

What's up at ARMS?



Alouette River Management Society

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Upcoming Events

April 22 – Earth Day

April 24-26 – Aboriginal Days

May 4-6 – Home Show Fun Zone

May 4-6 – Interpretation Canada Spring Conference at Manning Park

May 8 – World Walk Day Health Walk at Allco Park and Rivers Heritage Centre

Summer Eco-Camps

July 16-20 – Wildlife Week

July 30-31 – Outdoor Adventure Camp

August 15-17 – Bugs and Slugs Camp

Contact Parks and Leisure to register: 604-467-7322 or 604-465-2452 or www.mapleridge.org

Spring Showers Bring Damage

It may appear to some that ARMS has been sitting quietly at Allco Park, enjoying the sights and sounds of the Alouette River. Nothing could be farther from the truth. During the March 10-11 rain event, BC Hydro was required to start spilling water from the reservoir when it reach the 124.5 level, which added to volume of water flowing down the Alouette. While it was touch and go for a while, the river itself did not reach top of bank as the rain subsided.

After this rain event, it was evident just how much damage the rain had caused in the upper reaches of the river. The BC Hydro access

road to the Alouette Dam was washed out in three places. The siltation ponds at Mud Creek blew out (picture below) and the contained siltation entered the river. We have managed to temporarily manipulate the flow of Mud Creek away from the river. A plan to re-construct the siltation ponds will be developed and the work will take place during the fisheries window this summer.

The road to the Bell Corr site past the dam also suffered major damage. ARMS director Mike Ilaender has dedicated his off hours to rebuild this road with limited funds available. It will be necessary in the near future to build a new bridge at

one site along this road.

The North Alouette River also saw high flows in March. A number of properties were flooded and some yards were washed out. ARMS is working with the District of Maple Ridge to come up with a plan to ensure the residents along the river are kept safe from future flooding events.



Environmental Education

ARMS education programs are in full swing this spring. We are busy with classroom programs, Watershed Education Tours, outreach projects, and the Junior Naturalist Club

This season's popular in-class presentations are Creepy Crawlies and Water Wise. The students are excited by the aquatic invertebrates in the classroom and the water pollution demonstration. We have also had four bird feeder construction sessions which are a huge hit with students.

We have had a number of Watershed Education Tours, where students come to the Rivers Heritage Centre and

the Allco Fish Hatchery for a hatchery tour, nature walk, and insect study. Unfortunately due to the high river flows in March, the students did not get to see the aquatic invertebrates, but they were just as excited to hunt for terrestrial insects. We are looking forward to releasing salmon in May and June with school groups that come to the Centre.

Spring is also the season for stream restoration projects. In April and May, ARMS technicians will be working with Alouette Elementary, Fairview Elementary, Glenwood Elementary, and Pitt Meadows Elementary to clean up riparian areas in Maple Ridge

and Pitt Meadows. The students are energetic and enthusiastic to plant native vegetation, remove invasive species, and pick up garbage to enhance our local stream habitat.

The Junior Naturalists Club meets once a month to explore our natural environment. Each month a new theme is presented. In January our naturalist learned all about trees and enjoyed a forest ecology walk. In February bugs were the topic. We made bug pooters and went on a bug hunt. In March it was all about slimy slugs. Unfortunately we did not find a slug on our scavenger hunt! Our next meeting is on April 21.

Pesticide Community Awareness

ARMS is currently planning the Alouette River Pesticide Community Awareness Project. It will run from May 2007 to June 2008.

Along the North and South Alouette River lies rich agricultural land which has seen an increase in berry production over recent years. The increase in agricultural activities and pesticide discharge near and along the Alouette River has sparked public concern.

The project will have two phases, sediment testing and community education/awareness. Phase one involves obtaining sediment samples along the South Alouette River and its largest tributary, the North Alouette River.

These tests will give ARMS a baseline indication of the health of the river, and also help determine what type of effect local agricultural practices are having within the Alouette watershed.

