

# EARTH DAY 2023

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On April 21st, in partnership with the [Watershed Alliance of Southwest Washington](#), Lower Columbia Fish Enhancement Group hosted a field trip in celebration of Earth Day.

About 100 student-volunteers attended from CASEE (the Center for Agriculture, Science, and Environmental Education), part of Battle Ground Public Schools.

We took the students to a site along the Little Washougal River that was restored with support from the Clark County Clean Water Restoration Fund. Since 2019, about 14 acres of riparian area have been restored through a combination of revegetation and invasive species management to mitigate stormwater impacts. In total, over 15,000 native trees and shrubs have been installed through the combined efforts of LCFEG and the Watershed Alliance.

During the field trip, CASEE students hiked a half mile down to the edge of the Little Washougal River, to see first hand the restoration work completed in this area. Students learned about the importance of stormwater management, native plants, and riparian forests, and how these contribute to healthy salmon populations. Most of the day was spent learning how to remove invasive vegetation from the riparian zone, installing native plants in their place, and removing browse guards from older, established plants.

A huge thank you is in order to all the CASEE students and staff who put in the work cutting, pulling, planting, and slip-sliding around in the mud! And another round of thanks is in order to the [Watershed Alliance of SW Washington](#) and the Spencer family at [Get-to-Gather Farm](#) for partnering with us to provide this amazing learning opportunity and celebration.

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On April 22nd, LCFEG participated in Camp Hope of Southwest Washington's Earth Day Discovery Camp! As part of our Hope For Salmon Educational Program, we collected aquatic macroinvertebrates (water bugs without a spine), out of the East Fork of the Lewis River, and conducted a survey on what was found. Students learned about why these critters are so important - not only as a food source for juvenile salmon, but also as natural water quality indicators. We spent the bulk of our time learning how to identify the different groups of invertebrates, sorting them, and counting them. We also learned that macroinvertebrates can be grouped based on their sensitivity to pollution, and that one can infer a lot about the health of the water, by looking at what bugs are present in your sample.

A big thankyou to Camp Hope for inviting LCFEG with such an amazing educational opportunity.

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