

Newsletter Article

Salmon Watch – Fall 2021

“What does the term ‘anadromous’ mean when referring to salmon and other fish species that are found in the Rogue River and its tributaries?”

“What did the results of the water quality tests tell us about if the local stream or river conditions are healthy for salmon and other aquatic life?”

“Can you see macroinvertebrates with your eyes without the aid of a microscope or other magnifying device?”

“What are some key functions that healthy riparian areas provide?”

These are just a handful of the questions that are examined and subsequently answered following a successful Salmon Watch field day. For those unfamiliar with the Salmon Watch program, it was created by Oregon Trout in 1993 to cultivate a sense of stewardship for students with local creeks and rivers and the aquatic life that proliferates in those areas. The program consists of several elements culminating with the field day. A typical Salmon Watch field day includes four program modules: salmon biology/salmon lifecycle, water quality, macroinvertebrates, and riparian systems. Each module is taught by a local expert or professional in that field of study. Salmon Watch field days are held in both Jackson and Josephine counties, most frequently at county, state, or local parks with easy instream access.

Despite the challenges of the ongoing pandemic, a lack of school bus drivers, and limited chaperones, Salmon Watch field days persisted over a 7-week period, providing outdoor education to 3rd through 7th grade students. Due to generous funding from the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District, and contributions from water quality programs of our local cities (Ashland, Central Point, Grants Pass, Jacksonville, Medford, Phoenix, and Talent) and counties (Jackson and Josephine), as well as partner organizations, Salmon Watch field days were provided to 9 school districts and 2 private schools within the Rogue Basin on a no-cost basis. Overall, collaboration and partnership are key to making these kinds of awesome things happen! To learn more about Salmon Watch, visit: <https://www.stream-smart.com/our-work/programs-and-projects/rogue-basin-salmon-watch/>.

Fall 2021 Program Statistics:

- # of students served: over 1,240
- # of schools that participated: 20

- # of individual instructors that contributed: 38



