



# NEWS RELEASE

**U.S. ARMY CORPS OF ENGINEERS**

**BUILDING STRONG®**

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## **Students and agencies partner to release Coho salmon**

SANTA ROSA, Calif. – On Thursday, May 10, Westminster Woods will release 2,000 Coho salmon smolts into Dutch Bill Creek as part of the ongoing Russian River Coho salmon recovery program. Students attending the Environmental Education Program will help put the fish in the creek alongside officials from the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers and Sonoma County Water Agency.

In an effort to restore the Coho salmon population in Dutch Bill Creek, a smolt imprinting tank was installed at Westminster Woods for the second year in a row and will provide home to a total of 6,000 fish (3 groups of 2,000 fish) this spring. The tank allows salmon in the smolt life stage to “imprint” on the unique characteristics of the Dutch Bill Creek water which will make it possible for them to return to the same creek in two years to spawn as adults. The smolts spend three weeks in the tank before they are released into the creek to make their way to the ocean.

In the last few decades, the number of Coho salmon in the Russian River watershed has drastically declined. Work in Dutch Bill Creek, which has historically supported wild runs of Coho is being done by many local organizations including Westminster Woods, Sonoma County Water Agency, California Department of Fish & Game, U.S. Army Corps of Engineers, NOAA Fisheries and UC Cooperative Extension. Schools participating in the release are St. Rose School of Santa Rosa, The Reach Program of Sebastopol, Bannan Creek of Sacramento.

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Established in 1866, the U.S. Army Corps of Engineers San Francisco District employs approximately 350 people, who are responsible for 40,000 square miles extending 600 miles from the Oregon border to San Luis Obispo Country. The district’s programs and projects support approximately 1,000 permanent, higher-wage jobs that contribute to more than \$100 million to the regional economy.

The district helps build the nation’s long-term economic strength in an environmentally-sustainable way through water-supply management and flood-damage reduction, shore and coastal protection,

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ecosystems restoration, and wildlife protection. The district works in partnership with local, state and federal agencies. District staff respond with emergency operations for natural disasters, regulate development that affects waterways and wetlands, and keeps navigation channels, harbors and ports open for the more than 100 million tons of cargo shipped to area deep-water ports.

Westminster Woods Camp and Conference Center is a year-round camp and conference center located in Occidental, CA. Westminster Woods is known for dynamic summer camp programs, innovative Environmental Education and a state-of-the-art Challenge Course. For more information, visit [www.westminsterwoods.org](http://www.westminsterwoods.org).

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