

Salmo River Restoration: Habitat Enhancement – Then and Now

Readers who are savvy about vintage cars may be able to identify some of these cars (pictured) from the 1940s and 50s. They were “parked” on the banks of the Salmo River in 1963 to reduce erosion and provide bank stabilization to prevent mine tailings from entering the river. A Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) restoration project is building on these efforts, in a slightly more environmentally sensitive manner of course!

“Our bank protection and fish habitat restoration work in 2006 was undertaken on the aptly named “Upper Car-Body Run” adjacent to the northern Cantex tailings dump near Salmo,” says FWCP fisheries biologist Steve Arndt. This work was coordinated and partially funded by the FWCP, the Salmo Watershed Streamkeepers Society (SWSS) and Fortis BC. The SWSS, in close cooperation with local landowners, helped carry out the work.

A series of six log jam structures were built along the river bank over a 350 m stretch. These structures included placing logs and rootwads, anchored with large boulders, adjacent to the stream bank. The bank was also protected with smaller rock riprap and will be seeded this fall.



Car bodies, from the 1940s and 1950s, were used to protect the river bank. The work this summer included adding a large tree trunk and root wad.

“The objective of the restoration work is to ensure that the river does not cut into the mine tailings, as well as create eddies and pools of calmer water,” says Gerry Nellestijn, coordinator of the SWSS.

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Ministry of Environment



Partners in Conservation & Enhancement

The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, B.C.'s Ministry of Environment and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations affected by the construction of BC Hydro dams in the Columbia Basin.

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Manager's Message

Energy Conservation: One Way to Help Fish & Wildlife

We use the word conservation in many of the Compensation Program's communications in terms of addressing the impacts resulting from the construction of BC Hydro dams in this region. We often talk about the conservation work we do in the Compensation Program related to habitat enhancement for fish and wildlife, land acquisition, species inventories or some other aspect of our work.

There is no doubt that dams change water flows, alter the habitat available in valley-bottoms and affect many species. But - and it is a big but - we all use hydro electricity in our daily lives. That means we all share some responsibility for those impacts. As the demand for energy in B.C. grows, more fish and wildlife may continue to be impacted. Which makes me think about conservation in a different context. Energy conservation: another way to help conserve fish and wildlife habitats. The less energy we all use, the longer we can delay or reduce the need for new sources of power that may impact fish and wildlife. It makes sense to me.

Think about this: the average B.C. household uses about 15% more electricity today than in 1986 and about 30% more than in 1976. Today we have more electronic gadgets

than ever before. Despite all the energy-saving devices at our disposal, per capita electricity consumption is rising.

The energy gap - that is the gap between the electricity demanded in the province, and the amount supplied within B.C. - is growing. In each of the last five years, BC Hydro has had to import electricity to meet the domestic need and it has recently announced several new power projects.

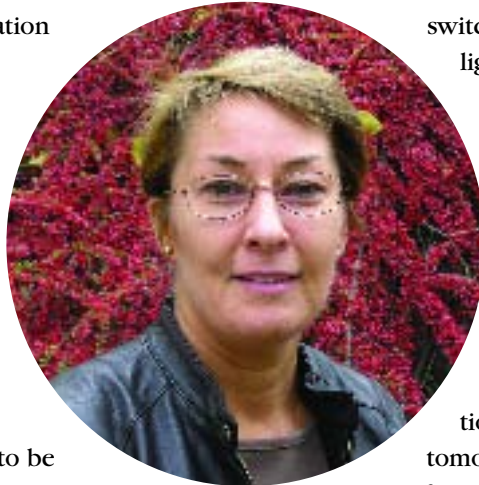
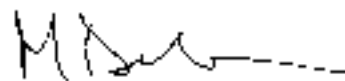
The first step towards closing the energy gap and keeping future impacts on fish and wildlife to a minimum is reducing our energy consumption. There is no shortage of ideas: turning the thermostat down a couple of degrees; using the dishwasher only when it is full; using a clothes line to dry clothes;

unplugging appliances when not in use; and using energy efficient models, to name but a few. As part of our recent

FWCP office renovations we installed manual light switches. Now, when a room is not in use, the lights are off. These are small things that could add up to a big difference. I'm going to continue to reduce my energy consumption in the workplace and at home, and do my part to minimize the environmental impacts of power projects.

Those are my thoughts as I reflect on the work of the Compensation Program today and the future of energy consumption and what it means for fish and wildlife tomorrow.

