“Like a fish out of water” is a common enough expression: we use it to mean something lacking an essential environment or situation. Lacking water is something we at Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society don’t want for our fish. Beside a natural obsession with the supply of water that runs through our tanks and raceways at the hatchery, we also have some real concerns about other things to do with water, specifically its quality and quantity in our area. FBSES has 22 creeks between Hart/Washer and Deep Bay in its mandate.

Water quality monitoring consists of testing and recording water temperature, dissolved oxygen, specific conductivity and turbidity at a specific site on a regular basis for years and years, and uploading the results to a website. Water quality changes reflect watershed changes. FBSES members Jens Johansen, Bessie Britt and Lorie Williamson do sampling in Rosewall, Cook and Deep Bay creeks and send their reports to the Regional District of Nanaimo DWWP website, *www.rdn.bc.ca/dms/documents/drinking-water-and-watershed-protection/community-watershed-monitoring*/ where it becomes available to all. Why the reports on two Fanny Bay creeks go to the RDN is all about nature; they are part of the Big Qualicum Watershed area, which overlaps the Comox Valley Regional District boundary.

Aquifer and groundwater is also tracked all over BC by a network of observation wells which have their own website; *www2. Gov.bc.ca/content/environment/air-land-water/water/groundwater-wells/aquifers/groundwater-observation-well-network.*

There is also the quantity of water in our streams, often either too much or too little, but there is a big range in between. Some of that distance is measured by Bob and Mary Anne Foster, two FBSES members who go out into three of our favourite creeks and see how much is there. The Fosters do stream flow measurements, technically called discharge. The numbers they gather go to produce a hydrograph that tells us how much and how fast the stream is. It involves using a fun piece of gear called a Swoffer Water Velocimeter. And you thought FBSES volunteers just fed fish. The underwater part of the velocimeter is equipped with a cute little propeller that drives a sensor that sends a signal to a laptop attached to it by a cable. All of this is done at multiple locations on a line crossing the stream from bank to bank, which is why it is only done in the low water season because we don’t want to lose Bob and Mary Anne. Rosewall and Cook and Wilfred creeks can get high and fast in winter months.

Living out of sight deep in the wells and the creeks are leveloggers, sturdy little electronic data gizmos hourly measuring stream temperatures and water heights and storing it away for months until they’re plugged into a laptop to download all their secrets, which then get combined with all the other data from the same stream. All of that data goes to Ministry of Forests Lands and Natural Resources which posts it on the website [*https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/water-science-data/water-data-tools/real-time-water-data-reporting*](https://www2.gov.bc.ca/gov/content/environment/air-land-water/water/water-science-data/water-data-tools/real-time-water-data-reporting)*.*

In addition we regularly monitor other creeks and their associated watersheds in collaboration with Island Timberlands, DFO and Dave Clough, our intrepid professional biologist.

There will be more, and more detail, soon on our website, www. fbses.ca and you’re always welcome Wednesday and Saturday mornings at the hatchery at 8425 Berray Road, Fanny Bay.