



Mt. Baker-Snoqualmie  
National Forest

# Forest FEATURES



## CELEBRATE: River Restoration, Return of Salmon



*Greenwater community members look at the spawning pink salmon in the river.*

**I**t was a clear warm fall day and the pink salmon crowded the Greenwater River, glinting and splashing as they made their way upstream to spawn. About 40 people gathered to tour the Greenwater Floodplain Restoration Project to see how natural processes are being restored to create and enhance habitat for federally listed salmon, bull trout and other species. Most were associated with the project: South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, Puyallup and Muckleshoot Tribes, community of Greenwater, contractors, cooperators and funders.

Snoqualmie District Ranger Jim Franzel made opening statements and representatives from partnering organization South Puget Sound Salmon Enhancement Group, along with those from several key funding organizations, spoke a few words. After the formalities that included unveiling a beautifully routed wood location sign, fish biologist Karen Chang struck out along the riverbank leading attendees who were astonished at the use of the large log jams and at how numerous the salmon were so soon after finishing the project, which took 15 years to complete.



*Engineered logjams in the river create spawning areas for returning salmon.*

A legacy of timber harvest altered the Greenwater River between the late 1950s and 1960s when most of the trees were removed from the valley to the banks of the river. This practice stripped the river of instream wood, removed the forest structure from the floodplain and subsequently increased channel incision, stream velocities and river bed scour.



*The Greenwater community helps dedicate the restoration project.*

Workers built 13 large engineered log jams to create pools and reactivate side channels where fish can feed, rest and hide from predators. Removing 4,500 feet of road consisting of 60,000 cubic yards of rock and fill material will allow high flows to use the floodplain and help stabilize the channel, while creating and maintaining spawning and rearing habitats for fish. The project will help attain what could have taken a century for the system to stabilize, which was funded by multiple sources to the tune of over \$1.9 million.

*Story and photos by Renee Bodine  
October 2011*