Before I wrap this up, I want to mention that a change is underway regarding this position. After more than a decade as Manager of the Compensation Program, I have chosen to take on new responsibilities as Environmental & Social Issues Manager for BC Hydro in the Columbia Basin region. Although plans are already underway to find a new FWCP Manager, the actual timing is uncertain. Therefore I will continue to be "at the helm" here over the next few months, while easing into my new duties, to ensure that the transition is as smooth as possible for this great organization. ●



Maureen DeHaan



Artwork by Esme entitled *Taming The Mountains - White Sturgeon*. Perhaps the piece serves as a reminder of the impact humans are having on the environment, especially with respect to electricity consumption. This art work is currently hanging in Touchstones Nelson: Museum of Art and History.

Art by Esme Nichola Shilleto www.EsmeArt.com

New Name & Logo

We have a new, or at least modified, name. It is the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program, or FWCP.

And have you noticed the fresh new look of our logo? The FWCP has never dwelled too long on how we look; basically the goal of our operations is to deliver effective conservation and enhancement projects for fish and wildlife.

Everything else is secondary. But a new look was timely to coincide with our name change so here it is.



Visit our website: www.fwcp.ca

Irene Joins Team

Wildlife biologist Irene Manley is the newest member of the FWCP team, replacing recently-retired John Gwilliam. One of the reasons Irene moved from the coast to the Columbia Basin 13 years ago was the amount of “on-the-ground” wildlife conservation and enhancement work occurring in the region. “It was a natural extension to join the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program,” says Irene, “because it undertakes such a broad range of projects that are leading to positive results.

“Whether generating wildlife trees, conserving land, providing improved foraging areas or enhancing habitat,” she

added “it is the breadth and variety of work that the FWCP does that appeals to me.”

Irene’s experience has revolved around species-at-risk so she should fit right in. She particularly enjoys concentrating on those species that are harder to find or come out at strange times of the day. “I guess I like the challenge, and many of these smaller species just don’t get the same attention as the ‘mega fauna,’” says Irene. In addition to 14 years of experience in the field she brings a Masters degree in Wildlife Biology from Simon Fraser University. Irene is based in the Nelson office and can be contacted at 352-6874 or Irene.manley@bchydro.bc.ca. ●



Irene Manley

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Salmo River Restoration Drives into the Future

New Techniques Used

“The rootwads help to provide shelter for adult fish and provide better juvenile rearing habitat.”

It is more than 40 years since the cars were strategically placed on the river bank, but it seems they have stood the test of time relatively well. “Although the cars are



Gerry Nellestijn SWSS

River bank conservation and restoration techniques have come a long way in forty years.

now rusting and starting to be taken away by high waters,” says Steve, “they appear to have actually performed fairly well as a tool for bank protection – although stream restoration methods have come a long way since then!” ●

If you would like to receive our newsletter electronically, contact:

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or e-mail info@fwcp.ca**

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UPDATE Newsletter

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We Would Appreciate Your Feedback

Let us know if you have questions or comments about the newsletter, or the Compensation Program.



FWCP Receives National Award:

“Silver Salamander” Makes its Way to the Basin

The Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) was recently awarded the Silver Salamander Award from the Canadian Amphibian Reptile Conservation Network (CARCNET) for its ongoing commitment to recovering the endangered Northern leopard frog in B.C.

“When our work is recognized at a national level, it is very gratifying to say the least!” says FWCP Steering Committee Co-Chair, Kevin Conlin. He noted that the overriding goal of the Compensation Program is to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife populations impacted by the construction of BC Hydro dams in the Columbia Basin.

“This is absolutely tremendous news, both for the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and the Northern leopard frog recovery team,” says consulting biologist Doug Adama who leads the delivery of the FWCP Northern leopard frog work. “Obviously when you work on these projects, you do it to save the species not for awards or peer recognition. That said, to receive an award like the Silver Salamander is very special. It gives you renewed vigour and inspiration for your work.”



Doug Adama

Not a salamander, but one of the many endangered Northern leopard frogs the FWCP has released in recent years. Doug Adama (on right) was on hand in Victoria to receive the Silver Salamander Award from CARCNET Director and Secretary, David Cunningham.



