

ABSTRACT: A STEP Ahead

The Warrenton High School Fisheries Program began in the late 1950's with the idea of students rearing salmon as a means to educate students of what reigned supreme in the community culture--salmon. Starting as the aquaculture club rearing salmon in buckets, it eventually grew to have a raceway, then a 1,000 sq. foot structure--all built with community guidance of the students. Educating students at every opportunity has always been the credo of the program, whether it be how to use a saw or how to calibrate 6 parameter dataloggers--every capital project constructed during a school year had student involvement and education in it. With the economic pictures of coastal communities darkening and lack of upkeep, the fish hatchery deteriorated to the point where the school shut the program down in 2003.

A sophomore armed with a new and very supportive principal and an activated community restarted the program in 2004. Community distrust of the school district resulted in the formation of Warrenton High Fisheries, Incorporated--aka WarHF. Under WarHF's leadership and collaboration with the community, a new rearing and research facility was built to house the newly revived program. With the program's longevity ensured, a new, broader mission statement was crafted and relationships were forged with NOAA, tribes, local governments, and other organizations like REDD Zone to further expand the learning possibilities of Warrenton students.

Despite the new facility the oldest problem still haunted the program--waterborne pathogens and particulates that clogged screens and incubators. Through consultation with REDD Zone, the concept of a sustainable system utilizing currently existing infrastructure to use cleaner water was drawn up. The object was to avoid using Skipanon water at all costs--to do that a new water source had to be adapted with the ability to recycle 100% of the water at times. Well and rain water sources were

developed and utilized and the plan was approved. The result was 100% filtration utilizing 10 micron sand filtration, UV sterilization and oxygen supplementation to provide high quality water for salmonid rearing. Grant funds from ODFW Restoration and Enhancement and a follow up STAC mini-grant were obtained to assist in funding the filtration and collection systems on the hatchery and gymnasium roofs.

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