We would like to thank The Pacific Salmon Foundation for funds of \$5875.00 and Westminster Savings for funds of \$2500.00. In addition, In Kind support has been received from the District of Maple Ridge, City of Pitt Meadows, and the Ministry of Environment.

ERA Community Ecosystem Restoration Initiative (CERI)

ARMS nursery has been expanded to allow for 140,000 trees that will be planted in the riparian areas Maple Ridge. This project will remove the invasive species and some of the older alder trees to allow for the planting of native conifers.

BC Hydro's Fish and Wildlife Restoration Program**Kokanee Migration**

Last spring, Katzie First Nation, the lead proponents on this project in partnership with LGL Limited and ARMS, were successful in their application for funding to BCRP to allow the spillway gate on the Alouette dam was to be opened on April 16 for "sockanee" kokanee/and steelhead smolts to emerge. The low level outlet was closed to coincide with the spillway opening, which means the same volume of water in the South Alouette River will remain the same. The river rotary fish trap was installed at Mud Creek 1.5 Km downstream from the dam the same day.

Trethewey Spawning Channel

ARMS applied and was originally turned down by BCRP in 2004 to construct a spawning channel on the south Alouette River at 216th, in partnership with Coniagas Ranch, Katzie First Nation and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Last fall, ARMS resubmitted the application and which was successful. This spawning channel will allow for approximately 600 metres of new habitat for coho.

We take this opportunity to thank BC Hydro and the BCRP for their support in

these projects and will update the progress in our next newsletter. We look forward to working with our partners on this project.

**Spring Break Eco-Camp Success!**

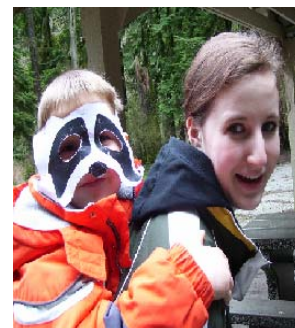
ARMS completed a successful Spring-Eco Camp at Rivers Heritage Centre and Allco Fish Hatchery. This was the sixth year the camp has run and attendance was high each day despite the rain!

The Eco-Camp was hands-on and was designed for children eager to explore the natural world. Each day had a different theme including: Web of Life, Coon Country, Wet Wednesday, Owls and Rodents, and Fishy Friday. Participants created a wide variety of crafts like magnets,

kites, rock owls, and painted wooden fish. Activities and games consisted of insect collection and identification, owl and rodent jeopardy, predator-prey tag, scavenger hunts, a tour of the Allco Fish Hatchery, and much more.

Our Spring Break Eco-Camp would not be possible without the extra hands provided by the student volunteers from Garibaldi and Maple Ridge Secondary Schools. Their

help was invaluable. We thank them for their time, hard work, and good attitude!



Eco-camp participant and volunteer in Allco Park

Water Use Planning

Last year, BC Hydro, ARMS, Katzie First Nation and representatives from multiple agencies attended hours of meetings to review the 1996 Water Use Plan on the Alouette Reservoir and River. Discussions surrounded fish, wildlife, and recreation in the Alouette Watershed. A leading draft agreement was reached in March 2006 by the Consultative Committee (CC). In summary, there will be no change to the quantity

of water released from the Alouette Reservoir into the river. A suggested increase in Reservoir elevations during the spring and summer months has been recommended by the CC. A number of monitoring programs were agreed to by the CC, with some minor changes to the (juvenile) migration monitoring program being proposed. These monitoring programs will see approximately

\$200,000 per annum (\$1.6 million in total) over eight years. This is a big increase from the \$50,000 per year under the original 1996 Water Use Plan. We have recently been advised by BC Hydro that the final report will be forwarded to the Water Comptroller's office in Victoria soon for approval. The Alouette Water Use Plan will come up for review again in 2014 to coincide with the Stave Water Use Plan Review.