

# 2025 Community Report



Image: Jeremy Johnson

# Reflecting on 35 years...



This year, as the North Olympic Salmon Coalition celebrates its 35th anniversary, I've found myself reflecting deeply on the generational impact of our work—and the work of the other 13 Regional Fisheries Enhancement Groups across Washington State. The numbers are impressive, but what stays with me are the stories etched into the landscapes we've touched.

In the day-to-day, our work can feel like a constant balancing act—writing grants, negotiating contracts, and juggling budgets. But then there are the moments when the long view comes into focus. I think back to when I first joined NOSC 16 years ago and stood on the edge of a reed canary grass field, its sterile expanse offering little refuge for wildlife. Today, that same place is an emerging forest, a stream shaded by young trees, alive with birdsong, and supported by a rich understory of native plants. What was once degraded habitat is now a thriving forest—proof that the land can heal if we tend to it.

That transformation is just one story among thousands. Across the state, RFEGs and our partners are replanting floodplains, opening blocked streams, and reconnecting rivers to their side channels. These projects don't just restore salmon runs; they restore resilience—to our ecosystems, our communities, and our shared future.

It's heartening to see schoolchildren who plant trees on their class field trips return years later as young adults, proud to show the next generation what they created. That's the true legacy of this work—it lives on not just in the miles of restored habitat, but in the people who will carry it forward.

As we celebrate 35 years of restoration and community impact, I invite you to invest in the next 35. Your support makes it possible for us to turn vision into action—transforming degraded landscapes into thriving salmon habitat and inspiring future generations of stewards. Every gift, no matter the size, strengthens this legacy of resilience. Together, we can ensure that the rivers, forests, and salmon we care for today remain abundant for the children and grandchildren who will inherit them tomorrow.

*Thank You*

*Jan Doyle*

Executive Director



Excavating during sunrise at Kilisut Harbor. Image: Kevin Long



**Growing Together**  
1990 - 2025



## Saving Salmon

## Supporting Locals

The Salmon Coalition's work benefits wild salmon stocks and contributes to our local economy. According to studies by University of Oregon's Institute for a Sustainable Environment, up to 80% of funding for restoration of watersheds remains in local counties. Additional studies showed that approximately \$2.5 million in economic activity is initiated by every \$1 million in watershed restoration funding spent.



Since 1990, the Salmon Coalition has secured nearly \$45.5 million in funding. These funds have and will continue to support local jobs in rural areas of the northern Olympic Peninsula.

**175**



Partnerships

**299**



Acres of Habitat Restored

**65**



Projects Completed

**46**



River Miles Restored

**155,113**



Native Plants in the Ground

**24,064**

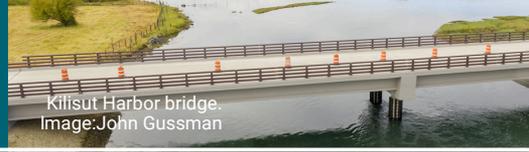


Students Reached

*These accomplishments are only possible through the strong partnerships built over the years. Thank you to all our partners and funders for making salmon recovery on the Olympic Peninsula a reality.*

# Restoration Program

A Legacy Under Construction



Healthy salmon runs begin with healthy habitat. That's why the North Olympic Salmon Coalition focuses on restoring the rivers, estuaries, and shorelines that salmon need to survive. Over the past three decades, projects like the restoration of Morse Creek and Kilisut Harbor have brought streams back to life and reconnected tidal waters long cut off from the sea. These efforts not only create safe places for salmon to spawn and grow, but also strengthen entire ecosystems—benefiting wildlife, improving water quality, and supporting the communities who depend on these natural resources.



## Reflections from Kevin Long, Senior Project Manager

Choosing a single project to highlight after nearly 20 years of project implementation is no small task, but the 2019 **Johnson Creek Culvert Removal Project** stands out. For over a decade, local practitioners warned that the culvert threatened to fail, potentially releasing large amounts of sediment into 12 miles of the Hoko River mainstem. Despite the urgency, the project sat unfunded for 15 years until the creation of the Brian Abbott Fish Barrier Removal Board, which selected NOSC as the project's sponsor. What followed looked more like mining than restoration, as crews removed a road fill and created steep smooth slopes where trees struggle to grow. Still, the risk to the Hoko was eliminated, salmon and steelhead regained access to prime habitat, and over time nature will soften the scars. The "Big Dig" exemplifies the patience, persistence, and resourcefulness of restoration practitioners when there's a fishy problem on the landscape. We'll get to it—just give us time!



10.7 miles of habitat reconnected



42 acres of forested wetlands reconnected



Left: Kevin Long, Senior Project Manager, standing in front of the Johnson Creek culvert. Right: Johnson Creek flowing freely after project completion.

# Riparian Program

Growing Our Future Forests

Riverbank lupine  
blooming along the  
Dungeness River  
Image: John Gussman



The forests that line our rivers are as vital to salmon as the water itself. Through our riparian restoration projects, the North Olympic Salmon Coalition works to transform acres of invasive weeds into thriving streamside forests that shade the water, stabilize banks, and provide the nutrients salmon need at every stage of their life cycle. The forests supply the large woody debris that shapes habitat—slowing currents, forming pools, and offering shelter for young fish. For 35 years, our crews, volunteers, and partners planted thousands of native trees and shrubs along local streams, creating habitat that will grow stronger with time.



