

The banners currently on display as part of the *River Story Exhibit* at the Port Angeles Main Library were originally created for the dam breaking ceremony on September 17 2011. Some of them are shown here in their original context at the Lower Elwha Dam.





ARTISTS: Young Artists from Port Angeles.

BANNER THEME: A Tribute to the Wild Elwha River and its people

STATEMENT: This banner was created by high school artists who are part of the Cultural Class offered by Jamie Valadez, their teacher.



ARTISTS: Olympic Peninsula YMCA – Y's Kids Summer Camp
Under the direction of Cathy Haight

BANNER TITLE: Good Bye Dam – Welcome Back Salmon!

28 Children from the Port Angeles area participated in a weeklong activity of artistic exploration to create a collaborative banner in celebration of the Elwha Dam removal project. We began by holding discussion groups on the implications of the dam removal and the impact it will have on the many ecosystems in the area. We talked about the care being taken to assure minimal impact on the area, beginning with the glacial melt off high in the mountains, the changes that might occur in the alpine meadows, the changes to the flora and fauna as the water subsides and leaves silt and residue behind. We discussed the changes to the water in the Juan de Fuca and the impact to sea creatures, of course, the river as it changes path and opens the path once again to the salmon. The children were deeply engaged in the discussion.

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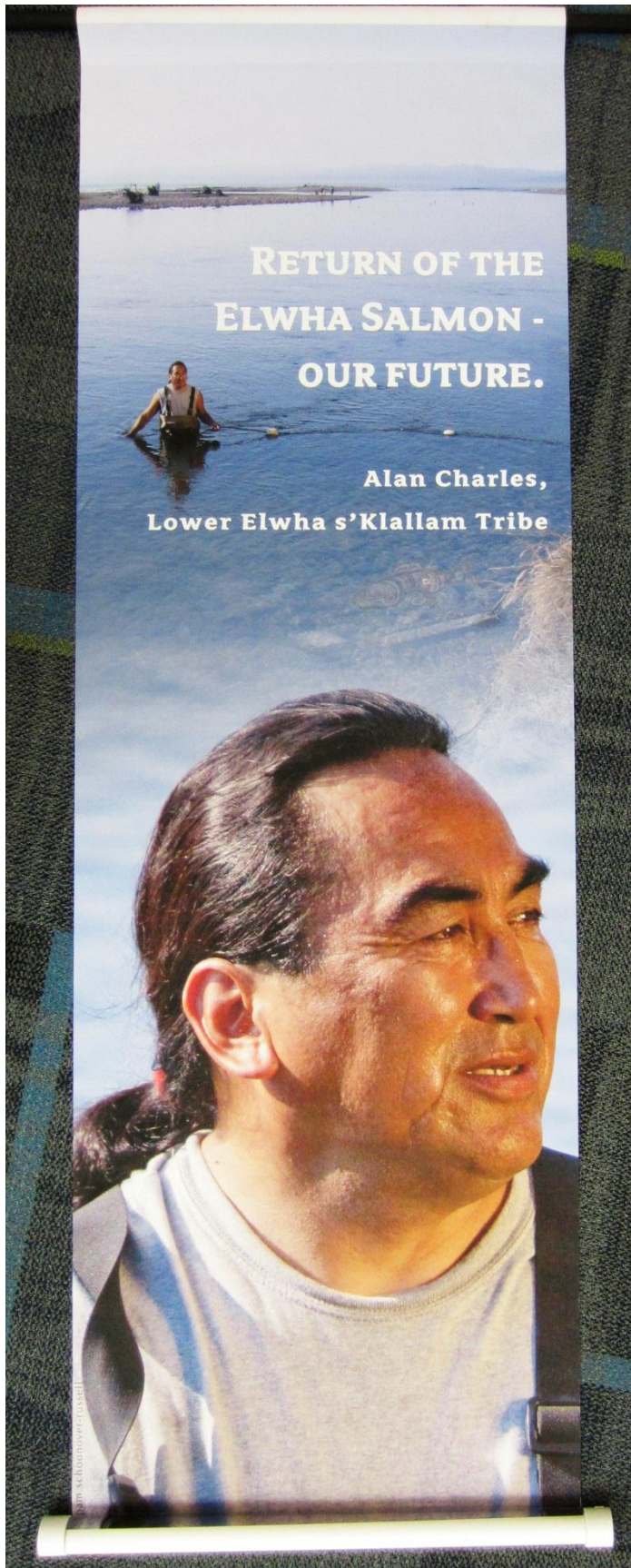
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The first assignment was to choose the part of the removal project story that was of interest to them and to draw a picture with the story they wished to tell. When we put all the drawings on the wall, the whole story emerged. Some children were interested in the impact on the high mountain peaks and the glacial flow. Some children were excited about the impact in the alpine meadows and the animals whose habitat may be changed. Others were impressed by the return of the salmon with an affinity to the salmon up stream meeting the salmon from down-stream like a giant family reunion. And there were those that chose the changes to the mouth of the river where it meets the waters of the Juan de Fuca.