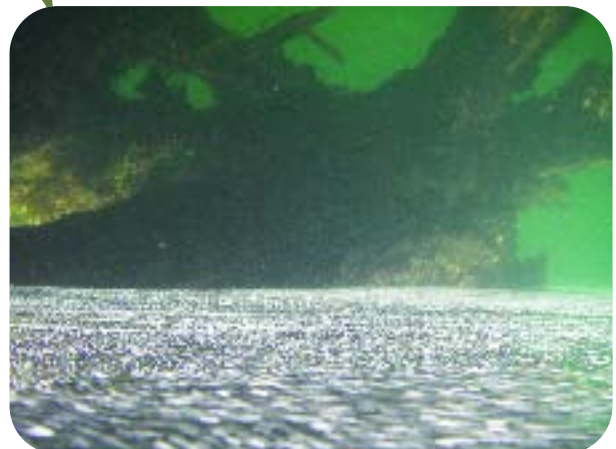
Larry Halverson

The Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area (CVWMA) is home to the only known breeding population of the red-listed (endangered) Northern leopard frog in the province. Since 2000, the FWCP has helped raise and release nearly 25,000 Northern leopard frogs. Although their survival in B.C. is still uncertain, progress is being made. Last year, for example, several egg masses were found in a new breeding area within the CVWMA. ●

So You Think You Know It All?

- 1 **Sounds like a bad joke but what do lawyers, lush and ling cod all have in common?**
- 2 **Why do ospreys and Peregrine falcons have black bands or patches under their eyes?**
- 3 **What's this?** ➤

see page 10 for answers



Michael Zimmer

The Fertilization Program-FAQ

All That You Ever Wanted to Know...and Then Some

The Fertilization and Monitoring Program, coordinated by the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program and the Ministry of Environment, has been in existence since the 1990s in Kootenay Lake and upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir. It accounts for over 60% of the Compensation Program's fisheries budget, and is held up as one of the largest successful lake water

restoration projects in the world. It is no surprise therefore, that we receive many questions about it.



On board the sampling vessel, Limnologist Eva Schindler and contractor Don Miller. This photo is five images "stitched" together with a view down the south and west arms of Kootenay Lake.

(Courtesy of kootenay-lake.ca). Pictured right, just a few of the species benefiting from the Fertilization Program.



When did it start and why?

This experimental program was started on the north arm of Kootenay Lake in 1992 to rebuild the food web that had been impacted by construction of BC Hydro's Duncan Dam. In 1999 it was expanded to the upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir in response to the impacts from Revelstoke and Mica dams.

The water storage and hydro-electric dams in the area act as a barrier to natural nutrients (both phosphorus and nitrogen) that would otherwise flow downstream from the land, into the lakes and through the system. Kootenay Lake and upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir became nutrient starved and kokanee stocks plummeted. By the 1990's both water bodies became "ultra-oligotrophic," which is Greek for poorly nourished. The Fertilization Program replaces the nutrients that would otherwise be flowing into these water bodies.

What is put into the water?

Is it fish food?

It is not 'fish food' but nutrients consisting of a liquid blend of nitrogen and phosphorus that feed the smaller life forms in the water. The fertilizer is liquid agricultural grade urea-ammonium nitrate (28-0-0) and ammonium polyphosphate (10-34-0).

How important is the nutrient addition and how does it work?

The nitrogen and phosphorus added by the Fertilization Program feed microscopic algae, technically known as phytoplankton - meaning plants suspended in water. The nutrients actually target nanoplankton which is a specific size of phytoplankton. Nanoplankton are important to the Kootenay Lake and Arrow Lakes Reservoir ecosystems because they are the best food for zooplankton.

In addition to nitrogen and phosphorus, phytoplankton requires the energy from the sun which they convert from carbon dioxide into high-energy carbohydrates that are subsequently passed up the food chain. Therefore the entire food web in an aquatic ecosystem is based on phytoplankton. They feed the zooplankton (animals suspended in water), which in turn, feed the kokanee, which feed the larger fish like the Gerrard rainbows and bull trout. These fish help feed the Bald eagles, ospreys, and grizzly bears, to name but a few.

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PHOTO CREDITS

Main photo and osprey: kootenay-lake.ca
Grizzly bear: Fred Parker

Bald eagles: Hal Korber
Kokanee: Brian Sperling
Gerrard rainbow: E. Keeley

Is it successful?

Yes, very successful. Phytoplankton biomass has increased as a result of the Fertilization Program, as has the number of kokanee. In the upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir, for example, the number of spawning kokanee increased from about 100,000 in 1997 to over 632,000 in 2005.

