

Pre-activity #2: Salmon Migration and Human Interaction

Adapted from <http://www.naturesweb.ie/Spring%20Newsletter%202006%20Page%204.pdf>

Salmon are born in a river ecosystem and eventually make their way to the ocean (using an estuary as an adjustment zone). On their long journey to and from the ocean salmon have a lot of barriers. Out of all the salmon that make this journey, about 2 % live to adulthood (<http://www.5counties.org/salmoncycle.htm>). Some of these barriers are human caused and some are natural. Can you think of any natural or human caused barriers that salmon may encounter?

| Natural | Human caused |
|--|---|
| <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Birds● Bears● Bigger fish and other marine animals● Waterfalls● Diseases | <ul style="list-style-type: none">● Dams● Fishermen● Oil spills● Garbage pollution● Logging● Erosion● Run off● Traffic |

Is there anything we can do to help protect salmon and their habitat?

Yes, we can help protect and restore streams that have been logged out and eroded, find ways that increase fish survival when faced with dams, decrease pollution and fishing efforts, and educate others about salmon.

Materials:

Salmon ecosystem

100 little salmon to tape on the ecosystem

Box or bag with lists of salmon deaths

- 500 eggs were not fertilized and therefore cannot develop
- 60 eggs are dead when they were crushed from gravel by tractors eroding the shore
- A new apartment complex washed mud and other debris into the river suffocating alevins
- 500 fry were eaten by bigger fish in the river
- Birds ate 40
- 260 salmon died due to pollution
- Once in the ocean 1550 were eaten by larger fish
- Seals had 100 salmon meals
- 590 salmon were caught by fishermen
- Land mammals ate 80 salmon on their trip back up the river
- 10 salmon were physically exhausted from fish ladders and died
- 3 salmon were crushed by rocks trying to make it up a waterfall

Festival Activity: Salmon Spheros

Draw on the board or have a big print out of a river ecosystem all the way to the ocean. Have barriers such as oil spills, fishermen, predators and dams. Each salmon actually represents 50 salmon so kids will have to do a little math to figure out how many salmon they have to remove from the ecosystem.

How many salmon made it back to their spawning habitat?

How many salmon were killed by natural causes?

How many salmon died due to human causes?