

Future Forests STORYBOARD [Esrm 101 Au20]

Group Number: 17

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Introduction

We salmon are a keystone species of the northwest. Our great migration to the ocean and back to rivers brings nutrients to the forests, rivers, and lakes.

Our carcasses feed fish, birds, trees, and micro organisms alike as they decompose in the river after spawning.

Native Americans had Salmon chiefs who ensured we are not overfished. The natives let the rivers flow freely without obstruction and tended to forests, making them old and healthy.

We used to be an abundant resource in the Pacific Northwest before the colonization of Western North America.

Change

But when the early settlers arrived, they rerouted the rivers so we lost our ways. They killed off the beavers whose dams created our habitats.

Then the settlers began to fish us mercilessly. Our population has decreased to a fraction of its original size.

Now overfishing, polluted waters, and destruction of our breeding habitats threaten our once thriving populations.

Seattle

As the Seattle metropolitan area expanded, river control structures were put in place to control the flow of the Cedar River. These came in the form of the Landsburg Dam and levees along the river.

Hitting my head against the dam wasn't fun, and not all of us could figure out how to use the fish "ladder" that was built to help us pass.

The levees kept the river from flooding over its banks and removed many of the small outlets of slow moving water that we need as smelt to grow before making the journey to the ocean. Small smelt that get swept away can't survive in Lake Washington.

Trees on the banks were also removed for land development. This led to less log jams for us to shelter in. The deforested forest soil could not retain water. The streams now dry in the summer and overflow when it rains. We can't depend on them.

Rehabilitation

Overfishing, polluted waters, and lack of habitat threaten our once thriving populations. But it isn't too late for us!

Salmon conservation and habitat restoration have been on the agenda for local and state lawmakers for years as communities learn the essential role we play as a keystone species in the Puget Sound ecosystems.

Levee removal projects in the Cedar river have successfully freed the river to occupy the historic floodplain in certain areas once again. Log jams of dead trees have formed on the river in these floodplains creating excellent habitat for our smelt to grow before making the dangerous journey to the ocean.

Future forests will help our species recover. We in turn will help the forest revive by bringing nutrients back to land and feeding the wildlife.