## Observations from Nate Roberts, Stewardship Coordinator

Restoring riparian wetlands along salmon bearing streams is a key component to restoring salmon populations. Through the simple process of planting native vegetation, the associated ecosystem benefits described above are realized, leading to more resilient watersheds. Of course, it takes time to see these benefits, and one of the most enjoyable aspects of these projects is returning to them year after year to witness their maturation. When considering significant riparian planting projects that NOSC has been involved in over the past 35 years, the planting associated with **2004's Salmon Creek Channel Remeander Project** immediately comes to mind. This planting followed a significant remeander project on Salmon Creek that was led by the Jefferson County Conservation District. The project restored natural curves into the stream channel after decades of being a straightened ditch. The Salmon Coalition partnered to help plant over 18,000 native trees and shrubs, with thousands more added in following years through volunteer planting events and our Real Learning, Real Work 7th grade STEM program. What was previously little more than a ditch in a field has since transformed into a sinuous, shaded stream surrounded by a maturing riparian forest that provides excellent habitat for salmon and dozens of other terrestrial and aquatic species.



29 acres of riparian  
buffer planted

# Education Program

## The Next Generation of Environmental Stewards



RLRW students on a field trip at Illahee Preserve.  
Image: Charles Espey

Over the years, education has grown to be a core piece of the Salmon Coalition's mission. With both classroom and field-based lessons for students of all ages, our education programs plant future forests as well as the seeds for future environmental leaders and stewards. Sparking curiosity and appreciation for our region's ecology is one of the most powerful tools we have in our conservation and restoration work, instilling a stewardship ethic in every person that we have the joy of teaching.

## Salmon in the Schools



Image: Carmen Charles-Watson



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Since 2021, NOSC's Salmon in the Schools program, which allows students to raise coho salmon in their classrooms and release them into local streams, has grown from three to eight elementary schools. Partnering with teachers, school districts, and local tribes, we've expanded curriculum, deepened engagement, and inspired stewardship with thousands of kids. This past year, for the first time, we worked with the Lower Elwha Klallam Tribe and the Port Angeles School District to raise and release coho on the Elwha River.



1500 students raised and released salmon



8 elementary schools participating



### Insights from Lindsay McCord, Education and Outreach Coordinator

As we work towards salmon restoration for now and the future, the crux of the equation is to invest in the future to ensure that our work is not in vain. Salmon restoration and stewardship is not a box we check and move on – it is a continual investment in the relationship we have with the natural world. Our youth and the generations that follow them will be the ones taking the next steps, making the decisions, and stewarding the places we are restoring today. It is our responsibility to make sure they have the skills, knowledge, and care for the world around them to build upon the steps we lay. It is in the classroom and in the field with students where I see and feel a hopeful future for salmon the most.

# Outreach Program

## 35 Years of Community Engagement



As we look back at our successes, we see how our dedicated volunteers and members have been with us all along the way to help accomplish our shared vision of salmon recovery on the North Olympic Peninsula.

For the last 35 years, NOSC volunteers have contributed over 81, 000 hours towards the recovery of salmon. That is equivalent to more than 9 years of volunteered time that our community has dedicated to salmon recovery! Volunteers have trudged up the creeks over mossy logs to count salmon, braved our Northwest winters to plant native trees, mentored the next generation of environmental stewards and worked alongside our staff to accomplish our restoration projects. In the time we have spent together, there have been many opportunities to listen, learn, and enjoy our shared, deep passion for healthy runs of salmon in our local watersheds.

We hold the utmost gratitude for your commitment to the recovery of salmon across our region. Just as every river is the sum of its tributaries and every estuary is the sum of its tidal channels, our successes are the sum of all of your efforts and volunteered time. Thank you for joining us with your energy and passion.



These activities are powered by our community. Join us on this journey with a monthly or one-time donation to NOSC! Your gift directly restores streams, supports hands-on education, and ensures wild salmon remain a vital part of our region for generations to come. Go to [nosc.org/donate](https://nosc.org/donate) or scan the QR code to the right.

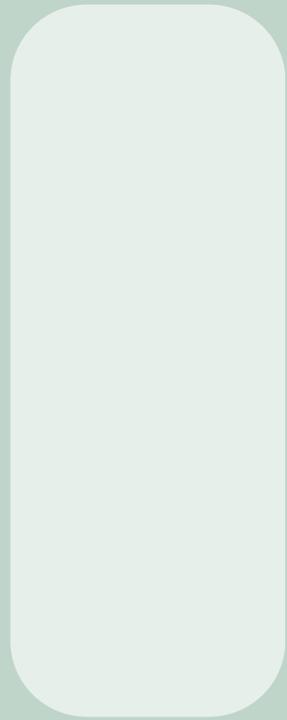


Base funding for the RFEG program comes from a grant from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service's Partners for Fish and Wildlife Program, a portion of state commercial and recreational fishing license fees, and excess egg and carcass sales administered by the Washington Department of Fish & Wildlife.

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