



# In the Flow

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<https://www.clallamcountywa.gov/901/Streamkeepers>

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## Happy New Year, Streamkeepers and Friends!

Streamkeepers volunteers were involved in quite a variety of project in 2023. Thanks so much to the 30 intrepid volunteers who were essential to our work in the last year! Here's an update with photos. **But before we get to that, we need volunteers for winter quarterly monitoring! If you are available, please email your available dates for the rest of January and the first week of February.** Okay, now on to the update:

### Quarterly Monitoring

We did quarterly monitoring on ten creeks in Clallam County, from Salt Creek on the west to McDonald Creek on the east. We measure stream flow, dissolved oxygen, water temperature, pH, and turbidity. These are all important factors influencing suitability of a stream as salmon and trout habitat. We also document wildlife observations including birds and animal tracks, and in summer, we do noxious weed surveys.

Here's Don Taylor and George Stratton measuring water quality in McDonald Creek,



And Dan Lieberman and Adar Feller measuring stream flow in Tumwater Creek...



And a racoon track by Tumwater Creek.



### **Stormwater monitoring in Port Angeles creeks**

We monitor bacterial pollution and other water quality parameters in Port Angeles creeks as well as stormwater inputs to the creeks, under a contract with the City of Port Angeles. If we find elevated pollution, it provides the basis for further investigation by the City to identify and correct pollution problems.

In this photo, Joanie Beldin is using a multiparameter meter to measure water quality in Peabody Creek, while Coleman Byrnes collects a sample.



And this is stormwater flowing into Peabody Creek under Peabody Street. Who wants to collect a sample?



### **The Pollution Investigation and Correction project**

This is a collaborative effort of Streamkeepers, Clallam County Environmental Health, the Jamestown S’Klallam Tribe, and Clallam Conservation District. We also coordinate with Washington State Dept. of Health. The focus of the project is to reduce bacterial pollution coming from freshwater streams into Dungeness Bay and Sequim Bay, so that shellfish beds can stay open for harvest in the bays. If bacteria levels get too high, shellfish beds must be closed. The Streamkeepers PIC Team monitors water quality

and collects samples to be analyzed for bacterial pollution in creeks draining to Sequim Bay and Dungeness Bay. When a polluted creek is identified, Environmental Health and Jamestown S'Klallam staff investigate further to identify the sources of pollution, and then Environmental Health and Clallam Conservation District offer assistance to landowners to correct pollution problems.

Here's PIC Team member Linda Sumner collecting a sample from the Dungeness River.



### **Dungeness Off-Channel Reservoir Project Ditch Monitoring**

Plans are in the works for an off-channel reservoir by the Dungeness River to collect water from the river during high flows in winter, and release water through the irrigation ditch system during the dry season. This will help both the farmers and the salmon that need the water in the river during summer and fall. Streamkeepers is monitoring water quality in the ditch system in support of this project, and we are currently working with the Public Works Dept. and Anchor QEA on a plan to monitor an expanded suite of parameters including metals and hydrocarbons.

Here's Ted Oldenburg collecting a sample in the Highland Irrigation Ditch near the spot where the future reservoir will discharge to the ditch system.



### **Lower Dungeness River Floodplain Restoration Project**

This project has involved removing a section of levee by the Dungeness River and building a new section of levee further away from the river, to allow for an expanded floodplain. This collaborative project of Clallam County and the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe restored more than 175 acres of the river's historic floodplain to provide habitat for fish and wildlife, and improved flood protection to boot. At this point, the bulk of the work is completed, except for building a road surface on top of the levee. Streamkeepers monitors water quality in support of this project, and is monitoring changes in the floodplain following its completion. New side channels have formed, and a majority of the river's flow is now through the restored floodplain. It is exciting to watch for new changes with each winter flood.

Here's Alan Brackney operating an Acoustic Doppler Current Profiler (ADCP) to measure flow in the new Schoolhouse Channel,



And here's Howard Carlseen and Paul Rogers collecting a benthic invertebrate sample in the Dungeness River for comparison to a new side channel in the restored floodplain.



Okay, last but not least, a shout-out to the wonderful volunteers that keep Streamkeepers going from behind the scenes. Here's Donna Spence and Jane Hutton, our detail-oriented, dependable, and cheerful data entry team!



And Bob Fitton and Ron Sidwell, so essential in working with the Clallam County Water Resources Database. A project is currently underway to move this database from Access to SQL format, which will make it more stable, secure, and accessible.



Okay, that's all the news.

**Again, if you can participate in winter quarterly monitoring, please email your available dates for the rest of January and the first week of February. We are going to try and get it all done in January, but just in case, ...**

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**Best Wishes for a great 2024!**

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