



Bellingham Technical College
Press Release

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For Immediate Release

SEE FISH CONSERVATION TECHNOLOGY AT WORK AS BTC PARTNERS WITH WHOOSH TO TRAIN STUDENTS ON FISH TRANSPORT SYSTEM NOV. 26



Bellingham, Washington – The community will have a chance to see the latest fish conservation equipment in action on Tuesday, November 26, as Bellingham Technical College's Fisheries & Aquaculture Sciences program partners with Whooshh Innovations to train students on the company's fish transport technology.

Students will get hands-on training working with a mobile fish passage system, which is often used in hatchery settings to

transport fish through a suspended, pliable, near-frictionless, water-misted tube from pond to pond safely and with minimal stress. The public is invited to watch the training and see demonstrations of the system at work from 11 a.m.-1 p.m. November 26 at the student-run Whatcom Creek Hatchery in Maritime Heritage Park. Students will offer tours of BTC's Perry Center for Fisheries & Aquaculture from 11 a.m.-12 p.m. for those who are curious about the program and its labs.

"This is a fantastic opportunity for our students to get hands-on experience with cutting-edge technology that will help our local fisheries better support salmon stocks," BTC Fisheries Instructor Brittany Palm-Flawd said. "Conservation is at the core of what we teach here, so giving our students the chance to learn on the latest equipment and broaden their experience is a tremendous benefit to our program."

This is the second year that BTC's Fisheries & Aquaculture Sciences program has partnered with Seattle-based Whooshh Innovations for student training. Last year, the collaboration provided students hands-on experience with next-level fish transport technology. The students worked to test the company's new FishL™ Recognition system as a part of a development effort toward building species recognition software.

“Whooshh is excited to have this opportunity to partner with BTC to help train the next generation of conservation-minded fisheries professionals,” said Whooshh Innovations Director Michael Messina. “Fisheries restoration is important for our rivers, for the orca and for our ecosystems, and hatcheries such as the one run by BTC’s program, that employ forward-looking techniques, play a vital role in ensuring that those ecosystems thrive.”



In addition to its uses in hatcheries, Whooshh technologies also help fish navigate more easily over obstacles such as dams. Fish ladders can be an exhausting journey for fish. Fish transported via a Whooshh system spend mere seconds being gently transported, compared to hours and possibly days of arduous swimming to climb up a fish ladder. Reducing stress and conserving the energy of the fish

leads to better fish health and more successful spawning. This in turn aids in salmon restoration and enhancement efforts.

This partnership allows BTC to be pro-active, providing valuable insight into reducing stress on salmon broodstock, while advancing technologies for innovative species identification software. This work is particularly vital in light of the orca recovery task force and efforts to increase salmonid production in the region. BTC works closely with the state’s co-managers (Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife and the Treaty Tribes) to increase chum and Chinook production in support of Governor Jay Inslee’s environmental initiatives. Through an intensive, hands-on training program, BTC students propagate millions of salmonids annually for the community. Upon completion of the program, students enter the workforce having been trained on advanced equipment and in highly innovative culturing methods.

About Bellingham Technical College

Bellingham Technical College is accredited by the Northwest Commission on Colleges and Universities, and offers seven transfer degrees such as pre-nursing, computer science and business. Completion of these degrees prepares BTC students to transfer with a junior status to participating colleges and universities in Washington State. BTC offers 38 associate degrees, 60 certificate options and two bachelor of applied science degrees providing professional technical education to support local and regional industry workforce needs. For more information, go to www.btc.edu or follow us on www.facebook.com/bellinghamtech, www.twitter.com/bhamtechcollege and www.instagram.com/bellinghamtechcollege.

About Whooshh Innovations, Inc.

Whooshh Innovations moves live fish safely and efficiently. Using patented technology, Whooshh can safely pass fish over dams, sort for invasive species, or simply move fish gently around facilities such as hatcheries and aquaculture operations. In addition to the environmental benefits associated with fisheries restoration, Whooshh solutions typically cost 80% less than fish ladders, and allow for 5-10% more clean energy production. Whooshh Innovations is located in Seattle and on the web at www.whooshh.com.

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