

Thanks to the generosity of the Cereus Foundation, Friends of the Van Duzen River was able to serve students in grades K-4 at Loleta, Cuddeback, Hydesville, and Bridgeville Elementary Schools. It is critical for younger students to gain an early respect for the natural world and to learn to share their ecosystem with other living things. Working with K-4 students also completes the cycle in our local K-8 elementary schools as my other grants served older students. Combing grants from Trees Foundation, Rose Foundation, Kiwanis Club, and the Humboldt County Office of Education, Friends of the Van Duzen River was able to reach and teach over 500 students in the 2018-2019 school year.

Working with artists Abbie Perrott and Virginia Wood, students in Mr. Rasmussen's 1st/2nd grade class in Loleta gained a working knowledge of the 5 parts of a tree doing drawings and labeling the parts. Abbie also did scientific art at Cuddeback Elementary in Mrs. Reback's 1st grade class and Mrs. Bravo's 2nd grade class. All the students got the opportunity to do leaf prints, design a redwood tree, add the prints, and embellish the tree with squirrels and birds. A good time was had by all!

Continuing our water quality monitoring, two high school students AJ Wyland and Brian Feuerman as well as Zooey, Keenan, Brodie, and Clyde from each of the elementary schools in the Van Duzen Watershed were part of the team to place 20 temperature probes in the Van Duzen Watershed. During the probe placement, Clyde, a 5-year-old boy was asked "What is a hypothesis?" His answer, "It's an idea you can test."

Pat Higgins from the Eel River Recovery Project and myself placed probes in the far reaches of the Van Duzen Watershed. Data from these studies are critical to be able to analyze the temperature changes during this critical time in the Earth's history. Temperature is a key factor for the migration, spawning, and survival of the endangered salmon, and we now have eight years of data collection. In addition, placing temperature probes with students follows the goal of Friends of the Van Duzen River to train the next generation of scientists and to witness the salmon cycle.

Completing this Cereus grant aimed at younger students, three kindergarten classes once again took a field trip the Sequoia Zoo to see the Watershed Exhibit of salmon, otter, and eagles. One of our traditions is to visit the Flamingo area, and then stand on one foot to experience this unique creature. Students did their yogic Flamingo standing poses to perfection!

Special thanks to the Cereus fund for helping to make all this possible.

Sal Steinberg, Community Coordinator, Friends of the Van Duzen River