

Salmon Watch Fall 2024 and Spring 2025 Activity Report



Fall 2024 Program Summary

In the Fall of 2024, the Rogue Valley Council of Governments, working on behalf of the NPDES Phase II Stormwater Communities (Ashland, Central Point, Jackson County, Medford, Phoenix, and Talent), Rogue Valley Sewer Services (RVSS), and local water quality programs (TMDLs – including Grants Pass, Josephine County, Phoenix, Talent, and Jacksonville) partnered with the Jackson Soil and Water Conservation District (JSWCD), Bear Creek Watershed Education Partners (BCWEP), the Rogue River Watershed Council, and others to implement the Rogue Basin Salmon Watch Program. Classes were conducted primarily in September, October, and early November (week ending November 8th) of 2024. We also held a special session in December 2024 in partnership with a class from LOGOS Public Charter School who participated in the Oregon Department of Fish and Wildlife (ODFW) Eggs to Fry program and released fry as part of the Salmon module into the Rogue River. Overall, 24 field days were conducted with 24 schools and 1,198 students. Classes represented schools from the Bear Creek Valley, greater Jackson County, and Grants Pass/Josephine County.

In addition, 17 organizations, agencies, and municipalities donated their time to the program and provided in-kind match to the program. The match reduces program costs and allows us to leverage grant funding for the program. Details on the class dates, field locations, schools involved, number of students, and other information (e.g., volunteer instructors) can be found in the Table 1.

The Rogue Basin Salmon Watch Program received financial support from JSWCD, in addition to the Bear Creek DMAs and MS4s, Josephine County, and the City of Grants Pass. We continued our partnership with the Army Corps of Engineers operating under the MOU established for the program to host out of McGregor Park near Trail. In addition, we continued to work with Oregon State Parks and Jackson County to waive some fees for park use (TouVelle and Cantrall-Buckley). ODFW has also continued to provide fish for the dissection module.

In addition to the field classes, there are several other program activities that are conducted to implement the program. Activities include an instructor training held on September 5th and 6th for

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both contracted educators and volunteer instructors, recruiting schools and instructors through emails, personal contacts, and at events, advertising the program, completing before and after program surveys, providing in-school presentations, coordinating logistics for the program (schools, sites, programs, and instructors), obtaining permits for site use at state parks (TouVelle), managing contracts for instructors, providing reimbursements for program expenses (transportation, parking fees, and program equipment and supplies), maintaining and stocking kits, and other logistics.

Spring 2025 Program Summary

We held an additional 10 field days in the spring of 2024 with four classes from Talent Middle School and 10 classes from Scenic Middle School reaching 350 students. Instructors for the program included RVCOG, RVSS, BCWEP, PPRV, STPW, CP

Salmon Watch Field Day

For most classes, the format is the same in terms of timing, modules, and other logistics. There are exceptions for classes that make special arrangements (e.g., Scenic Middle School). Salmon Watch field days are scheduled for around 4 hours (time of classes on-site) at field locations spread throughout Bear Creek and the Middle Rogue Watershed. Field sites include (although not all are used every year) Cantrall-Buckley County Park, Fish Hatchery Park, Griffin Creek at Scenic Middle School, McGregor Park, Palmerton Park, Reinhart Volunteer Park, TouVelle State Recreation Site, Valley of the Rogue State Park, and numerous sites along Bear Creek (Bear Creek Park, Blue Heron Park, Cascade Christian High School, Coyote Trails Nature Center, Lynn Newbry Park, and North Mountain Park).

