



# Follow the Salmon Journey this fall!

**See spawning salmon.** Visit the Cedar River in the Renton and Maple Valley areas to see salmon spawning this October! Trained naturalists will be on site to help you spot and learn more about these amazing fish.

A threatened run of Chinook, as well as sockeye and coho, return to the Cedar River each fall. Sockeye are the easiest to spot since they spawn together in groups and are brightly colored with red bodies and green heads. Look for larger Chinook in deeper pools, and watch for coho migrating back to the upper reaches of the watershed.

**Learn about salmon.** Learn about what salmon need to thrive and why clean and cold water is so important to their survival—discover how you can help keep these special creatures coming back to our watersheds. For free, family-friendly salmon activities, visit [SeattleAquarium.org/salmon-journey](http://SeattleAquarium.org/salmon-journey).

**When:** October 7, 8, 14, 15, 21, 22, 28 and 29, 11am–4pm, at the sites listed below.



## Visit one or all five sites! Each one is unique.

### 1. Renton Library

100 Mill Avenue South, Renton, WA, 98057

Stand directly above the river and watch as salmon spawn beneath your feet. Note the many human changes to the Cedar River.

### 2. Cedar River Park

1717 Maple Valley Highway, Renton, WA, 98057

Watch how some salmon are removed for the sockeye hatchery. You may spot a migrating Chinook or coho here.

### 3. Riverview Park

3201 Maple Valley Hwy, Renton, WA 98058

Enjoy the view from the bridge as you watch spawning behavior in a natural setting.

### 4. Belmondo Reach Natural Area

16248 SE Cedar Mountain Place, Renton, WA, 98058

Walk down to the river past a salmon habitat restoration site where native trees and shrubs have been planted to benefit salmon.

### 5. Landsburg Park and Dam

SE 252nd Pl & Landsburg Rd. SE, Ravensdale, WA 98051

From the viewing platform, look for spawning pairs and lighter patches of gravel that show where salmon have laid their eggs. Take a 40-minute tour up to the dam to learn about the greater Seattle area's water supply and see how some salmon are allowed to pass above the dam. **Note:** The last tour leaves at 3pm.

### Need more info?

[SeattleAquarium.org](http://SeattleAquarium.org)

(206) 792-5851

[salmonjourney@seattleaquarium.org](mailto:salmonjourney@seattleaquarium.org)

All sites are ADA-accessible except Belmondo Reach and Landsburg Park.

Parking is limited. Help salmon by carpooling, walking or biking between locations. The Cedar River Trail runs from Renton all the way to Landsburg Park.

— This program would not be possible without the help of our sponsors: —



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King County Library System, Renton • US Army Corps of Engineers, Seattle District • King County Department of Natural Resources and Parks

[SeattleAquarium.org/salmon-journey](http://SeattleAquarium.org/salmon-journey)

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# Salmon and the Cedar River

## THE CEDAR RIVER WATERSHED

### Critical for salmon—and humans too!

An elongated basin of 188 square miles, the Cedar River Watershed begins at the Cascade Crest, near Snoqualmie Pass, and flows through Maple Valley and Renton before emptying into Lake Washington.

The Cedar River Watershed is remarkable in many ways: It contributes over 50% of Lake Washington's inflow—which means that it keeps the floating bridges afloat and allows the operation of the locks in Ballard. It provides two-thirds of the water used by King County residents and businesses (over 100,000,000 gallons per day!). And it supports a run of Chinook salmon—listed as threatened under the Endangered Species Act—as well as coho and sockeye salmon.

Humans and salmon alike depend on a healthy habitat and good water quality, which is why it's important for each of us to do our part to care for and protect the Cedar River Watershed.

## Salmon life cycle

Pacific salmon begin and end their lives in the cold, clear water of mountain rivers and streams. A female salmon can lay up to 3,000–5,000 bright pink eggs in a nest called a redd that she digs in the gravelly stream bed.

After the male fertilizes the eggs, embryos develop in the gravel, living off of nutrients in the egg yolk sac. A few months later, they become fry (small fish), swim up out of

the gravel and spend a few weeks to a year (depending on the species) rearing in fresh water.

Fry develop into *smolts* and migrate downstream to an estuary, where they spend time growing and adjusting to salt water before swimming out to the ocean. After one to seven years in the ocean, mature salmon migrate back to the rivers where they were born to reproduce.

After spawning, most Pacific salmon die within one to two weeks. Salmon carcasses are a vital part of the stream ecology. Nutrients from decomposing salmon support plant and insect life that later nourish young salmon. Streamside plants absorb salmon nutrients and bears, birds, small mammals and even deer also feed on salmon carcasses.

### What's a watershed?

No matter where you live, even if it's very far from a body of water, you live in a watershed, which is defined as an area of land that channels rainfall and snowmelt to creeks, streams and rivers—and, eventually, to outflows such as lakes, bays and the ocean.

Put another way, a watershed is like a basin: All the water that falls within it flows to the lowest point, at which it drains. And, even if you don't live near a body of water, your actions affect the health of your local watershed.

## Take action to help salmon!



### Get involved:

Support salmon recovery by volunteering, voting and sharing your knowledge with others.



### With your car:

Take your car to a commercial car wash and have oil leaks fixed.



### Around your dog:

Pick up dog waste, bag it and place it in the trash (not in the yard waste bin).



### Conserve water:

Sweep driveways and sidewalks instead of hosing them off, take shorter showers and use drought-tolerant plants in your yard.



### In your yard:

Use fertilizers and pesticides sparingly, or just use compost.



### At home:

Properly use, store and dispose of hazardous household materials.