When we saw the picture stories together, the children decided we should show the whole picture and it was decided to make our banner like a quilt that weaves the different parts of the story together. The actual process for painting took 4 days. A layer was painted each day beginning with the background, and then the middle ground with plants and water and, finally, the animals and creatures were added. Each block on the "quilt" was a joint effort and children were allowed to add to the squares as they saw fit. It was a lesson in teamwork and cooperation much like the dam project, with the entire stakeholder involved.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Pam Schoonover-Russell

BANNER TITLE: Elwha Tribal Tribute

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I capture an image as visual Haiku. What I see changes me in some way. My images change my sense of beauty, my perspective, my sense of the relationship that is evident among the color, shape, and light of things. I am both a zoologist and an artist. In science as in art, I observe and I interpret my observations. I am drawn to the detail as well as the context . . . the organism and the ecosystem, the object and the system. I relish photographing my subjects in their places, doing what they do or being what they are. This precept drew me to this project as it represents a people being able to return to who they are where they are.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Malia Mercer

BANNER TITLE: Elwha Be Free

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: My history with the Elwha River and its dams is directly connected to my husband, Jeff Duda. He is a Research Ecologist for the U.S. Geological Survey and had worked extensively on the Elwha River for the last 8 years. He introduced me to the beauty of the Olympic National Park and with that, the Elwha River. It was love at first sight on both accounts.

My banner harks back to a time in the Elwha's history when sentiment for dam removal was hitting its peak. In 1987 an individual belayed down the Glines Canyon Dam and painted 'Elwha Be Free' on its face, a controversial activity that unwittingly brought national attention to the Elwha's dams. While that message has been gone for years now, the sentiment has survived and we now find ourselves at a time where we've come full circle and the dams are finally being removed. My banner represents all 6 ocean-going Salmon species spilling out from a crack in the dam. These are the fish whose livelihoods have been critically impacted by their inability to reach historical spawning grounds. A bit of homage to the original 'Elwha Be Free' message painted on the dam in the '80s, the concept is meant to be historical and prophetic . . . an idea whose time has come.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Dani LaBlond

BANNER TITLE: Leap of Faith

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I am a fourth-generation resident of the Olympic Peninsula. My art encompasses painting, ceramics, drawing, and sculpture. I also am an art educator who loves to share the wonder of personal creation and artistic expression to both children and adults. The salmon were elemental to our ancient Native culture, and an important part of a healthy Elwha River ecosystem. I am inspired by the theory of the salmon returning to the ancient spawning grounds after being separated for so many years by the Elwha dams. I am proud our generation is taking a "Leap of Faith," in removing the dams in hopes our salmon runs will once again be health and strong. If we nourish the salmon, they, in turn, will have the ability to nourish us.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Leo E. Osborne

BANNER TITLE: INFINITY SALMON

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Since my teenage years in the 60s, I have made an attempt to be a human voice for the wild creatures of this planet. The Elwha Dam Project spoke to me and I became inspired to participate in this great co-creation. My contribution is in the form of a plea to follow the dream of universal peace. We must continue to IMAGINE PEACE.

INFINITY SALMON represents a need to listen to the cycles of life in nature and to share will being this beautiful green~blue planet. There are infinite possibilities. We are all ONE.

Leo lives on Guemes Island in Washington State

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ARTIST'S NAME: Laura Alisanne

BANNER TITLE: Welcome Home

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Laura Alisanne is an artist, sculptor, writer and graphic designer informed and inspired by her greatest and most enduring teacher: Nature.

“Imbedded in the DNA of all living creatures, the desire to return home is a magnificent and humbling experience to witness. My memories of watching large, dark-bodied salmon surmount the Sol Duc River each autumn has left an indelible impression. With a mighty determination through turbulent waters, the salmon, their powerful bodies swimming through ancestral waters, has inspired the artwork, with a vision of triumph as finally, a century later, the salmon of the Elwha return home.”