The “classic” four module model is used from the Salmon Watch Curriculum for the programs. Instructors are assigned stations to discuss Salmon Biology/Salmon Life Cycle (station 1), Water Quality (station 2), Macroinvertebrates (station 3), and Riparian Areas (station 4). Each station also has activities for students, including salmon viewing (when spawning), salmon dissection, water quality testing, macroinvertebrate sampling, native plant identification, drawing riparian cross-sections and longitudinal profiles, scavenger hunts, and shade surveys. Classes are divided into 4 groups and rotate through the stations at approximately 35 minutes, allowing every student to participate in each of the four stations. Examples of completed activity forms are included in Appendix A and an example schedule is presented below:

Schedule

9:30-9:50	Opening Circle (Lead Instructor)
9:55-10:30	Rotation 1
10:35-11:10	Rotation 2
11:15-11:50	Lunch
11:55-12:30	Rotation 3
12:35-1:10	Rotation 4
1:15 - 1:30	Wrap-Up and Closing Circle (Lead Instructor)

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There are a few exceptions to the field day, most notably at Scenic Middle School. Due to the size of the class, the program is structured over 8 days where one module (e.g., Salmon) is taught to all 5 of the 8th grade periods for the class. In addition, for smaller classes (30 students or less), we have adjusted the schedule to use only 3 instructors teaching the four sessions. One session (usually riparian) is either shared amongst the instructors or taught once by each instructor onsite.

Field Day Statistics

Table 1 summarizes all of the Salmon Watch classes completed in the Fall of 2024. Information on the dates, field locations, schools/districts, grade levels, number of students, and contributing partner organizations (volunteer instructors) are included in the table.

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Table 1: Fall 2024 Salmon Watch Field Trip Information

Class Number (Field Days)	Date	Location	School	Grade	Number of Students	Partners (organizations providing match instructor time)
1	9/19/2024	McGregor Park (MG)	Ruch Outdoor School	5 th /8 th	55	RR, RRWC, SOFRC, SOWT
2	9/20/2024	MG	Roosevelt Elementary	5 th	50	RVCOG, RVSS
3	9/24/2024	MG	Bellview Elementary & homeschool group	1 st – 8 th	50	RRWC, RVSS, and TCMSO
4	9/26/2024	MG	Griffin Creek Elementary	4 th	33	BCWEP, SOFRC
5	9/27/2024	MG	Talent Elementary	4th/5th	46	NMP, RVCOG, SOLC
6	9/30/2024	MG	Bellview Elementary	2 nd /5 th	80	ODFW, RVCOG
7	10/1/2024	MG	Talent Elementary & Pinehurst	2 nd – 6 th	39	RVSS
8	10/3/2024	MG	Butte Falls Charter & Helman Elementary	3 rd /5 th	54	BCWEP, MWC, RVSS
9	10/4/2024	MG	Kennedy Elementary	4 th	55	AFR, BCWEP
10	10/8/2024	TouVelle (TV)	Williams Elementary & St. Mary's School	4 th /5 th & 11 th /12 th	25	RVCOG, RVSS
11	10/10/2024	TV	Walker Elementary	4 th	43	RVCOG, RVSS
12	10/11/2024	TV	Shady Cove	2 nd /3 rd	42	MWC, SOLC, TCMSO
13	10/15/2024	TV	TRAILS Outdoor School	3 rd /4 th & 4 th /5 th	50	RVSS, SOFRC
14	10/17/2024	TV	Orchard Hill Elementary	3 rd	58	BCWEP, PPRV

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15	10/18/2024	North Mountain Park (NMP)	Ashland High School	9 th /10 th	50	RRWC, RVSS
16	10/22/2024	Reinhart Volunteer Park (RVP)	Allen Dale Elementary	5 th	75	BCWEP, RR, RVCOC, SOWT
17	10/24/2024	TV	Sams Valley Elementary	5 th	54	BCWEP, RRWC, SOFRC
18	10/25/2024	TV	Medford Montessori	1 st /2 nd /3 rd	44	MWC, ODFW, TFT
19	10/29/2024	NMP	Talent Elementary	3 rd	50	BCWEP, NMP, PPRV
20	10/30/2024	Cantrall-Buckley (CB)	Teach Northwest & Envision Homeschool Support Group	3 rd -8 th	48	RRWC, SOFRC
21	10/31/2024	NMP	Oak Grove Elementary	4 th	85	NMP, PPRV, RRC
22	11/1/2024	NMP	Griffin Creek Elementary	4 th	52	NMP, RRWC, RVCOC, RVSS
23	11/4/2024	Cascade Christian (CC)	Cascade Christian Middle School	6th-8th	60	CC, RRWC, RVCOC, RVSS
24	12/19/2024	TV	LOGOS Public Charter		30	NMP, ODFW, SOLC

