**FANNY BAY SALMONID ENHANCEMENT SOCIETY (FBSES)**

**June 2018**

By Dave Sands

Does it seem like it only just stopped raining? It didn’t rain Sunday May 6th, and that’s when 623 people came to the FBSES Berray Road hatchery site for our 12th Annual River Never Sleeps Festival. That 623 included 505 members of the public, which included lots of Fanny Bayites, 36 members of FBSES and 82 other volunteer types from all over the island. Fanny Bay’s Volunteer fire fighters even came twice, once first thing Sunday morning to attend a power transformer fire on Berray Road, and then later to set up their own display. FBSES was happy to see them both times, but especially after they reopened Berray to all our River Never Sleeps traffic.

Other numbers are adding up this year: even though that rain just stopped and there’s still snow on the hills, some creeks are dropping fast. Ron Mielke and Tom Hutton have started fish salvage on McNaughton Creek, and our first salvage tank contains the 36 coho smolts and seven fry they found in a cut-off pool under the E&N trestle. Fry salvage as it’s practised at FBSES is a major contributor to the health of all our streams and the survival of wild salmon.

Some relevant numbers from years past; in the years 1997 to 2014 FBSES volunteers salvaged, which is to say captured, contained, transported, (usually by buckets with air bubblers and by walking a lot of the way) counted into our holding tanks, fed and cared for, and then when the rains returned in November, returned said fish to their same stream homes. For a total of 412,649. Or an average of 22,925 a year although actual numbers—they are all counted, remember—varied from 8,305 in 1997 to 52,312 in 2001, to 9,860 in 2007, to 56,737 in 2014. One reason for the variations is that every year is somewhat different weather wise, especially in the time the hot weather starts and the streams start to disappear into their gravel beds. The other is that salvage is labour intensive, and needs time and people. Since fry salvage in our creeks is one of those things that belongs in the list of most fun you can have with your clothes on, we really wonder why more people don’t want to help. If you’d like to stay dressed and have fun, we have a bucket for you.

More with the numbers: since 2008, Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society volunteers have logged 80,200 hours of time on the job. And a lot of time is worked and not logged, especially by our executive members.

And we can't talk about numbers around FBSES without a mention of our favourite numbers person, Brenda Fisher, who was our outstanding treasurer, money person and go-to for everything financial around the hatchery. Our loss is minor compared to that of her family and husband Bryan, and many Fanny Bay residents will remember her from the Union Bay Credit Union, but we will all miss our compatriot and co-worker, and friend. Celebration of Life for Brenda Fisher will be held at Dove Creek Hall, 3400 Burns Rd. Courtenay, June 2 from 12:30 to 3:30.

Our website is FBSES.CA and work parties are Wednesday and Saturday mornings with all welcome to visit, tour, join, donate; our opportunities are numberless!