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ARTIST'S NAME: David Berger

BANNER TITLE: Going Upstream (Prayers for the Elwha)

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Living in Seattle, I've come to follow the rhythms of the salmon like some might follow the Dow Jones Average. I'm especially involved, as a fisherman and hiker as well as an artist. Getting to this moment of removing the Elwha dams took many decades. I first visited the Elwha dams in the mid-1980s, finding surprisingly beautiful industrial structures of weathered concrete. With their removal the great salmon runs of the Elwha will once again stretch into the pristine watershed of the Olympic Peninsula, and the river itself will be returned to freedom. It makes me glad that our culture can move forward with steps to resuscitate the natural world. I am a painter and sculptor, and pleased to help celebrate the return of migrating fish to the length of the Elwha, for the benefit of native peoples, current residents and future generations. This banner combines contemporary and traditional Northwest Coast idioms. The style of the eyes is Northwest Coast, but the use is more classic Western, and the intent is Godspeed to restoration of the fish runs.

MATERIALS: Acrylic paint over gesso

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ARTIST'S NAME: Jessica Dodge

BANNER TITLE: Flux

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: A large part of making art for me is telling a story, and much of my work is rooted in narrative. I look for universally familiar symbols and imagery that I can put to use in my art, always finding the natural world and the animal kingdom rich with possibilities. In these difficult times for the environment, I am excited to participate in a project that celebrates the freeing of the Elwha River and the return of that ecosystem back to its natural state.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Sherilyn Seyler

BANNER TITLE: Welcome Home

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I was born in Franklin, Pennsylvania, and moved west after completing college. I had several jobs before I discovered my niche as a Park Service Ranger. Serving as an Interpretation and Education Ranger has allowed me to combine my degrees of Environmental Science and Elementary Education to teach people about the special areas the National Park Service protects. I have worked at Olympic National Park for twelve years. Living and working in National Parks has enriched and inspired my life which is revealed in my artwork.

I have always enjoyed creating artwork. As a child I wanted to become an art teacher. However, life circumstances did not permit me to follow that path, so I worked at home with various mediums. After I moved to Port Angeles, Washington, I took a couple adult education classes at Peninsula College. One of the classes given by Melissa Penic involved using color pencils. I fell in love with the medium and have been using them ever since. I felt re-connected to the art world and more confident so I have experimented with other mediums including fused glass and fabrics.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Gay Whitman

BANNER TITLE: Stump's King

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I was born, raised and reside in Port Angeles, WA. I attended Peninsula College and community art classes. I've always been fascinated with art, design, and fashion.

I recently retired from a graphic design and marketing career. I am currently painting portraits and playing with fiber.

My banner entitled 'Stump's King' celebrates my late father-in-law and the prosperity of the King and all native salmon in the Elwha and waterways up and down the Pacific Coast.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Margot Voorhies Thompson

BANNER TITLE: Back to the Elwha

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Dam removal is the conscious invitation to revive & restore the natural alphabet of species that would include bears, salmon, insects, plants and native trees. I chose the bear as a symbol to represent an optimistic outcome for returning balance to a landscape & watershed that has been interrupted and disturbed. No matter who we are or where we are, "ex situ" restoration is the work of our generation. If we are fortunate, the bears, salmon & so many other species will make their way back to the Elwha. Let us make this happen to brighten our future.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Barbara Slavik

BANNER TITLE: Cascadian Flag

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: The very name Cascadia conjures a mindscape of the Ideal. Cascadia will not be found on a road map. Its boundaries are defined not by laws and treaties, but by a more natural ecology that encompasses the emerald lands that lie between the snowy ramparts of the Cascade Mountains and rugged shoreline of the blue Pacific.

The colors of the Cascadian flag represent three base elements of the region – the forest (green), the water (blue) and the ice and snow (white). The fir tree stands in the center as the symbolic monarch of perpetual forest. Cascadia is a distinct bioregion inhabited by a people who have environmental stewardship as their primary ethic. Because of its remoteness and its location at the very heart of the Cascadian zone, the Olympic Peninsula still embodies the promise of such a place.

Barbara Slavik is an artist and educator, who in her 22 years of guiding the Port Angeles Fine Arts Center's ArtPaths education program has initiated tens of thousands of Peninsula youngsters into the arena of creative thought from which art springs. Her own paintings and mixed media works have been exhibited in galleries and museums up and down the West Coast.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Christine Hella Cott Thompson

BANNER TITLE: Dance of Life

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Without water our beautiful planet would be just another ball of dust in the vast reaches of space; every water drop is precious, as are the multitudes of life forms that can live and thrive because of it. Freeing the Elwha means the dance of life can **once more flow as nature intended.**

To me art is a celebration of life, with all its ups and downs and unexpected journeys; it is a mirror held up to the individual and the society at one and the same time. I live and work in Olalla, WA.

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ARTIST'S WEBSITE: www.hellacottfineart.com



ARTIST'S NAME: Anna Wiancko-Chasman

BANNER TITLE: Freedom

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I have been a professional artist for over half my life, successfully showing at several galleries around the Northwest. I enjoy all mediums, but prefer mixed media.

