Kids in the Creek Fact Sheet for Media

The *Kids in the Creek* Mission: To connect students with aquatic and riparian ecosystems for an understanding of watersheds and the critical role of human land management activities.

History

In 1992, resource specialists from the U.S. Fish & Wildlife Service, U.S. Forest Service, Natural Resources Conservation Service, Chelan County Conservation District, and science and Future Farmers of America (FFA) teachers from local high schools adopted the hands-on field experience idea to connect students with aquatic and riparian ecosystems for an understanding of watersheds and the critical role of human land management activities.

The first all day field trip was in 1993 on Icicle Creek, near Leavenworth, WA. Since then, hundreds of students from distant watersheds and many more resource agencies and private companies have joined this high quality educational effort.

Kids in the Creek Today

The annual Kids in the Creek (KitC) program is a cooperative collaboration run by a Core Planning Team with representatives from Cascadia Conservation District, US Fish and Wildlife Service, Department of Ecology, City of Wenatchee, and USDA Forest Service. The event is organized and implemented by Cascadia Conservation District, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA Forest Service.

Kids in the Creek is held at the Entiat National Fish Hatchery and consists of six educational stations.

KitC Stations:

- **Fish Health -** Identify basic parts and function of internal and external fish anatomy, predict and measure sub-lethal effects to fish based on water quality and habitat conditions, and explore how humans affect water quality and habitat in ways that affect fish health and actions that could be taken in the watershed to benefit fish health
- **Water Quality** - List the effects of turbidity, pH, temperature, stream dynamics and dissolved oxygen (DO) on the aquatic ecosystem, test health of adjacent body of water, and identify human activities and natural phenomena that impact water quality

- **Riparian Ramble** - List the functions and adaptations of riparian plants, discuss the benefits of a riparian area to its watershed, and list ways the geomorphology of the area formed the watershed
- **Water Flow** - Describe the hydrologic cycle, demonstrate the tie between water quality and dynamics, and collect and analyze stream flow data
- **Habitat Sense** – List steps of stream habitat survey methods, discuss the features a healthy stream must have to support aquatic life, and sketch a reach of stream in all its complexities
- **Invertebrate Investigators** – Investigate macro-invertebrates found in the stream, list sensitive and tolerant species and explain how changes in water quality can impact the aquatic system, and recommend ways to maintain and restore watersheds for macroinvertebrate fauna
- The six stations are hosted by representatives from Department of Ecology, City of Wenatchee, US Fish and Wildlife Service, and USDA Forest Service. Volunteers from many agencies from across the state donate their time to help implement the field days.
- **Watershed Wonders** – The culminating activity in which students apply the knowledge gained through the course of the program to develop a hypothetical parcel of land with a given land use, either: Agriculture, Recreation, or Urban Development. Students apply their conclusions to develop land use scenarios that utilize best management practices which mitigate potential negative impacts on natural resources within the local ecosystem.

What's New

- Video brochure – can be accessed through the KitC website or www.cascadiacd.org
- KitC website complete with training videos – www.kidsinthecreek.com

Contact Information:

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