

# COQUITLAM RiverWatch

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NEWSLETTER

NUMBER 169

## COQUITLAM RIVER WATERSHED ROUNDTABLE MEETING

On Saturday November 3, the Coquitlam River Watershed (CRW) Roundtable will host a public information meeting from 9:30 am - 2:30 pm (doors open at 9:00 am). Highlights of the meeting will be view the new Web site with virtual tours, hear about Roundtable initiatives such as the Watershed Cafés, learn about new funding for a watershed plan and share your ideas, and meet the new Roundtable Coordinator. The location of the meeting is The Outlet (Work Room), 2253 Leigh Square, Port Coquitlam. There is no fee to attend, but pre-registration is requested. Contact Dave Peterson (meeting coordinator) Email: [dave@devonknight.com](mailto:dave@devonknight.com) Tel: 604-677-2759. For more information about the Roundtable, visit the CRW website at [www.coquitlamriverwatershed.ca](http://www.coquitlamriverwatershed.ca)

World Rivers Day celebrated its 8<sup>th</sup> anniversary and BC Rivers Day celebrated its 32<sup>nd</sup> anniversary. It all started in 1980 by Mark Angelo and friends doing a clean up on the Thompson River and is now in over 60 countries worldwide. Our group participated in the event at Lions Park by having a display and talking to people about the importance of the Coquitlam River Watershed.

## SALMON COME HOME FESTIVAL

On Sunday October 21<sup>st</sup>, the Hoy/Scott Watershed Society and the City of Coquitlam will be hosting the festival from 11 am to 3 pm at the Hoy Creek hatchery. Free parking is available at Douglas College, City Hall and Pinetree Community Centre. For further information please call 604-927-6536 or check the website at [www.hsws.ca](http://www.hsws.ca)

## HYDE CREEK SALMON FESTIVAL

The Hyde Creek Watershed Society, in partnership with the City of Port Coquitlam, hosts their Annual Hyde Creek Salmon Festival. The festival this year will take place on November 18<sup>th</sup> from 11am to 3pm at the Hyde Creek Recreation Centre and the Hyde Creek Education Centre. Join in on celebrating the salmon as they return to their spawning grounds. There will be activities for all ages, including

nature walks, education displays, hatchery information, sampling demonstrations, site tours, kids' activities and a first-hand look at the salmon in the creek.



Clockwise from top left  
Coq. River in E-9 by Mallee  
New channel in W-1 by Ian  
Garbage in W-6 by Murray  
Fire pit in W-1 by Ian



# SEPTEMBER RiverWatcher's REPORTS

Ian (W-1) Sept. 30

Heavy equipment has been in the River just north of the Al Grist Memorial Hatchery. Some of the River flow has been diverted to flow close to the west bank (hatchery side). The River has been flowing in this channel when the levels are normal, but not when the River gets low. Someone left a box of beer cans and garbage in the fire pit at the party beach. The River was clear and at a low level. Slade Creek was clear and was flowing very low. I only saw a raven and chickadees.

Gord (W-2) Sept. 29

This walk covered from Overland Creek to Upper Coquitlam River Park. I was on an invasive plant patrol in waders from the river netted 1008 stems of Japanese knotweed and 392 stems of Policeman's Helmet all from the banks, while passing over approx 300 Policeman's Helmet stems & 300 knotweed stems in the Archery braid. The vast majority of stems were pulled in areas not previously treated (since 2005, that is). One stem was growing out of a root chunk caught in a logjam, the chunk connected to a dead stem, apparently tossed into the river in the past month. The flow was beautifully clear and substrate particles defined without significant silt coating. Undercut banks readily visible throughout, promising excellent rearing potential but is also a possible indicator of spawning substrate scouring from the higher flow regime (release from the dam since 2008/9). There was a light silt release from Partridge Creek early am to 11:00am. I saw 9 adult chum with 3 pairs on redds (a nest made of gravel in which salmon spawners lay their eggs) at the tail of diving board pool. I also saw a raven, toad, and a tree frog.

