

# Spanish Bank Creek Restoration Project

## Project Summary 1994–2007

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In November 2000, after over 50 years without salmon, coho salmon returned to Spanish Bank Creek in northwest Vancouver. This was followed by the return of over 60 chum salmon in November 2004, providing a fascinating site for thousands of people using the Spanish Bank Foreshore Trail. The return of chum and coho salmon was the successful outcome of a restoration project that was implemented between 1994 and 1999 through the cooperation of a variety of groups.



Chum salmon in December 2004.

A 60 m section of fish-impassable culvert beneath the beach and parking lot of Spanish Bank Park was removed in November 1999 as the core component of the project. The restored channel incorporated log and rock placements, brush piles, riparian vegetation, and a beach meadow. A heavily used pedestrian walkway and bridge along Spanish Bank Park made the restoration project one of the most high profile sites in the Lower Mainland. Spanish Bank Creek also had the advantage of draining a watershed with relatively little urbanization compared to many urban streams in Vancouver. The total impervious area is estimated to be less than 10% and the lower reaches flow through a heavily forested ravine in Pacific Spirit Regional Park.



Coho and chum salmon fry from stock obtained from Capilano River (coho) and Kanaka Creek (chum) are released annually into the stream beginning in 1999. Smaller numbers of coho fry were released into Spanish Bank Creek between 1993 and 1999. Stocking has continued to ensure sustainable fish populations are established.

The project was organized as a co-operative project between several community-based stream stewardship groups, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Vancouver Parks Board, and Ministry of Environment. Construction was completed by John Hunter Company Ltd. Ongoing monitoring and enhancement activities are undertaken by the Spanish Bank Creek Streamkeepers. Nick Page of Raincoast Applied Ecology developed the original restoration plan for the stream in 1994 and has continued to be involved in restoration and maintenance activities.

# Spanish Bank Creek Restoration Project



Before restoration (1999)



Stream mouth (2006)



Before restoration (1999)



Upstream channel



Stream mouth (2005)



Beach dune

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