



TIGHTLINES



Former county road crew workers, and current OFF members, Joe Conner, Don Corwin, Dick Simmons, Mike Truax and Norm Primc take a break on the banks of Willow Creek. Not pictured: Jim Hagy who was supervising Jim Gauntt who was in charge of taking this picture.

Eglon: "Year's Worst outing?"

That's what Dan Reynolds calls it. "I could not have picked a worse day for the weather," he said. The wind was blowing about a steady 30 knots right into the beach. casting was tough, if not impossible. It also doesn't help to have two and three foot waves hitting you in the chest. "No fish were landed but there were a lot of fish in the area. Jeff Bandy broke off a nice fish. Ken Martin missed a good one, Norm Primc said Ken was looking the wrong way when the fish hit. And a couple of other guys hooked up." The good news? More than ten members showed up.

August Calendar

8/13: SPECIAL EVENT! Our regular meeting will be the annual club picnic. For the third year in a row, Gene Anthony will be manning his backyard grill and serving up some great food. Dinner is on the club. We'll also have a raffle and, **FOR THE FIRST TIME EVER**, a swap meet. Bring up to six items you'd like to swap or sell. If you can bring a folding table that would be great too. (See Page 4 for directions to Gene's place.)

8/27: Business meeting at Alf's.

9/10: General meeting, Dave McCoy, of Emerald Anglers, will share some of the wisdom he's gained from many years of pursuing sea run cutthroat along the beaches of Puget Sound. Dave knows his stuff. You'll enjoy this one.

10/8: General meeting, noted author, guide, fly tyer, and photographer Mike Lawson will discuss nymph fishing from top to bottom. Invite your friends!

Will coho come back to Willow Creek? Stay tuned.

Several OFF members joined the Laebugten Salmon Chapter of Edmonds recently to help with restoration efforts along Willow Creek just below the Willow Creek Fish Hatchery.

Willow Creek is like a lot of creeks along the West Coast and Puget Sound. It once had a small, but healthy run of Coho that came back to Brown's Bay, through the Edmonds wetlands marsh and up stream to spawn. But over the years Willow fell prey to "progress" and indifference.

According to Hatchery Manager Walt Thompson,, the last "normal" run petered out about 15 years ago and the last time a Coho made it up as far as the Willow Creek Hatchery was probably five years ago.

It's always been a struggle for the fish in recent years because of
See WILLOW Page 2



Now that's one BIG brown! See who landed it on Page 3.



WILLOW Cont.

culvert problems and a high tide gate

the city has installed to control flooding in the wetlands during the winter.

"The fish need rain and a good high tide in November to make it across the wetlands and into the lower part of the creek," says Walt. "But that same combination can also create flooding in some of the Harbor Square area. And has," he adds.

But the final nail in the coffin for Willow Creek coho was the lengthening of the culvert that runs from the marsh then under Marina Park and into the bay. When hydraulic problems in the original culvert created a sink hole in Marina Park the city decided to extend the culvert farther into the bay, well below the low tide line and, unfortunately, too deep for the fish to enter.



Jim Gauntt clears brush.

Despite Willow Creeks problems, the Laebugten Chapter is closely involved in salmon enhancement. Since 1979, the group has sponsored a coho net pen under the Edmonds fishing pier where they raise up to 40,000 coho annually. And at the hatchery, built in 1985, they raise about 100,000 salmon each year from eggs provided by WDFW. Those salmon are released into Scriber Creek, Swamp Creek, North Creek, Boeing Creek and the Lake Washington watershed.

But hope for Willow Creek springs eternal. This summer, Chevron began excavating contaminated sediment from the 450 feet of the creek that runs along the northern border of its former tank farm. When the work is completed this October the area will be replanted with native vegetation. "If we can get Willow creek designated as a "daylight" stream the entire creek will be opened up and we will definitely have a good chance at restoring a regular run of coho." said Walt.

Meanwhile, on Saturday July 26th, up below the hatchery, members of the Laebugten Chapter, with the help of seven volunteers from OFF, a half dozen young college guys, bobcat loader and backhoe operators from Pentec Environmental and a couple of biologists were all doing their share to help by restoring portions of the creek channel that had been washed out during recent storms.

It was a beautiful morning and down in the woods alongside the creek you barely heard the ferry traffic roaring by on Edmonds Way less than a hundred feet away. Much of the work was hard and over the weekend an impressive amount of it was accomplished.

"It came together pretty good," said Walt. "I had my doubts at first. But we did okay. We may actually see some coho in this stream again. Someday."





The Fly Fishing Life



His first morning on Montana's Big Hole River Jim Hagy handed Guide Eric Thorson his old brown glass 7 WT Fenwick rod with its Pflueger Medalist reel. With typical Montana guidelike "tude," Thorson looked at it, snorted, rolled his eyes, and replaced Jim's 4X leader with 2X.