Ian (W-2) Sept. 30

A dog was off leash and tearing around the UCRP side channels. The River was clear and at a low level above and below the gravel operations. The water level at the Galette gauge was .560 metres. Falacea (Fulawka) Creek (#4) was clear & only a trickle. Mantle Creek (#6) was clear and low flowing. Partridge Creek was clear and low flowing. Marquart Creek was almost clear and flowing well. Goodyear Creek (#11) was clear and low flowing. Wildlife included American Dipper, Raven, crows, chickadees, Northern Flicker, and fry in UCRP side channel. When I first saw the American Dipper it was doing its usual knee bends, but when it flew to a different log it stopped doing the bouncing for a few minutes. I had never seen this before.

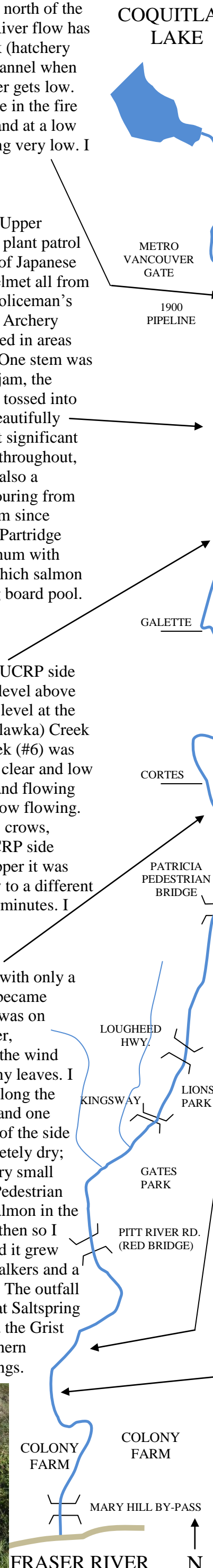
Jeff (W-4) Sept. 21

The river was clear and very low all month with only a slight rise on September 10 when the river became slightly cloudy. This month's official walk was on Friday September 21, the last day of summer, starting at 6:15PM under cloudy skies with the wind high in the cottonwoods bringing down many leaves. I headed south seeing fry and water striders along the river's edge, a few people on the east bank and one dog in the river. The rocky area at the head of the side channel downstream of Dunkirk was completely dry; the side channel was only being fed by a very small trickle. I had a hard look from the Patricia Pedestrian Bridge wondering if there might be some salmon in the river but saw none. Streetlights were on by then so I returned along the trail as daylight faded and it grew dark among the trees. Three cyclists, two walkers and a skateboarder were all that I saw on the trail. The outfall at Dunkirk was completely dry, the outfall at Saltspring had a moderate flow, Maple Creek well and the Grist Creek pipe were running well. I saw a Northern Flicker and heard many unidentified birdsongs.

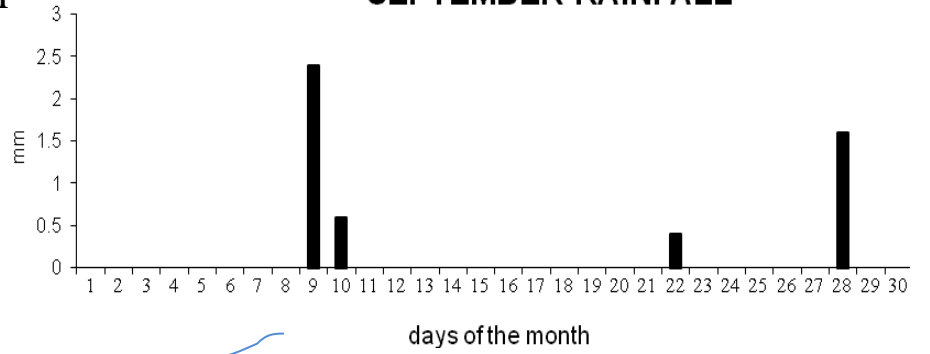


Dried channel in E-9 by Mallee

## COQUITLAM LAKE



## SEPTEMBER RAINFALL



Murray (E-3 north) Sept. 8

Nice morning for a walk. My wife was with me and commented how pretty the Oxbow Side Channel looked running through the heavily treed riparian area. Needless to say worth protecting. I only collected about ¼ bag of garbage including a few doggie bags. Garbage included a kid's floater and a metal cylinder, which appears to have been thrown out by a house in the subdivision that borders the PoCo Trail near the David cul de sac. The River was clear but low. I suspect BC Hydro is still controlling the depth, as it could be a lot lower without any rain for the past month and half. The Oxbow Side Channel looked good and they've done a good job of installing a wood and wire fence along portions of the channel, presumably to protect migrating fish from unleashed dogs and owners not appreciating the need to protect the stream and the fish.

