



DUNGENESS RIVER  
**NATURE  
CENTER**

## 2021 ANNUAL REPORT

A YEAR OF INNOVATION & CONSTRUCTION  
WHILE THE COVID PANDEMIC CLOSED DOWN THE COUNTRY



The River Center under construction in November 2021 Photo by Jake Peetz

SEE THE BUILDING RISE FROM THE GROUND UP IN THIS TIME-LAPSE  
VIDEO: [Click here!](#)



# A YEAR OF BIG DECISIONS AND CHANGE



## A NOTE OF GRATITUDE FROM THE DIRECTOR & BOARD PRESIDENT



Dear Members,

### NEW MISSION STATEMENT GUIDES FUTURE DECISIONS

In 2021, the Board of Directors changed the name, the logo, and shortened the mission statement of the River Center:

"Our mission is to inspire understanding, respect, and stewardship of our natural and cultural resources."

Nature is complex and undeniably fascinating.

Every aspect of nature that is taught at the River Center is meant to awe with its unique genius, indisputable strangeness, and interconnectedness with other plants and animals.

Once a person understands deeply, respect will follow and most certainly there's a better chance that people will weigh their decisions more carefully, opting for stewardship.

It's clear that the River Center's education staff will never run out of topics to share with children and adults!

2021--What a year! The Center's staff, volunteers, partners, and subcontractors weathered Covid 19, mask wearing, closed doors, a 53% increase in construction costs, materials shortages, limited classes and meetings on Zoom, and some outdoor activities.

Yet perseverance produced progress. The Center's outreach expanded online to many class participants across the country; the new Center walls, roof and interior continued to rise; and donations kept coming in--more than one million in 2021. **Congratulations and thank you!**

All of us, working together, have and will see this project become a catalyst for future educational programs "to inspire understanding, respect, and stewardship of our natural and cultural resources."...the Center's Mission.

The new and remodeled building and exhibits, when completed, will provide an exciting and motivating environment for local residents and for visitors from all over the world.

In 2022, you are so welcome to become involved...become a host at the reception desk, help visitors in the exhibit

### RENEWING A COMMITMENT TO ENVIRONMENTAL EDUCATION

With anticipation of a new facility with every room devoted to teaching, education staff began dreaming big in 2021.

Not only does the largest room, Rainshadow Hall, have more than twice the space of the old meeting room, it has a huge LED screen, camera, recording capacity, and surround sound.

The room, with a capacity to seat 150 people, can be divided into two classrooms.

A smaller classroom, just inside the front door, can seat 30 people, or more intimate groups around tables for drawing, photography and nature journaling classes.

In the works, is a new outdoor classroom that can be opened to the outdoors and when class is over, buttoned up.

The extra space means that more adults and children can be served with a wider variety of classes.

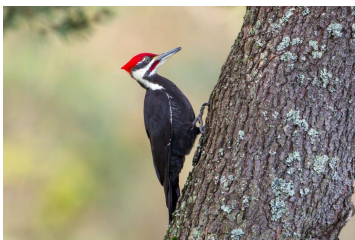


DUNGENESS RIVER  
**NATURE  
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**THOUGHTS ABOUT THE  
NEW NAME & LOGO**

The River Center deliberated for several years on a name change, wanting both a symbol and name that would be inclusive of the partnership with the Jamestown S'Klallam Tribe and Audubon.

The resulting logo is a perfect pairing of traditional Northwest Coast formline design by Bud Turner at the S'Klallam House of Myths, and the iconic pileated woodpecker, much loved by Audubon members, that creates nesting cavities for songbirds, owls, wood ducks, and small mammals such as Douglas squirrels, gray squirrels, rodents and possums.



room, weed in the Rain Garden, or keep trails maintained in the Park. You'll meet so many new friends and feel a deep sense of belonging, as many of us do. This is a pleasant environment to spend a few hours volunteering—and there's espresso!

**Annette Hanson**  
**Board President and Inspire  
Wonder Capital Campaign  
Committee Chair**



As Annette described, it has been quite the year for the Dungeness River Nature Center. Thanks to the support of our dedicated members, donors, volunteers, and our community at large we developed the potential to be a world class nature center.

The new center will significantly add to the potential outreach of our organization. Providing more available space, dedicated exhibit space, and increased capabilities through technology will allow us to spread appreciation and stewardship of our natural and cultural resources farther than ever before.

