

City of Bellingham Habitat News



Improve Fish and Wildlife Habitat for Earth Day



The City of Bellingham [Parks Volunteer Program](#) and [Public Works Natural Resources Division](#) are hosting their annual Earth Day work party on **Saturday, April 20 from 9 a.m. to 12:30 p.m. in Fairhaven Park.** Join us as we remove invasive plants and apply mulch to improve habitat and water

quality in Padden Creek.

[Padden Creek](#) provides habitat for a number of fish species, including chum, coho, Chinook and kokanee salmon in addition to steelhead and sea-run cutthroat trout. The City's Public Works Natural Resources Division and Parks Department have been working for many years in Fairhaven Park to restore native vegetation along Padden Creek. Volunteers at the 2019 Earth Day work party will contribute to this restoration work by removing invasive plants, which compete directly with native plants for moisture, sunlight, nutrients and space.

No RSVP or experience is required for this free, family-friendly event that is open to the public. Tools, gloves, instructions and refreshments – including pizza donated by Papa John's – will be provided. Volunteers need only bring weather-appropriate clothing, closed-toe shoes and a water bottle.



The event is located at Fairhaven Park, [107 Chuckanut Drive North](#). Several Whatcom Transportation Authority (WTA) bus routes stop near Fairhaven Park. The park is also accessible by bike. Find your bus route using WTA's [online trip planner](#) or your bike route by visiting www.cob.org/bike. Parking is available in the three parking lots within Fairhaven Park. Sign in will be located at the tents near the playground.

For more information about this event, please contact the Parks Volunteer Program at pkvolunteers@cob.org or 360-778-7105, or you can visit www.cob.org/workparties.

Spring: An Exciting Season for Salmonids



Spring is here! For salmonids, spring is an important time of year. It is the time when young salmon, called "smolts", begin their journey from their home stream or river to the ocean, making a stop in the estuary to gradually adjust to life in saltwater. As smolts

prepare for the saltwater, their bodies go through many changes and begin to turn silver.

The City's Public Works Natural Resources Division occasionally uses smolt traps in Bellingham streams during the spring season to monitor out-migrating

smolts. A smolt trap is a standard tool used to quantify how many fish are moving through a water system. Smolt traps are not used in Bellingham streams every year – the [most recent trap](#) was installed in Padden Creek in spring 2018. To learn more about how smolt traps work, check out this short educational [video](#) that the City created.

Squalicum Creek Re-route Project Wins a Second National Award!



The City's [Squalicum Creek Re-route](#) Phases 1 and 2 project won a second national award, the [2018 PISCES award](#) from the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA), in recognition of the water quality benefits associated with it. It was the only project to receive this award in Washington State. In 2016, the project

also received the American Public Works Association's (APWA) Public Works [Environment Project of the Year Award](#). This project re-routed nearly a mile of Squalicum Creek around Sunset Pond into a newly created channel and removed a fish passage barrier that opened over 22 miles of upstream salmon habitat. Construction of Phases 3 and 4 of the project is planned for 2020. These phases will address water quality and habitat issues associated with Bug Lake and the reach immediately downstream of Bug Lake.

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