Murray (E-3 south) Sept. 29

Fairly quiet despite a lovely early afternoon along the River. The Reach was very clean considering it has been over a month since I was along here. Picked up about a ¼ bag of garbage. The River was clear and at a normal level. Considering we have had very little rain for the last two month the River looked pretty good and we need it to be at reasonable heights as the chum will be coming into the river in the next week or so. We can thank BC Hydro for maintaining the water level in the River. It has become increasingly evident that there are fewer and fewer decent holes for the spawning fish to rest in. While we've been fortunate that BC Hydro has kept the River with a reasonable amount of water, it's disappointing that there has been little action taken by groups formed over the past 15 years to protect and enhance the condition of the River.

Charlene (E-8) Sept. 29

Undoubtedly, some of the salmon seen on E-8 were the same as those seen on W-8. Many were making the trek upstream. The area at the bend of the river, near the new tidal gates, seemed to be a playground. Many of the salmon seemed to pause there to swim feverishly in circles, breaking the surface. The old pump house has been completely dismantled and most of the materials have been removed. Out with the old and in with the new. The respective diverting pipe was also removed and the area has been filled in with rocks and sand. The River was very low and clear. Water was also very low, if not dry, in the Wilson Farm channels. Bird activity included lots of geese and gulls. Lots of bright blue dragonflies buzzing around like helicopters.

Mallee Stanley (E-8 & 9) Sept. 2

Although the day was warm & sunny, there were only a smattering of buttercups, thistle, yarrow, the tips of fireweed, and a clump of goldenrod that were still flowering. Only morning glory, red clover, dandelion and what I thought was peavine were profusely flowering as if it was still spring. Hardhack flowers had turned brown. One fisher had his rod planted in the sand but said he hadn't had any luck. There were more bikers (40) than walkers (23) and more dogs on leash (3) than off (2). I spotted 11 pieces of garbage, mostly under the Mary Hill By-pass not far from the only black squirrel I spotted before reaching the mouth of the river. Someone had built a fire in the sand with the ash residue a little too close to the trees for this time of year. The Coquitlam River was the lowest I'd ever seen it – over Millennium Bridge it appeared under 30 cm deep with mud banks weaving through the middle. The water was clear and didn't appear to be moving. Birds were scarce as I only saw 8 Wood Ducks in the channel closest to Lougheed Highway. Perhaps this was due to the most noticeable difference – the water level. Several channels have nearly dried up and some covered in grass with intermittent pools.

# SEPTEMBER RiverWatcher's REPORTS

Murray (W-6) Sept. 30

I spent the whole time walking in the River doing a cleanup, walking from the McAllister Pedestrian Bridge to the mouth of Scott Creek. The sole purpose was to clean garbage in the River from the summer bathers & picnickers. As a result, the only count done was the 8 fishermen, which I was surprised to see as I wasn't expecting any fish to be in the river for a week or two. I got two large bags of garbage plus a couple of old lawn chairs. There's still a couple of bags of garbage in the River along this stretch but I was pleasantly surprised by how clean this part of the Reach was considering the number of people were down at the River during the month of August. It gives me some hope that people are concerned about picking up their garbage. The River was low but in reasonably good shape considering the lack of rain for the last couple of months. There was only one hole during the entire stretch that I walked which would have been deeper than waist level. When I swam this stretch of the River 50 yrs ago most places were over my head. There were a few dead chum in the River but both were in reasonably good shape so it appears to be the start of the fall spawning run.