Fall 2025 Classes

25	5/8/2025	Blue Heron Park	Talent Middle School (TMS)		50	RVCOC, PPRV, STPW, ODFW, Volunteer
26	5/9/2025	Blue Heron Park	Talent Middle School (TMS)		50	RVSS, PPRV, STPW, RRWC, Volunteer
27	5/19/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		125	RVCOC
28	5/19/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		125	BCWEP
29	5/20/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		*	RVCOC

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30	5/20/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		*	BCWEP
31	5/22/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		*	RVSS
32	5/22/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		*	CP
33	5/23/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		*	RVSS
34	5/23/2025	Scenic Middle School (SMS)	Scenic Middle School (SMS)		*	CP

**250 Students attended overall from the 7th Grade Science classes.*

Color Legend

MS4 or DMA
All. Regional Enrollment.
Medford
Phoenix/Talent
Central Point
Ashland
Josephine County/Grants Pass
Other Schools – Jackson County

Table 2: Key to Instructional Partners and Project Supporters

Abbreviation	Organization Name	Support Detail
AFR	Ashland Forest Resiliency	Module Instruction
BCWEP*	Bear Creek Watershed Education Partners (*Volunteers – Former Board Members)	Module Instruction
BLM	U.S. Dept. of Interior, Bureau of Land Management	Module Instruction, Training Video Production, Program Site (Provolt)
CC	Cascade Christian Middle/High School	Site Access/Facility Use, Module Instruction
CP	City of Central Point	Module Instruction
GH	Gold Hill	Module Instruction
JC	Jackson County	Site Access, Fee Waivers (Cantrall-Buckley), Module Instruction
MWC	Medford Water Commission	Module Instruction
NMP	North Mountain Park	Site Access/Facility Use, Module Instruction

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ODFW	Oregon Dept. of Fish & Wildlife	Module Instruction, Supplies, Fish Carcasses
OSP	Oregon State Parks	Fee Waivers
PPRV	Pollinator Project Rogue Valley	Module Instruction
RBP	Rogue Basin Partnership	Module Instruction
RR	City of Rogue River	Module Instruction
RRK	Rogue Riverkeeper	Module Instruction
RRWC	Rogue River Watershed Council	Module Instruction
RVCOG	Rogue Valley Council of Governments	Module Instruction, Coordination, Administration
RVSS	Rogue Valley Sewer Services	Module Instruction, Coordination
SOFRC	Southern Oregon Forest Restoration Collaborative	Module Instruction
SOLC	Southern Oregon Land Conservancy	Module Instruction
SOWT	Southern Oregon Water Technology	Module Instruction
TCMSO	The Children's Museum of Southern Oregon	Module Instruction
TFT	The Freshwater Trust	Module Instruction
USACE	Army Corps of Engineers	Site Access/Facility Use, Hand Washing Stations, Fee Waivers
USFS	U.S. Forest Service	Module Instruction

Next Steps and Recommended Program Changes

- Continue to refine the program training materials. Add a suggested “how-to” to teach each module to help with time management and transition of the stations.
- Add in hands on activities options for several of the stations for program use and for events (e.g., life cycle figurines, salmon game) for options for the instructors based on grade levels, instructor experience, and school requests/.
- Continue to host a pre-season “open house” and post season wrap-up as part of the training featuring new materials, modules, and other changes to the program.
- Review and update the survey questions annually.
- Continue to work with municipal separate storm sewer systems (MS4), designated management agencies (DMA), Jackson SWCD, Stream Smart, and other partners to continue the program.
- Work with local, regional, and statewide programs to continue to expand the program. Expansion would be additional programs offered (number), new field locations, and modules (Fire Ecology – SOFRC), Stormwater (NMP), and Cultural/Native American History (NMP).
- Continue to add programs later in the season and in the spring as time and resources allow. Timing is to allow better coordination with ODFW's in-class fish program where

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schools grow salmon from eggs and release them later in the year. We moved Scenic Middle School to the fall to accommodate the school schedule.

