

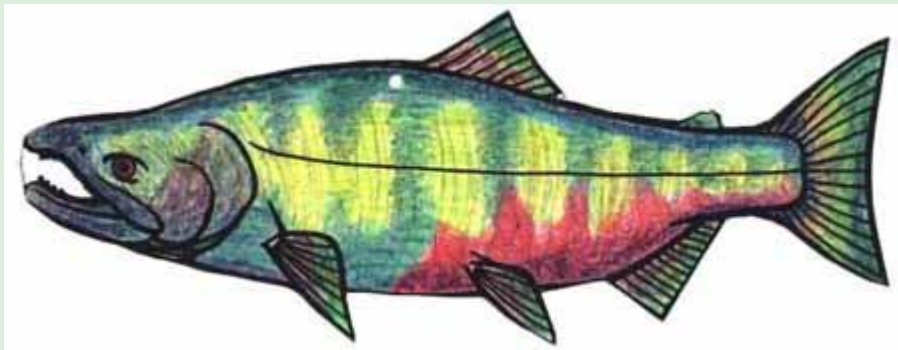
# Water Legacy

## Heritage for the Future

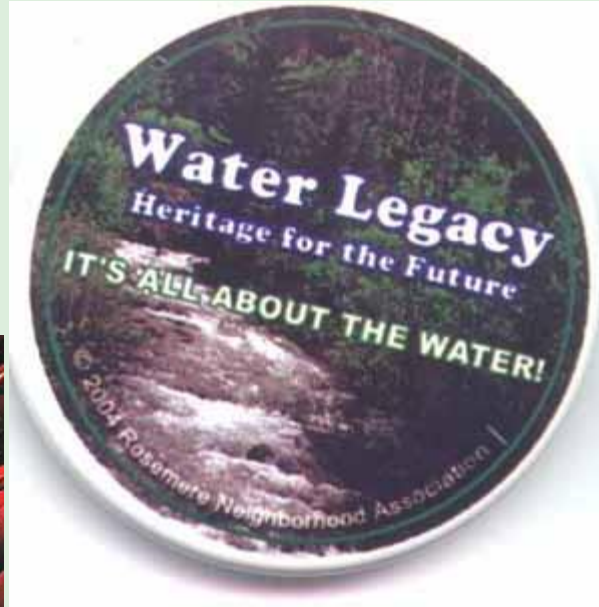
*"The Word 'ecology' derives from the Greek **oikos**, meaning 'household' or 'place to live.' Ecology is about our homes, our neighborhoods. We believe that the struggle to develop communities that are models for human dignity is the essential struggle of human history." -- Robert F. Kennedy, Jr.*



On May 14, 2004, the Rosemere Neighborhood Association hosted and sponsored a community town hall event at the Hazel Dell Grange to draw attention to water quality and environmental concerns in Vancouver and Clark County. The room was lavishly decorated with live trees, planters, sculptures and flowers donated by Leslie Zega Floral Design and Pollock & Sons Nursery. The RNA also created festive banners, party lanterns, and patriotic posters. Hand-made images of endangered fish from Burnt Bridge Creek, Vancouver Lake and the Columbia River were hung in mobiles from the ceiling -- brightly colored Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, Chum Salmon, Steelhead Salmon and Cutthroat Trout.



Chum Salmon, Endangered



The RNA offered bottled water with its own "Water Legacy" label, official "Water Legacy" buttons that show a cascading stream in a lush green forest behind the motto "It's All About the Water!" A fine spread of refreshments was provided for our guests. This well-attended event was videorecorded by RNA staff for broadcast on Fort Vancouver Public Access Television.



Guests listen to the lively music and visit the many information tables provided by various organizations.

Information tables were provided by:

Addy Labs, Clark County Conservation District, Clark County Clean Water Commission, Clark County Trout Unlimited, Environmental Protection Agency, Fort Vancouver Tapestry Project, Friends of Trees, Rosemere Neighborhood Association, Sierra Club, Watershed Stewards, and Washington Conservation Voters. Many tables offered educational materials, booklets, brochures, and study materials for the attendees.



Patricia Giles (RNA Board Member and Watershed Steward) makes the official "Water Legacy" buttons using a special machine at one of the information tables.

The town hall meeting was designed as a community fair with information and education tables about water quality, environmental concerns, and community projects. Guests enjoyed the live music from sensational musical groups -- The River Bottom Band, Jane Keefer and Mary Rose, and the Puddletown Ramblers. It was a special evening of guitar strumming, banjo picking, high stepping, folk singing and Bluegrass fun! All of the musical groups donated their time and talent for the cause of water quality.



The fabulous Bluegrass sounds of the Puddletown Ramblers. Some serious hoofing, and twirling took place on the dance floor.



Steve Kiern (a Supervisor with the Clark County Conservation District) and Jim Comrada (a Habitat Biologist with the Sierra Club) chat about water quality while Jane Keefer and Mary Rose perform fabulous folk songs on stage.



The mellow harmonies of the River Bottom Band opened the evening's entertainment.