Imagine Eric's surprise when shortly thereafter Jim hooked and landed the largest Brown the guides had ever seen taken from the Big Hole. Apparently, equipment isn't everything. As Jim describes it:

"I was fishing a golden stone nymph and thought I had hooked bottom until he came out of the water. We just could not believe what it was.

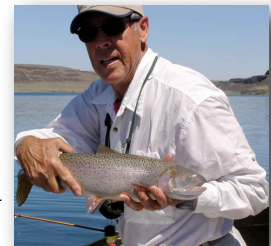
"The river was running high so there was no place to go to the beach for about a mile. I managed to keep him away from the weeds along the bank for about 30/40 minutes until we found a place the anchor would hold and we could get out and net him near the bank. That old Fenwick was bent in half the whole time. This all drew some onlookers, of course.

"I must say the other browns and rainbows I caught seemed like "shakers," mostly 14/19 inches. AND, my fishing partner son, who usually **claims** to have caught or lost the biggest on all our trips, was silenced."



Kiss and smell. Ken Martin shares an intimate moment on Davis Lake, Oregon with his new "best friend" Mr. Bass. —Norm Primc Photo

Ed Note: Last month Keith Stamm and some friends spent a week fishing in Canada and he's written a nice story about their adventures. You can read it by going to the OFF web site and clicking on the LINKS page. Here's an excerpt about a conversation he had with a Canadian fisherman at Dairy Lake:



Keith at Grimes with a nice Lahontan cutt.

".....At some point Keith said something like, "Some people in the states are so upset with the political situation they think they might like it better in Canada."

Over hearing this conversation was an old guy fishing on the other side of the Canadian. He's catching a few fish and not saying a word. That is, not until Keith asks the Canadian how he can tell when his fly is on the bottom fishing without a bobber. Then the old guy interrupts very loudly:

"Don't tell him. Let him figure it out for himself." The Canadian tells Keith anyway, and it's not anything Keith didn't *See KEITH on next page*



The OFF Beat

KEITH cont.

already know. You clip your angler's forceps to your fly and lower the line down till the forceps hits bottom. That's your depth. Keith also knew that it's a good idea to bring the line back up and take the forceps off the fly before dropping the fly back down.

Anyway, the old guy continues to hook fish and there's a lot of splashing and commotion over by his boat. Keith decides to needle him a little to get back and says to the Canadian. "I don't suppose he's going to tell us what fly he's using."

Of course, the old guy hears this and answers so everyone on the lake, including Herb and Pat, can hear, "Anybody who's not happy to be an American, I wouldn't tell him a damn thing." The Canadian took that as his cue to paddle to another part of the lake.

OFF WEIGHS IN ON SNOQUALMIE PLAN.

Ed Note: Earlier this year we had a WDFW presentation on its plan to study the Snoqualmie River watershed. It's Funded by PSE rate payer at more than \$600K. Larry Pinnt contacted the PSE biologist involved to the plan who agreed to provide us with a preliminary draft for our comments. We have received that draft and Conservation Chair Mike Truax has sent a reply. His complete

comments can be found on our website: www.olympicflyfish.com click on LINKS. Here are some excerpts from Mike's response:

.....The plan proposes an investigation to obtain estimates of fish density, relative abundance, growth, population age structure and mortality, species composition and distribution. However, the agency cites no benchmark data or reference stream(s) that it intends to use to compare the results of its investigation. How will PSE know that after paying for the acquisition of this information that the Snoqualmie River is not at or near its natural carrying capacity for indigenous trout?

.....The Snoqualmie is a well-studied river basin. I was surprised to see that a public document, the Snoqualmie River Watershed Analysis was not referenced in the literature review. This was the initial detailed watershed assessment required by state rules governing forest practices on state and private land.....It addresses a myriad of topics including fisheries, water quality, hydrology, landslide prone areas, roads, timber harvesting, etc. on a substantial portion of the plan area.

..... the WDFW's stated mission to provide maximum recreation fishing opportunities... For the most part, trout under consideration by this plan are residents and do not move up or down streams very far. Given the topography, landform and vegetative density it is likely that nearly all recreation fishing opportunities will occur in close proximity to publicly accessible roads and trails. If the agency's mission indeed is to maximize fishing opportunities, perhaps emphasis should be placed on evaluating fisheries in locations where fishing is permitted, accessible or potentially available through access agreements with landowners. Investigating fish

trends in remote locations which have little connection to recreation fishing opportunities may be a poor allocation of scarce financial and human resources. You may find the most effective game fish enhancement plan is one identifying opportunities and strategies for improving public access for fishermen.

—See you on the water, DS



General Information

The General meeting is held on the 2nd Wednesday of each month at the South County Senior Center, 220 Railroad Ave., Edmonds, WA. Social hour: 6:00 p.m.

The Business meeting is held on the 4th Wednesday of each month at Alf's 4820 196th SW, Lynnwood, WA. Dinner at 6:30 p.m.

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