None of this would be possible without the support of all of you, thank you!

**Powell Jones, Director**

The new technology also makes it possible to connect remotely with a speaker anywhere in the world in real time.

Throughout 2021, education staff worked with a committee of experts to design one of the Center's best teaching tool, the exhibits room:

Freeing the collection of 200 birds and animals from their cabinets into the context of the habitat they prefer, the exhibits will showcase the snowfields to the estuary, with narrative both scientific and cultural.

**JAMESTOWN TRIBE'S  
PROJECT ADDS  
VALUABLE LESSON  
ABOUT SALMON**

The Tribe has long-planned to restore salmon habitat at Railroad Bridge Park by removing a 1960-era levee and mitigating 20 years of parking at the river's edge. With blueprints on the table in 2021, the project gets underway in 2022, providing a valuable teaching tool about how nature responds to restoration.

Below: Salmon eggs



[CLICK HERE TO WATCH OUR ANNUAL RECORDED ANNUAL MEETING](#)

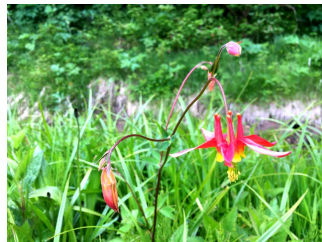


### **ZOOM SAVES THE YEAR, AGAIN**

A quick shift from in-person meetings to Zoom in 2020 continued to build in 2021. Over 1,000 people tuned from all over the country for nearly every lecture, learning about the animals and plants of the North Olympic Peninsula. The majority of lectures were by experts in the field with storytelling skills, humor, slides, graphs, and delivering a wealth of science-based facts.

### **WILDFLOWER HIKES DELIGHT**

One of the joys of being a Nature Center is the focus on the outdoors-- in 2021 the only place that people could safely gather together. Hikes continued all summer--a comforting reminder of the beauty and wonder of the natural world.



### **GREEN VALENTINES RAISE MONEY FOR PURCHASE OF NATIVE PLANTS**

You purchased over \$10,000 worth of Green Valentines, at \$30 apiece, in February 2021 to help buy native plants for new landscaping. Heeled in while the building was being completed, they were planted in 2022 with hundreds of mostly native plants and trees planted by landscapers in the spring 2022.



A TOAST of FRESH, COLD CLEAR, WATER TO YOU, MEMBERS & DONORS,  
FROM THE RIVER CENTER BOARD & STAFF



**CAPITAL CAMPAIGN COMMITTEE  
REMAINED IN HIGH GEAR TO  
FINISH THE JOB**

**CLOSING FOR CONSTRUCTION  
COINCIDED WITH COVID  
AND SUPPLY-CHAIN ISSUES**

**UP IN 2021:**  
Materials Costs  
Labor Costs

**ALSO UP:**  
Donations  
Grant Awards  
Memberships  
Bridge Crossings on the Olympic  
Discovery Trail

**A QUICK LOOK TELLS  
THE WHOLE STORY:**

**SEE the PIE CHARTS! [Click here](#)**



**TRIBAL PERSPECTIVE ADDS  
EXCITING ELEMENT TO TEACHING**

The best way to teach and inspire curiosity is to tell a memorable story. Here's a short film about salmon by John Gussman, narrated by national award-winning storyteller, and S'Klallam elder Elaine Grinnell.

**TEACHING BY EXAMPLE**

**VOLUNTEERS PLANT A  
RAIN GARDEN  
WITH WSU EXTENSION  
& JAMESTOWN S'KLALLAM TRIBE**

1,000 plants, 50 volunteers, 2 days

Built to capture thousands of gallons of storm water off of the River Center roof and hard surfaces and filter it before it enters the water table.



See the plants list and how the raingarden was built here:

<https://ruralstormwater.wsu.edu/rain-garden/>

To see a time lapse of the garden being planted, click on the photo above.



IN 2021 NUMBERS SOARED  
NO MATTER WHAT THE WEATHER

OVER 250,000 CROSSINGS  
ON RAILROAD BRIDGE IN 2021



## 2021 RIVER CENTER DONORS

*Thank You for inspiring generations  
with your gifts to the River Center!*

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In Memory of Audubon representative Allyson Simons, and of Les Jones, who served on the River Center Board for many years.

**RIVER CENTER STAFF**



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