



City Manager's Weekly Update

September 2, 2011

Dear Mayor, Councilmembers, Residents, and Employees:

Holiday Closure

City facilities will be closed on Monday, September 5, for Labor Day.

**CALLING ALL
VOLUNTEERS!**

Volunteers Needed

King County's Miller/Walker Creek Basin Steward is Seeking Volunteers to survey the creeks for salmon. Please see the attachment for more information.

Civil Service Commission

The City of SeaTac has an immediate vacancy for a Civil Service Commissioner. The SeaTac Civil Service Commission ensures that hiring and promotions are fair and competitive and that all personnel rules are fairly administered for City Fire Personnel. The SeaTac Civil Service Commission is composed of three commissioners who are appointed by the City Manager. Commissioners serve a four year term. The Civil Service Commission meets on the second Monday of each month at 3:30 PM at SeaTac City Hall. If you are interested in serving on the Civil Service Commission, please contact the City Clerk's Office at 973.4660.

Attachments:

King County's Miller/Walker Creek Basin Steward Seeking Volunteers

You can view the City's Event Calendar at:

<http://www.ci.seatac.wa.us/index.aspx?page=16>

Todd Cutts, City Manager

King County's Miller/Walker Creek Basin Steward Seeking Volunteers: Sign up for Community Salmon Investigation for Highline (a.k.a. CSI: Highline)

Volunteers Needed

In 2010, 20 volunteers each surveyed the creeks for salmon each week. This year, team members will have the option of surveying every week or every other week. This means we need between 10-20 new volunteers in 2011! Please sign up by September 20, 2011.

Information for New and Potential Volunteers – Be part of Miller/Walker Creek Stewardship

How many adult salmon return to Miller and Walker Creeks in Burien, Normandy Park, and SeaTac each year? The fact is we have only a general idea, but [last year we learned a lot](#). In addition, we need to know how many of these fish are stricken by [pre-spawn mortality](#) each year, and thus how many are surviving long enough to lay the eggs of the next generation.

A better understanding of the numbers of fish returning to the streams and the extent of pre-spawn mortality is one of the top recommendations the community identified as part of coordinated monitoring of the streams (see the [2009 monitoring coordination recommendations](#)). Adult salmon in our streams are the Pacific Northwest equivalent of the “canary in the coal mine” – they reflect the health of our lands and water. Knowing adult salmon numbers and what’s happening to them once they enter the stream will serve as “vital signs” for our streams. By being part of our **Community Salmon Investigation** team, you can help us learn more about this community resource.

To accurately monitor adult fish returns and fish health, we need your help! Volunteers are needed to collect data on adult salmon that will return to Miller and Walker Creeks from mid-October to late December.

Beginning in mid-October and continuing until late December, we need volunteers to visit Miller and Walker Creeks daily at several locations to look for fish. We need enough volunteers to staff every day of the week because only a sustained, daily (or close to daily) survey will provide us the accurate information we need to understand stream health.

This is an exciting and unusual opportunity to see parts of your community that are normally inaccessible. You will get closer to one of the iconic animals of America – the Pacific salmon. You will be part of an important community effort to better understand how well we’re doing taking care of our lands and waters. And, of course, you’ll get to cut open dead salmon bodies like the CSI teams you watch on TV!

Volunteer Expectations

As a volunteer, here is what to expect:

- You need to commit to volunteering either one day per week or one day every other week for the 2.5 month period from mid-October to late December. (If you can’t volunteer consistently

but would be willing to fill in for a regular team member, please let me know and we'll see if we can include you that way.)

- Two-person teams will be responsible for data collection on one day each week (e.g., every Tuesday). Ideally each team will have three or four people, so each person only needs to go out every other week, and there are enough volunteers to fill in on days when one team-member cannot go out.
- Volunteers should assume spending three or four hours on their day. If we have enough volunteers, we will make the stream reaches shorter and have multiple teams each day.
- You will work only during daylight hours, which will, of course, become more limited as the season progresses. People who work five weekdays will want to volunteer for Saturday or Sunday surveys. Those with flexible schedules will be encouraged to do weekdays.
- You need to be able to walk up stream channels/banks that are rocky and wet/covered in running water. You may need to climb over and under downed trees and push through or go under brush. Overall distance walked each daily survey will be about one mile (only a portion will be in the stream).
- You will need to go out rain or shine but you will not monitor when the stream is running high to keep you safe (plus it's hard to see fish in high, turbid water).
- There are three sites to be inspected on Miller Creek and two sites on Walker Creek – four sites are in Normandy Park and one site is in Burien because all adult salmon migrate first through the lower part of the creek before spawning (or, sadly, dying before they can spawn). Short drives will be needed for you to reach all the survey sites.
- You will work in pairs for safety and to maximize data quality.
- You will need to follow the access requirements of the private and public landowners who are graciously providing us access to the streams.
- You will count and record information on living fish
- You will take measurements of each dead fish. This will involve handling and cutting open carcasses. Gloves will be provided. You will record information on adipose fin presence (indicating whether the fish came from a hatchery), sex, percent egg retention, spawning status, and if possible, coded wire tag scans (another sign a fish came from a hatchery).
- You will need to provide your own rain gear and footwear. In most cases, we expect you will need to use hip waders but knee-high rubber boots may suffice depending on your height and stream conditions. My rubber hip waders – which have survived many years of rough service already – cost less than \$40, so buying a pair is not a big investment.
- You will be given sampling collection kits and recording documents.
- You will be trained or paired up with a trained volunteer who will teach you what to do.

Training

This community is fortunate to have some citizens who love the fish and work together to restore the streams. People so motivated will be offered more intensive training in late September. (However, everyone is invited to attend.) This self-selected “core group” will provide the “lead” team member. These leads will in turn train the other team member(s). Consequently, lack of previous experience should not be an obstacle to successful data collection.

New and returning volunteers, especially team leaders, are encouraged to attend the training:

When: Wednesday, September 28, 2011, 4:00-6:00 pm

Where: Normandy Park

What: New survey locations, fish identification and measuring techniques, staying safe, scheduling.

Willing to Mentor a High School Senior?

I am looking for one generous volunteer to offer to mentor a senior high school student for their culminating senior project. Are you willing to have a high school student participate on your team? Help them determine another way to use what they learn, such as give a talk at a neighborhood meeting, or a class, or write an article, or ??? **Please let me know right away – we are recruiting high school seniors soon.**

Sign Up and Questions

- Would you like to survey every week? Or every other week?
- What days of the week are you available? (If you can manage weekdays that will be especially helpful.)
- Will you attend the training on September 28 from 4-6pm?

To sign up or if you have any questions about whether this volunteer activity is right for you, please contact me at elissa.ostergaard@kingcounty.gov or 206-296-1909.