

# A Dynamic Creek

## Climate Change

Climate change is making our summers hotter, and our winters wetter than we have experienced in the past.



In 1974, beloved Victoria naturalist Freeman King wrote: “[Douglas Creek] used to be a delight, shaded by many shrubs and some fine specimens of the Western (Pacific) Yew. Now it is polluted. The banks have been battered and it will soon become nothing more than a series of eroded gullies.”

The restoration work in Douglas Creek will help heal the creek, but we all have a part to play as well. What can you do to keep fresh water clean and to prevent it from overwhelming storm sewers and this hard-working creek?

Photo Source: The Victoria Naturalist, March 1978, Vol. 34, No. 7

Storm water collected from the Douglas Creek watershed contains pollutants such as oil and paint, but also sand, silt, and bits of tires from roadways. To capture some of these pollutants and lessen their impact on the creek, a weir was built upstream of here. The weir slows the water so silt and pollutants can settle out. But during heavy rainfalls, the large volume of water can overwhelm the storage capacity of the weir and water overflows into the creek.

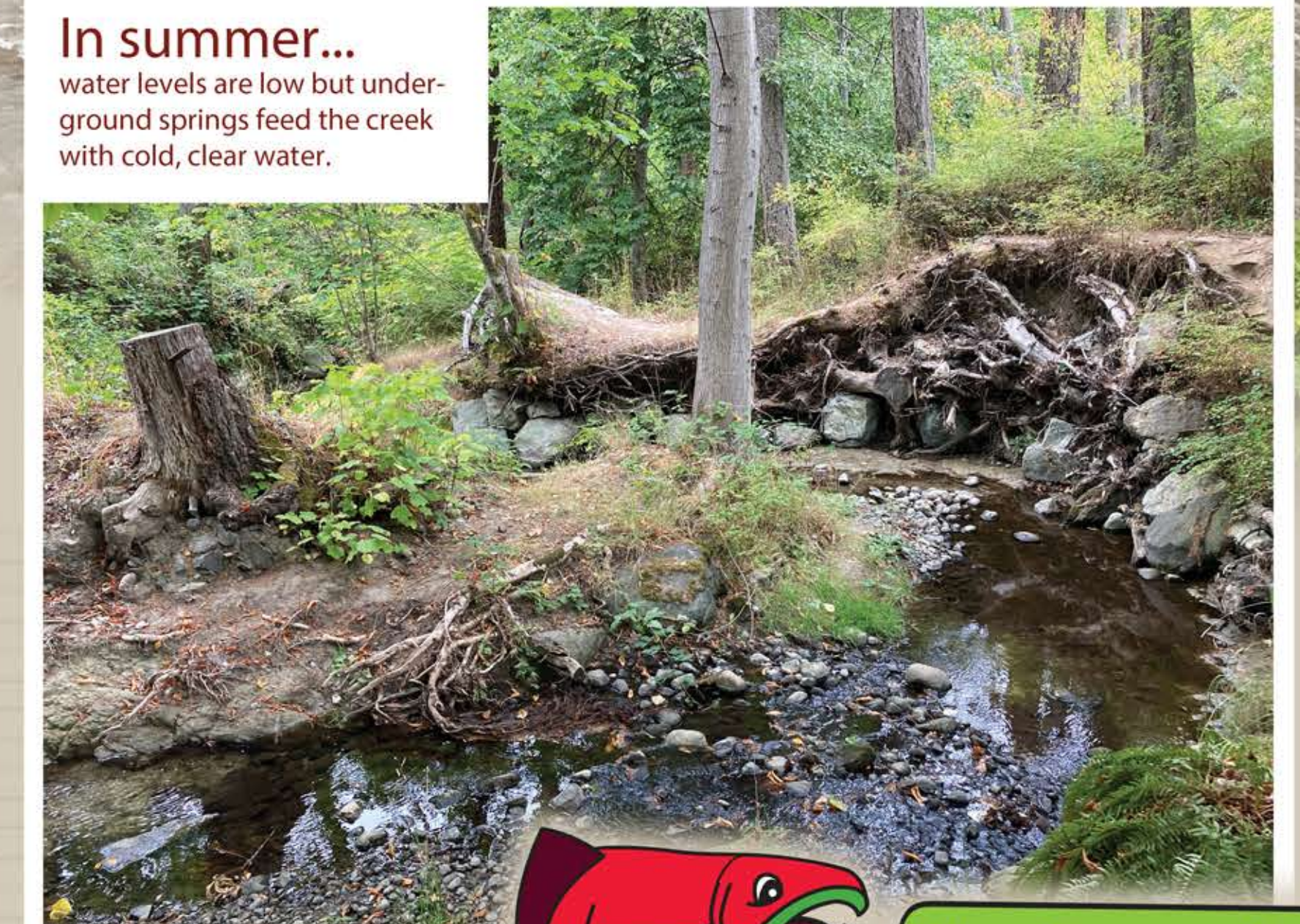
A hydrometric station at the weir monitors water flow. Track the water volumes in the graph below to see how quickly the creek can change from one or two centimeters to raging floodwaters, a metre more in height.



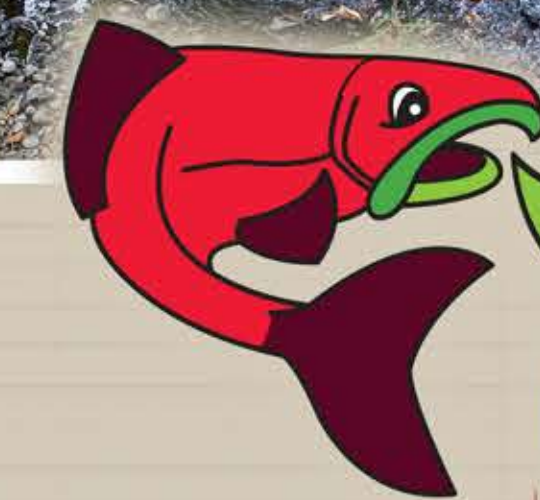
**In winter...**  
heavy rains cause water to surge, eroding the creek banks, scouring spawning beds, and washing away stream invertebrates and the few salmon eggs in the beds.

## In summer...

water levels are low but underground springs feed the creek with cold, clear water.



Photos: Darrell Wick



Hotter, drier summers leave little water in the creek making it difficult for me to spend a year here before heading out to the ocean.

