



WSU EXTENSION
Jefferson County

WATER & NATURAL RESOURCES 2022

BY THE NUMBERS

- 2—place-based volunteer trainings
- 10—enrichment in-the-field events (9 Bridget Gregg organized + 1 Beach Naturalist event at Salt Creek)
- 46 – new volunteers trained: 28 Beach Naturalists and 18 Stream Stewards
- 459 hours – service hours reported by volunteers trained through WSU Extension to improve local ecosystems through education, stewardship, and community science
- 2 – meetings to foster partnerships with volunteer leads/staff from 13 environmental stewardship organizations working with community volunteers across the North Olympic Peninsula
- 3 virtual trainings
- 164—new subscribers to the monthly North Olympic Peninsula Volunteer Opportunities newsletter
- 11 classroom and 8 field experiences for 3 middle schools in the region led by the North Olympic Salmon Coalition through grant funding provided by WSU Extension
- 3 Rural Stormwater Virtual Workshops



ISSUE

Jefferson County is located on the Olympic Peninsula and is bounded by the Pacific Ocean to the west and Hood Canal to the east. Most of the County's population—nearly 96%—resides in East Jefferson County, where WSU Extension is located and serves the community. East Jefferson County has an abundance of natural resources, including 950 stream and river miles, 317 lakes, 45 recreational shellfish beaches, and over 200 miles of shoreline that border the Strait of Juan de Fuca, Admiralty Inlet and Hood Canal. This region is also characterized by its vast forest lands that provide important ecosystem services such as water storage and filtration. Although many waterbodies in this predominantly rural county are relatively undisturbed, impacts from human activities and development are a growing concern. Non-point source pollution, generally resulting from stormwater runoff, is the leading cause of water quality issues. Freshwater harmful algal blooms are an ongoing problem. Climate change poses additional water quality concerns, with the Pacific Northwest experiencing drier summers, reductions in snowpack and glacial mass, higher spring and lower summer river flows, and a more acidic ocean. Addressing threats to water quality and adapting to climate change impacts at the local level hinges upon the broader community becoming well-informed of the issues and actively engaged in stewarding our water and natural resources.

RESPONSE

WSU Jefferson County Extension provides environmental education training programs, public events, and resources for those interested in stewardship of our streams, rivers, lakes, wetlands, estuaries and marine waters. With a three-pronged approach, WSU Jefferson tackling local water and natural resource issues:

1. We teach people to value and protect our natural resources through public events and training programs led by staff and local experts.

The purpose of the Water and Natural Resources Program is to cultivate an environmental stewardship ethic in East Jefferson County community members through offering science-based education and engagement opportunities.

2. We train people to be volunteer educators and stewards, to share knowledge and inspire a stewardship ethic in others.

3. Through partnerships with local governments and organizations, we connect community volunteers with environmental stewardship opportunities across the North Olympic Peninsula.



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QUOTES

“ This class is just wonderful and has really inspired me and made me fall in love with my new home here in the PNW.”

“I feel so much more informed about these beaches I walk daily and feel more able to share some really important and interesting information about our area”

“The Dungeness River trip and WA noxious weed pamphlet inspired us to permanently retire our butterfly bush. Thanks to the Stream Stewards class!”

“This program definitely enlightened me - and I thought I knew a lot.”

PARTNERS

City of Port Townsend Parks, Clallam County Conservation District, Clallam County Marine Resources Committee, Clallam County Streamkeepers, Dungeness River Nature Center, Feiro Marine Life Center, Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe, Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee, Jefferson County Conservation District, Jefferson Land Trust, Local 20/20, North Olympic Salmon Coalition, Northwest Straits Initiative, Port Townsend Marine Science Center, Strait ERN LIO, US Fish & Wildlife Service, Washington Sea Grant, WA Department of Ecology, WA Department of Natural Resources, WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, WA Native Plant Society, and more.

IMPACTS

In 2022, the Water and Natural Resources Program trained 46 new Clallam and Jefferson volunteers through the Stream Stewards and Beach Naturalists programs. Presentation topics varied based on each training. Examples of these included:

Stream Stewards- Watershed systems and hydrology, salmon identification and life cycles, stormwater management

Beach Naturalists- Salish Sea oceanography, intertidal invertebrates, community science opportunities (Crab Team, SoundToxins, etc.)

Volunteers trained through WSU Jefferson County Extension reported **459 hours of service** to improve local ecosystems through education, stewardship, and community science. In 2022, a few examples of how alumni volunteered to make a difference include:

Stewardship: spread clean shell at Discovery Bay to support Olympia oyster habitat enhancement efforts, installed and maintained rain gardens with the Jefferson County Marine Resources Committee, pulled weeds with the Clallam County Noxious Weeds program

Community science: surveyed salmon with the North Olympic Salmon Coalition and WA Department of Fish and Wildlife, monitored crab traps with the WA Sea Grant Green Crab Team, documented backyard weather observations through CoCoRaHS, monitored water quality with PTMSC and DOH using mussel cages

Public and self-education: guided public members on beach explorations, learned how to assess forest and stream health through the WSU Jefferson Extension enrichment series, attended Orca Recovery speaker events through the Clallam County Conservation District



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