- Continue to expand the program by adding back in service learning programs and bringing back the Student Education Symposium if possible (phasing programs back in).
- Use survey results to refine the program teaching points as needed when data is available.
- Continue to highlight the program as an important regional Stream Smart program.
- Establish geocaches at field site locations.
- Host a family day for the program similar to the Kids and Bugs program from the mid 2000's. We are working on a program at North Mountain Park in October of 2025.

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Program Photos

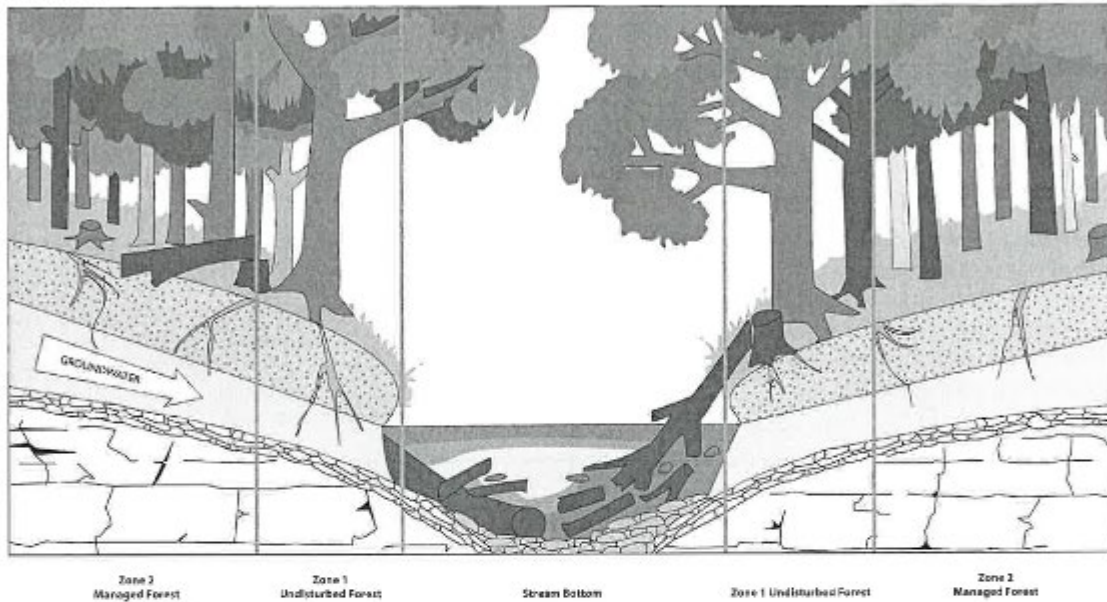


Appendix A: Data Sheet/Activity Example

RIPARIAN AREA PROFILE DATA FORM

Directions: Pick a place along the stream that you particularly like. Draw a profile (cross-section, see **Figure 2**) of this place. Include the near bank, stream, and opposite bank in your drawing. If you aren't sure how to do this, ask your adult group leader. Show the water level in your drawing. Now, draw in features of the riparian zone that you think are important to salmon.

Figure 2



Appendix B: Salmon Watch Wrap-Up for Fall 2024



Rogue Basin Salmon Watch Program Summary – Fall 2024

Another Successful Year in the Books!

In collaboration with partners and volunteers, we were able to provide 7 weeks of field trips, bringing students outdoors to learn about their local watersheds. Thanks to funding from the Jackson Soil & Water Conservation District and contributions from the water quality programs of local cities (Ashland, Central Point, Grants Pass, Jacksonville, Medford, Phoenix, and Talent) and counties (Jackson and Josephine), as well as seventeen additional partner organizations, we were able to provide no-cost field trips to students primarily in grades 3rd-8th from twenty-four different schools in the Rogue Basin. In addition, we taught mixed (1st through 5th) and AP high school classes. Collaboration and partnership make it happen!

of students served: 1,198

of schools participating: 24

of individual instructors contributing: 35

Coordinating agencies:



Thank you, Salmon Watch Partners!



And Salmon Watch Sustainers!

