Students release salmon into wild

After having watched 40 salmon growing up in the school's large aquarium for the past six months, Grindrod Elementary students finally had the opportunity to release the fish into the wild at the Kingfisher Creek Ecological Reserve last week.

Wendy Taylor, the teacher in charge of the field trip and the salmon experiment, said that growing the fish offers students an opportunity to connect with the natural world.

"They learn about the importance of salmon in particular in the B.C. circle of life. The salmon play a really important part and we don't want them dying off," she explained, adding that students can apply many of the skills they learn in the classroom to their study of the fish. "It gives you jumping off points for talking about a whole series of issues and ideas."

The salmon are a school-wide project, but Taylor said her class was in charge of feeding them and took the responsibility very seriously. She thinks that learning to care for another living thing is an important lesson for children to learn.

Next year, the school will move even more towards a focus on outdoor education with a new agriculturally-based curriculum being implemented in the fall. Students will build and tend to a large garden on school grounds and many of the core subjects, such as math, reading, and home economics, will revolve around agriculture and food production.

Taylor pointed out that a GoGrant from the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation made the field trip possible and leftover funds will be used to purchase soil and seeds for the gardens. She also expressed her appreciation of the school community.

"They're out there fundraising and making money so that things can happen for the kids. There are even parents whose kids don't go here anymore that still support us."

Bye bye Bob. *Grindrod Elementary students Keira Baker, right, Amy Loughran, middle, and Halayna Green, left, say goodbye to young salmon that the school grew over the past six months. Teacher Wendy Taylor said that she names them all Bob so that she never forgets their names.*