

Summary of 2010 VIU student activities helping out with the Nile Creek Enhancement Society:

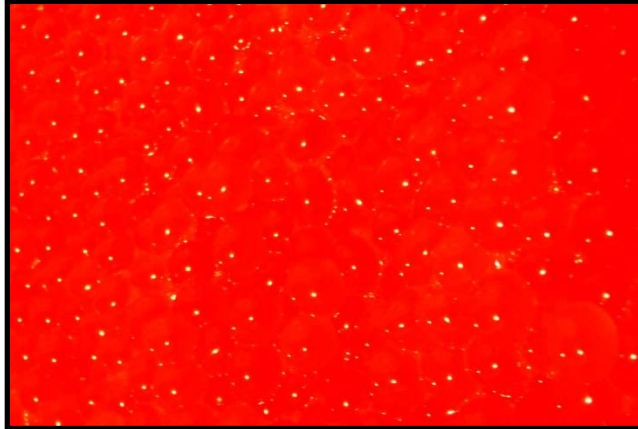
I would like to update you on the recent activities of the VIU students who are volunteering with the Nile Creek Enhancement Society. Since September 2010, Kayla Mohns, Brydon Peace and Ben Trerise (recipient of the Mid-Island Castaways Scholarship) from the VIU Fisheries and Aquaculture program have been working with the Nile Creek Enhancement Society.



Recently, the main focus has been monitoring flow gauges on the local streams. So far, flow gauge stations have been established on Thames Creek, Nile Creek, Nash Creek, Annie Creek, and Black Brook Creek. We are especially interested in seasonal maximum and minimum flows, as well as minimum and maximum water temperatures. This information will establish important baseline data for water levels in these streams, and in the long term will allow us help out our local fish.



With all our efforts, the pinks are of course a top priority and we assisted in spawning pinks at the Quinsam hatchery this fall. From that spawning, about one million eggs are now incubating at the Nile Creek hatchery.



We have also been focusing on the local cutthroat trout by sampling sea run cutthroat trout populations by fly fishing at the Nile Creek estuary and the Englishman River estuary. Results for the cutthroat trout project have not yet been finalized but they appear to show a sustainable stock with good numbers.



To help document the happenings around Nile Creek, we have also been taking weekly photographs at select locations. A time-laps series of photos at the two spill-ways at the mouth of Nash Creek will show the changes at these locations as the seasons progress. We are also documenting the effects of recent work to control flows at the large culvert under highway 19A on Thames Creek.



We have also been recording the presence or absence of spawning chum salmon in the lower reaches of the local streams. Plans are in the works for conducting a fish population assessment of coho and cutthroat trout, and also to help re-establish kelp beds off Bowser.