Midway through the evening several noteworthy speakers delivered important messages to the assembly. As emcee, Dvija Michael Bertish, Chairman of the Rosemere Neighborhood Association, introduced the RNA officers and board members to enthusiastic applause. The RNA board worked diligently for several weeks to design and organize the evening's event. The RNA plans to hold several more of these Water Legacy meetings to help spearhead positive environmental change and to help improve water quality throughout the community.

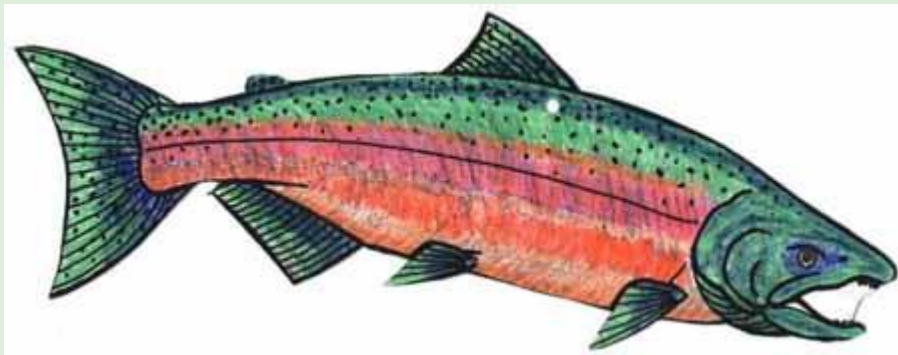


*Where the rest of the country's groundwater movement is measured in feet per year, the groundwater movement in Clark County is measured in feet per day. Thus, plumes of contamination can, and do, move quickly through our groundwater, which is the source of our community's drinking water.*

The emcee introduced honored speakers for the evening, Thom McConathy of the Clark County Natural Resource Council, and Carl Addy of Addy Labs. Both Thom and Carl have devoted at least 25 years of service to help address water pollution in Vancouver and Clark County. Thom McConathy detailed the geologic history of our community's groundwater, noting that we are now pumping our drinking water from sources deep underground that only recharge once in tens of thousands of years. Carl Addy of Addy Labs discussed the dangers of e.coli from failed septic tanks, and how human waste contributes to the degradation of Burnt Bridge Creek.



Thom McConathy of the Clark County Natural Resource Council addresses the audience on our community's geologic history.



Coho Salmon, Endangered

Other organizations also addressed the gathering. Nick Forrest from the Sierra Club remarked about the importance of preserving and planting trees in watersheds to help protect the waterways. Sherry Mowatt introduced the Vancouver Tapestry Project, a 108' long hand-made tapestry that tells a pictorial history of Vancouver on the shores of the mighty Columbia River. Don Steinke of the Clean Water Commission explained that many urban creeks like Salmon Creek, Burnt Bridge Creek and Cougar Creek all suffer from similar contaminant problems, including septic waste and pesticides. Steve Kiern from the Clark County Conservation District explained the workings of the District as a state governmental entity, and he commended the attendees for their interest in water quality and the environment. Heather Melton of the Washington Conservation Voters talked about an environmental performance scorecard evaluation for politicians who are running for office this year. John Felton and James Neigel, RNA Board Members who also serve as Tree and Watershed Stewards, announced community steward volunteer opportunities, classes, and projects. Mr. Neigel described a recent tree planting event in Rosemere, Carter Park and

Shumway this spring where 80 trees were planted in one day, the largest volunteer effort in west Vancouver sponsored by Friends of Trees.



*Always remember...our rivers, streams, creeks and lakes -- all belong to us, the citizens of the Public Trust. It is our right to demand clean water, to protect our water, and to enjoy full access to our waterways.*



Sherry Mowatt with the Vancouver Tapestry Project displays sections of the 108' hand-made tapestry that is being created by fabric artists to portray the diverse history of Vancouver. The upper panel shows Lewis and Clark along the Columbia River, The Prune Queen with a crown of prunes from the Prune Festival in the 1940's, and a scene from the county fair.



Art Stubbs (Clark County Clean Water Commission),  
Craig Pridemore (Clark County Commissioner), and  
Ed Bennett (Citizen Volunteer, [www.sensibilist.com](http://www.sensibilist.com))  
ham it up for the camera.



Steffanie Kercheval (EPA Seattle), Yvonne Vallette (EPA Portland)  
and Steve Willie (US Fish and Wildlife Dept) at the EPA's  
information table. The EPA donated brochures, booklets and  
studies to help build the RNA's water quality document library.





Carl Addy (Addy Labs) and Randy Phillips (Clark County Health Dept). Addy Labs provided a specialized viewing machine that indicates the presence of e.coli in water samples. Blister packs containing samples of water from Burnt Bridge Creek glowed a neon aqua color, which indicated e.coli contamination in the samples.

This Water Legacy town hall meeting was a great success, and the RNA received many compliments for the sponsorship and design of this community event. In closing, the emcee explained that blue has always been his favorite color, the color of a pristine sky reflected in our rivers, lakes and streams. Mr. Bertish closed by saying that it was time to paint the world blue and help save the water in our community.



*"It's vanity to say we are protecting nature for the sake of the planet. Nature will survive without us. But what will we be without nature?" -- Seneca Chief Oren Lyons*