and the Kanaka Creek Watershed Stewardship Center was completed in 2017.

KEEPS consists of our Board of Directors and general membership, as well as a Hatchery Manager and part time Coordinator and Administrator. We also retain a Program Interpreter to implement our education programs. Want to become involved? Send us an email at volunteer@keeps.org

KEEPS gratefully acknowledges that we live, work and play on the traditional and unceded territories of the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations.

Year 20

When monitoring programs with Samuel Robertson Technical School commenced at Spencer Creek in January 2006, Paul Martin was Prime Minister, and Facebook and Twitter had not launched yet. Spencer Creek was also suffering high turbidity levels, but the attention that the student's efforts brought to the stream brought a steady improvement over the years that has continued to this day. Spencer Creek's return to a highly productive salmonid bearing watercourse is a true Maple Ridge success story.

Left to right: February cold snap; late spring purple policeman's helmet removal; June windup at Jackson Farm.



Year 25

There have certainly been some longtime participants with the Salmonids in the Classroom program over the years. At this time we give a shout out to Cathy Wightman, who was presented with her 25 year recognition in June of this year. We have made some beautiful music over the years, and those informal question and answer sessions with her classes are always a delight.

