

For Immediate Release
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Harbor WildWatch to offer virtual educational experiences open to all

In light of recent school and public space closures related to the evolving COVID-19 (novel coronavirus) outbreak, Harbor WildWatch will now be offering regular STEM-based digital content each week as a part of their educational programming. This content will be both interactive and informative, and geared toward kids, adults, and families for at least the next six weeks.

As an environmental education organization, Harbor WildWatch provides STEM-based workshops in both Pierce and Kitsap county schools, as well as public programs like beach walks, live SCUBA dives, and presentations from researchers. Their free interpretive center serves as an engaging learning destination in Gig Harbor for visitors and residents alike – serving over 40,000 people since they opened their doors in 2014. While the *Skansie Visitor & Interpretive Center* is temporarily closed and classroom workshops brought to a halt, Harbor WildWatch strives to be a continued source of inquisitive and fun education, for all ages.

“Harbor WildWatch is committed to providing educational services to our communities, especially during this time of uncertainty,” says Lindsey Stover, Executive Director. “We have the ability to deliver programs and activities for all ages through streaming platforms to ensure that we continue to deliver on our mission of inspiring stewardship for Puget Sound and greater Salish Sea, all while staying safe, healthy and maintaining social-distancing practices.”

Every week, the organization will offer three free, educational videos. These videos will be a combination of livestreams and pre-recorded workshops that explore our natural environment, provide STEM learning opportunities, and offer activity ideas for at-home learning. The content will be posted on Harbor WildWatch’s Facebook and YouTube accounts as well as shared on their website and through email. Harbor WildWatch will also be a regular weekly host on Thursdays in the *Too Cool For School* Facebook group, developed as a global resource for parents experiencing school closures due to COVID-19.

Content will be geared toward all ages – adults included! The team is looking forward to getting creative and offering a variety of accessible topics: from beach exploration at high and low tides, to understanding our watersheds, to an in-depth SCUBA exploration.

“Harbor WildWatch’s motto is ‘Learn, Have fun.’ We have always strived to make our lessons fun as well as educational,” says Rachel Easton, Educational Director. “In the coming months we will need fun more than ever! No matter the circumstances, we are committed to positive, interactive and informative content that promotes stewardship of our local environment. “

A full schedule of video content will be posted weekly to Harbor WildWatch’s website, Facebook, and via email. While the content will be free to the public, as a 501(c)(3) nonprofit, Harbor WildWatch is appreciative of any donations to help support the creation of the content and supporting their staff positions during this time. Donations can be made through their secure website or mailed to 3110 Judson Street, PMB #99, Gig Harbor, WA 98335.

To learn more, visit Harbor WildWatch's Facebook page (no Facebook account required), website, or sign-up for their email list at www.HarborWildWatch.org.

Harbor WildWatch is a 501(c)(3) non-profit environmental education organization based in Gig Harbor, WA. Their mission is to inspire stewardship for Puget Sound by providing learning opportunities about the environment to the people in the local community.

Through more than 600 fun and interactive programs each year, Harbor WildWatch hopes to inform residents and visitors about local marine life and elicit their involvement in preserving our natural resources. To make a donation or learn more about Harbor WildWatch, visit www.harborwildwatch.org.



Rachel Easton, Education Director, and Stena Troyer, Science Specialist will be bringing environmental education digitally to communities across the globe... rain or shine! These STEM-based videos will educate audiences of all ages on our environment.