



Grovers Creek Salmon Hatchery

The Suquamish Tribe's Grovers Creek Salmon Hatchery sits nestled among forest preserves where Grovers Creek empties into Miller Bay. This hatchery is a key component of the Suquamish Tribe's Salmon Enhancement program, which provides salmon for Tribal fisheries in two important ways: restoring naturally spawning chum and coho populations, and supplying hatchery chinook without impacting threatened or weak wild salmon stocks.

The Suquamish Tribe designed and built the Grovers Creek Hatchery, which was completed in the early 1980's. The large stream at the mouth of Grovers Creek allowed for larger-scale hatchery operations than near-by former Cowling Creek Hatchery. Though Grovers began primarily as a coho and steelhead hatchery, the hatchery now releases about 500 thousand Chinook and 250 thousand chum salmon into the wild each year. Quality is valued over quantity in all Grovers Creek Hatchery operations, as raising fewer higher quality fish is better for salmon survival. In a process that is repeated many times over, small batches of salmon eggs are fertilized by multiple mature salmon. This helps ensure a healthy genetic variation among each new generation of fish. The eggs are raised in low density, and young fish are released at night when they're ready to leave the safety of the hatchery. They will remain at sea for several years before returning to the site of their release. About two thousand Chinook will return to Grovers each year throughout September and October, and approximately fifteen hundred Chum return to the hatchery during the later fall months.