My inspiration comes primarily from nature and animals. I've been creating salmon for over two decades. Their health in our rivers is the key to a healthy ecosystem. To watch them struggle upstream to spawn, then creating new life in the river beds, brings me the feeling that "all is right with the world."

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ARTIST'S WEBSITE: www.freshwaterbayarts.com



ARTIST'S NAME: Lyn Smith

BANNER TITLE: A New Day

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: For many years I have been a visitor to the Olympic Peninsula and recently decided to make this heaven my home. Since living here, I am exploring watercolor techniques and trying to capture much of the beauty that abounds.

In my banner celebrating a "New Day," I tried to represent the Elwha River as she has lived throughout the millennium.

This is truly a moment in time worthy of our reflections and hope for a future as it was intended to be.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Pamela Hastings

BANNER TITLE: Water of Life

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I have been sewing, drawing, and making sculpture since I was five and couldn't start school with my friends. Along with appearing in numerous books, as well as five of my own, I have exhibited and taught internationally. My studio overlooks the Strait of Juan de Fuca in Northwestern Washington. See more of my designs at www.pamelahastings.com

In this banner, I've returned to a bold graphic style, incorporating words, to express the vital part that water plays in all of Life.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Melody F. Charno

BANNER TITLE: Celebrate the Salmon

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I live in Port Angeles and have been working as printmaker since 1976, trained as a stone lithographer and Japanese woodcut artist.

The Elwha Dam Removal inspired me to paint swimming salmon on a yellow background (the yellow stands for wisdom, joy and happiness; which I thought summed up the project in a nutshell).

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ARTIST'S NAME: Sarah Tucker

BANNER TITLE: New Shores

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I am a local multimedia artist, film maker and performer. I moved to Port Angeles in 1999 and was fascinated to hear about the Dam Removal plans and how it would affect the landscape, what would be revealed, what could be predicted and what would be unpredictable?

My inspiration for this banner is the anticipation of new shorelines along a healthy river.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Dona Cloud

BANNER TITLE: Something Fishy

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: Dona is a multi-media, award-winning artist and a resident of Clallam County since 1958. In 2010, a 50 year retrospective of work done in Clallam County was exhibited at the Carnegie Museum in Port Angeles. Jim, her husband, worked at the lower Elwha Dam from the 1970s into the 90s. He savored the beauty of the river and the huge fish that milled about at the foot of the dam. Dona often joined him at the power house windows to admire the lively activity of the salmon. "Something Fishy," was inspired by the myth of salmon waiting at the mouth of the Elwha River, primed for mass return when the portals of the dams no longer obstruct travel to the upper waters to spawn. The native fish are carrying their "genes" (suitcases) to the spawning grounds for future years of strong fish for Strong People.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Karen DeWinter

BANNER TITLE: Crow River Blessing

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I was born in Baltimore, Maryland but have lived most of my adult life in the Northwest. I work in a 3rd floor studio in my house which overlooks Lake Washington. I watch crows fly by with bits of food in their beaks. The sound of their raucous calls often fills my studio while I paint. Sometimes they perch on the rail of the deck outside my window. A bald eagle, osprey or heron will occasionally fly by. There are squirrels in the yard, ducks, coots and geese on the lake. I observe them and contrast their lives to mine. This is the primary concept I explore in my work.

The Celebrate Elwha! Banner project has given me the opportunity to imagine this beautiful river without the large man-made obstacle. It will flow through the forest unimpeded again. My companions, the crows, it seems to me would gladly bless this event.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Susan Summit Cyr

BANNER TITLE: Home Again

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: I am thrilled and inspired by the prospect of salmon returning to their ancient home and wanted to visually portray the interconnectedness of all aspects of this vast ecosystem.

I paint primarily on silk, which I think is the perfect canvas for a depiction of a beautiful web of life finally being woven back together.

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ARTIST'S NAME: Doug Parent

BANNER TITLE: Passage

ARTIST'S STATEMENT: My art, my work is a reflection of my life from day to day. I try to let the rivers of life flow, the creativity that is given, to be used and shared. I have been drawing and painting since very young and look forward to each new piece of work to see where it will lead me, and to share that with all who will press in and open eyes and minds.

The rebirth of the Elwha River to its original run, spurred thoughts of the old and new, the tree of life that has stood thru the ages of time, the never ending flow of water, the river, the sea, mountains, and the life in the waters, merging colors of life and the colors of change, freedom, passage. This has been a great privilege and opportunity to be part of the celebration of new life . . . thank you.

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