

Fish Use of Stream Drainage Basins in the City of Bellevue

April 2009

Background and Data Sources

Current knowledge of the species of fish in Bellevue's streams and their distribution is based on stream typing work conducted in the summer of 2001 (The Watershed Company 2001) that involved assessing culverts as to whether fish could pass upstream and electrofishing; an electrofishing survey conducted at five sites in the Kelsey Creek basin in 2007 (City of Bellevue, unpublished data) and fish moved prior to sediment removal from two sediment ponds along Coal Creek (The Watershed Company 2007a); salmon spawning surveys conducted annually during the fall between 2001 and 2008 (Taylor Associates 2002; The Watershed Company 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007b, 2009); and peamouth surveys and spawning observations conducted by Bellevue staff and volunteers between the late 1990s and 2008 (City of Bellevue, unpublished data). Lake Washington shore use by warm water fish was documented by Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife in June of 2005 (Personal Communication, Chad Jackson, July 18, 2007). Fish use of the lake shore along Lake Sammamish has not been documented by the City of Bellevue.

Richards Creek Basin

Richards Creek (08-0261) is a southern tributary to Kelsey Creek, and access from Lake Washington is via Mercer Slough. Adult Chinook, coho and sockeye salmon have been observed to SE 30th St., and chinook, sockeye, coho and cutthroat spawning have been documented (The Watershed Company 2009). Sculpin, lamprey and stickleback have also been observed in Richards Creek.

The headwater segment of Richards Creek flows through a ditch at Loehmann's Plaza along Factoria Boulevard. Electrofishing here in 2001 located several cutthroat trout, each greater than six inches in length, as well as a juvenile coho salmon. Within the channel, pool formation was minimal due to a lack of woody debris or other significant in-stream structures. The stream was deeper than two feet at many places and it flowed steadily. The isolated tributary to Richards Creek, accessed via trail at SE 20th Street, was incapable of supporting fish activity. This small channel lacked any pools greater than two inches deep. There were also numerous natural fish barriers, most notably a six-foot waterfall at the trail's lower bridge, located near the 13500 block. During the survey, a second stream flowing into this tributary, which does not appear on the City's maps, was found and sampled. Hydrology was also a limiting factor in this stream. No fish were discovered in either channel.

See Bellevue's Basin Fact Sheet main web page for additional fish use information for Bellevue streams.

References Cited

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- Williams, R. W., R. M. Laramie, and J. J. Ames. 1975. A Catalog of Washington Streams and Salmon Utilization. Washington Department of Fisheries, Olympia, Washington