



2003 AWARD WINNER PROFILE

**WINNER: JENNY BALKE
DENMAN ISLAND**

CATEGORY: INDIVIDUAL AWARD

PROJECT: VALENS BROOK RESTORATION

NOMINATOR: LOUISE BELL, DENMAN ISLAND

Project Description:

The objective of this project was to replace the culvert under McFarlane Road on Denman Island with a fish-friendly structure that allows the passage of salmon to the upper reaches of Valens Brook. Construction of the new culvert in August 2002 represented the culmination of four years of meetings and planning in a process that was led by Jenny Balke on a volunteer basis. The success of the project hinged on her ability to achieve funding, enroll the necessary partners and maintain their cooperation and assistance through the process required to plan and complete the culvert replacement.

Valens Brook is one of only two streams on Denman Island that bear Coho salmon. Until its replacement, the culvert at McFarlane Road completely blocked the upper 5 km of potential salmonid habitat. Successful access to the habitat above McFarlane Road included establishing dams either side of the road, removing old culvert, installing new culvert, backfilling, placing rocks and stabilizing banks. Jenny maintained the interest and support of other partners and the public with frequent progress reports.

In addition to its benefits to fish and other riparian species, the Valens Brook restoration project has heightened awareness on Denman Island about the importance of protecting environmentally sensitive habitat.

As a professional biologist, Jenny Balke served as both project coordinator and environmental monitor for the project. She chose to contribute these services as an in-kind donation to the Denman Conservancy Association.

This project is consistent with Islands Trust policies that support the protection and restoration of riparian habitats and fish-bearing streams in the Trust Area.