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

**May 2018**

By Dave Sands

Normally, the Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society, as a group, is pretty cool about rain. It is after all, water, which is good for fish, streams, trees, as well as all the usual things, like puddles, ducks and flowers. But not on the first Sunday in May, because that’s our “River Never Sleeps” open house day at Rosewall Creek on Berray Road.

For the eleventh year we will transform the hatchery site into a tent city of exhibits from groups around the island who, like us, work for the good of the environment, its creatures and its habitats. Rain or shine.

We will also have everything else you can expect when your neighbors put on a show; well, almost everything, depending on your neighbors. We will have hot dogs and hamburgers and oysters and music, face painting and educational brochures, and a nice sunny day. Promise.

Unique things like fish printing happen at the River Never Sleeps day. You get a fish print by bringing a little person to the tent where nice people help them slather their choice of colours over a real, genuine coho or chum carcass from this year’s spawning run and then lay a large piece of white paper over top of it and press down everywhere. The result is a fish shaped rainbow extravaganza suitable for framing, and every grandparent should have one.

One of River Never Sleeps days’ most popular events is our coho smolt release by ice cream bucket brigade of pre-schoolers, school agers and parents, guardians, grandparents and volunteer bucket listers who carry their fresh-dipped silver fish from our hatchery tank to the shores of Rosewall Creek, where they are unobtrusively safely helped to pour it into its new home after Mom takes a picture. What this kind of fish release lacks in efficiency, it makes up for in charm. There is also an efficient mass coho smolt release.

Another kid-focussed attraction who goes non-stop all day is Registered Biologist Dave Clough, whose enthusiasm for bugs and other crawly things that come out of streams, complete with hands-on experience for every juvenile fascinated by the idea that there are living things under every rock, is one more of the unique, but fun, learning experiences River Never Sleeps day offers.

It will last from 10 a.m. to 3 p.m., the family-friendly concession sometimes runs out early, parking is along Berray Road, there will be interesting things to do and people to talk to, and it will be sunny.

You can check out last year’s event at our website, www. fbses.ca but there’s nothing like being there.