



# Friends of Wilson Creek

August 25, 2008

[www.friendsofwilsoncreek.com](http://www.friendsofwilsoncreek.com)

*A neighborhood group working to restore the health of Wilson Creek*

## A Truly Fishy Story...

So, back in November, we're busy surveying Wilson Creek for our grant-sponsored project when suddenly, without warning, we see one, no two, could it be... yes, THREE large fish swimming upstream.

After our initial shock, our fisheries biologist, Kim Schaumburg, was able to identify two of them as chum salmon and the third as (possibly) a cutthroat trout all actively struggling to find a good place to spawn.

Fast forward to April when unexpectedly several salmonid fry (possibly the offspring of the November sightings) were spotted in the creek. Throughout the summer, numerous fry and parr (next stage) have been spotted in the lower and middle reaches of the watershed. When we begin our fall surveying we expect to discover the extent of fish distribution throughout the Wilson Creek system.

### "What does this mean?"

At this stage, we think it is definitely good news that a few fish can breed and live in our little stream. On the other hand,

the ongoing degradation of the watershed due to development, erosion, and storm water runoff continue to threaten the overall health of the stream and the few fish that now live there.

### "What are we doing to help the fish now?"

Besides collecting data, we've planted more than 1,700 native shrubs and trees along the stream and in the estuary to provide more slope stability and protection from the elements. We're still removing weeds in the estuary so the plantings have a good chance to take root. Tree and soil experts are evaluating ground water conditions along and above the creek.

### "What's next?"

This is what we're trying to figure out as we continue our grant activities throughout the rest of 2008. Once we have collected all the necessary data and completed our findings, we can make informed recommendations to continue improving the conditions in the watershed. These might include further studies, more tree planting, and

possible land procurement of undeveloped lands within the watershed.

To accomplish our goals, we will be applying for another grant or grants in the very near future.

### "How can Wilson Creek neighbors help?"

As residents living in or near the Wilson Creek Watershed, our participation is critical. On a daily basis, we MUST continue, or begin, to: reduce our use of pesticides and fertilizers, preserve and/or plant native shrubs and trees along unstable hillsides and in riparian (creek side) areas, keep culverts clear of debris, keep toxics out of the stream, and make sure our septic systems are working well.

If we all work together, we can enjoy the many benefits that living near a healthy flowing stream can bring. Keep up the good work!

### Here's the agenda.

**8:00** - We're going to meet again at Dan and Joyce's house at the mouth of the creek for coffee, hot chocolate, cider or orange juice and breakfast munchies.

**8:30** - We'll head to the estuary to clean up after the summer growing spurt. Those blackberries in the estuary have been growing back with a vengeance! But we're bigger and smarter. We will conquer! A spade shovel may work for a lot of the growth. Just shove the spade into the ground with your foot to cut the growth off at the base. Pruners and loppers are good tools to bring too. The trees and shrubs we planted in the spring have done well, but we've had a few casualties, so we also have more trees and shrubs to plant.

**11:00** - we'll start the barbecue. So when you find yourself suddenly craving a burger, come wash up and join the party. There will be beef, turkey and veggie burgers, and plenty of accompaniments. After lunch, **Beach/Stream walk and field trip!**

*Check the website to download directions  
Don't forget your gloves, and be sure and dress in layers*

*See you there!*

## Next Work Party

**Saturday, Sept. 20 - 8:30-11:30**  
Barbeque  
& Field Trip follows!

## In This Mailing...

Well, summer's over, the kids are headed back to school and we're all going back to our routines. We hope you'll continue to make healthy choices part of your routine. The folks at Kitsap County Public Works have given us some literature to pass on to you that have some great tips. The brochure talk about how to maintain a healthy lawn AND a healthy environment: dealing with pests in a safer way.

Pesticides and Herbicides are a major cause of damage to the environment, not to mention our own health and the health of our pets! The third piece of literature is an Environmental Guessing game. AND DON'T PRETEND YOU'RE TOO MATURE FOR A LITTLE GAME NOW AND THEN. This one is certainly a blast from everyone's childhood past, and it actually has some really good facts and tips. Have fun!