Charlene (W-8 & 9) Sept. 29

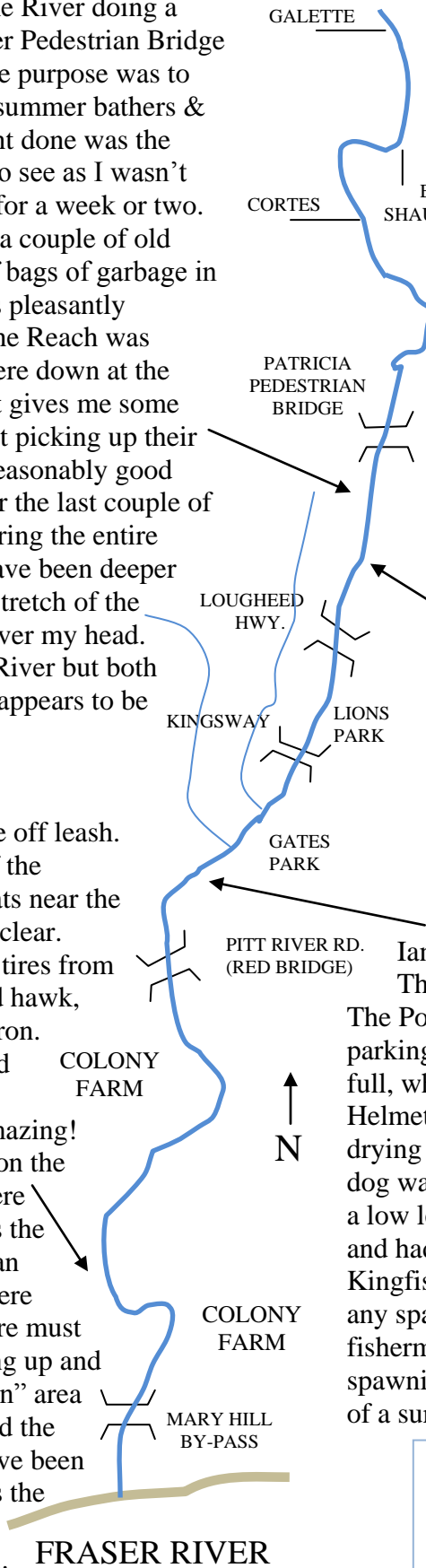
There were 4 dogs on leash and none off leash. Two fishermen were at the mouth of the Coquitlam River and I saw three boats near the mouth. The River was very low and clear. I could see the top halves of two car tires from the pedestrian bridge. Birds included hawk, chickadees, Mallards, gulls and a heron. I also saw a seal off of the mouth and multiple salmon from the pedestrian bridge. Watching the salmon was amazing! From a distance, I could see ripples on the surface of the river. Some ripples were moving very fast and zigzagging. As the ripples moved nearer to the pedestrian bridge, I could see that the ripples were caused by salmon. Big Salmon! There must have been at least 40 of them, moving up and down river. In the "habitat restoration" area between the Sheep Paddock Trail and the Lougheed Highway, trees/bushes have been planted by Metro Vancouver. This is the area that was mechanically cleared and Vantage XRT treated last month.

David & Myrna (E-5) Sept. 26

A city storm drain cleaning truck was in the city works area near the bike park, could only assume they were dumping the sludge that they suck out of the storm drains. Always lots of leachate coming off this site, across the PoCo Trail and into the river. We saw more garbage than usual. The River was clear and the level was very low. Birds included Winter Wren & American Dippers. Great to see American Dippers, especially two at once. We watched as they frolicked in the faster waters. A sure sign that we are into fall. There was a dead raccoon along the edge of the forest on Shaughnessy Street near the Patricia Pedestrian Bridge path. Japanese knotweed was along the Patricia walkway very noticeable especially at the entrance from Shaughnessy Street. The forest was extremely dry, many trees and plants showing the signs of heat stress. Lots of leaves on the ground, dry and brown, not colourful as in most falls. As much as I enjoy the wonderful warm weather the riparian area along the river is suffering from the extended summer.

Ian (E-7) Sept. 30

This walk was done on World Rivers Day. The PoCo Trail and Gates Park were so busy the parking lot at the north end of the Gates Park was full, which I have never seen before. Policeman's Helmet was flowering and the blackberries are drying up. Snowberries were out. One off leash dog was in the River. The River was clear and at a low level. Maple and Scott Creeks were clear and had a low flow. Birds included Belted Kingfisher, chickadees, and Mallards. I didn't see any spawning salmon, but I heard reports of fishermen under the Kingsway Bridge seeing spawning chum and spring salmon. This was a bit of a surprise as the River was still quite low.



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