

5th Grade Camp:

A. Thompson

Every year in the spring, 5th graders from Ellensburg's elementary schools head out for a three day camp experience in Manastash Canyon. In addition to getting to be away from home and among their peers in an off-campus setting, students participate in a variety of special classes and workshops volunteer-taught by members of the Ellensburg community. In 2012, these classes ranged in topic from Water Safety taught by a local law enforcement officer, to Fly Fishing for rainbow trout in a well-stocked pond, to basic Emergency First Aid. This year, Blue Leaf Environmental participated by putting on a class about Fish and Animal Tracking. Mark Timko and Audrey Thompson from Blue Leaf explained to the students how fish and animals can be tagged using radio and acoustic telemetry transponders, and then tracked in the wild using tracking tools like radio antennae. While Mark and Audrey pretended to be tagged bears and hid in the camp forest, students took turns tracking them down using radio telemetry. At the lake, students also got to watch rainbow trout behavior underwater in real time using Blue Leaf's sonar imaging technology (DIDSON). Seeing so many fish moving around near shore really helped motivate them for the Fly Fishing class!