It is also proving successful for the larger predator fish species. In the early years of the Fertilization Program, bull trout were 20-30% heavier for a given length, and rainbow trout 17-24% heavier than in pre-fertilization conditions. This is good for the ecosystem, as well as tourism and recreation in the region. The Fertilization Program is viewed as one of the largest successful lake restoration projects in the world.

Why not just keep on adding fertilizer to increase fish numbers?

Implementation of the Fertilization Program is a balancing act. Adding too many nutrients can lead to over-enriched bodies of water that produce too much algae. As these algae die they use oxygen to decompose, which is unhealthy for fish, plants and other animals.

Where is the fertilizer dispersed?

In all cases, the fertilizer is dispersed far from shore on the water's surface as phytoplankton live in the epilimnion - the warmer, upper layers of the lake.

When is it dispersed?

From late spring to early fall. The amounts are seasonally adjusted. More phosphorus than nitrogen is added in the spring and as the summer progresses, more nitrogen than phosphorus is added. In ecosystems, it is important to maintain a balance of nitrogen to phosphorus in order to maintain the balance of phytoplankton composition in the ecosystem.

How is it dispersed?

A tug and barge is used to disperse fertilizer in the north arm of Kootenay Lake. Both the MV Galena Bay Ferry and MV Shelter Bay Ferry are used to disperse fertilizer in the upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir. The propeller wash helps to mix the nutrients in.

Does monitoring occur?

Yes, monthly. To ensure there is an efficient uptake of the nutrients the Fertilization Program uses an adaptive management technique. This means water quality monitoring is done monthly from April to November (twice in June) so that the amount of fertilizer added can be adjusted accordingly. There are a total of 12 monitoring sites; four in Kootenay Lake and eight in upper Arrow Lakes Reservoir. A wide range of samples and measurements are taken at each site.

Does the Fertilization Program feed mysid shrimp?

No, that is not the intention. Mysid shrimp are a non-native species introduced into Kootenay Lake in 1949 as a food source for juvenile Rainbow trout.

In the years that followed, an increase in the size of kokanee in the West Arm was mistakenly attributed (for a variety of reasons) to the introduction of the shrimp and, as a result, mysid shrimp were introduced to hundreds of lakes across North America and Scandinavia. Although some are eaten by kokanee, the reality is that mysid shrimp compete with kokanee for zooplankton rather than provide a food source for them. Mysid shrimp are able to avoid predation by spending the day in deep, dark water. They migrate at night to the surface waters to feed on zooplankton, thus competing with kokanee for food. There were initial concerns that the Fertilization Program would lead to significant increases in mysid shrimp populations but this has not been the case.

What is the difference between nutrient addition through the Fertilization Program and pollution?

When the lakes or reservoirs receive large amounts of nutrients from agricultural run-off, sewage plants or industrial effluents, the growth of algae is uncontrolled and can overwhelm the lake ecosystems. This would be pollution. The Fertilization Program, in contrast, adds a balance of nutrients over a wide area at specific times of the year, and the process and results are carefully monitored to ensure a healthy ecosystem.

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Does it affect my swimming in the water and should I be worried about water quality?

High quality agricultural grade fertilizer (i.e. can be sprayed on our food crops) is dispersed over a wide area. The Canadian Water Quality Guidelines for the Protection of Aquatic Life and the Protection of Drinking Water for Humans contain regulations for the amounts of nitrogen and phosphorus permitted in water. Nutrient concentrations during the Fertilization Program remain far lower than those permitted by such regulations.

Does it affect how clear the water is?

Biologists ensure that the Fertilization Program is balanced and that there is not an excess production of plankton. An increase in plankton will reduce the clarity of the water (because of light absorption and scattering) but, in general, water clarity in B.C. lakes is determined by particles naturally washed in, or by storms, wind and wave action. Secchi disc measurements (a patterned disc that is lowered into the water until it cannot be seen) are taken at all the monitoring

sites and, typically, the water is clearer now than it was prior to when the dams were constructed. Secchi disk measurements range from 3 metres during the summer months to 15 metres during the late fall and winter months.

Will there be a time when the Fertilization Program is not needed?

In the late 1990s the level of nutrients added to Kootenay Lake was decreased to see if the lake had retained enough to maintain kokanee stocks. This was not the case and there was a subsequent decrease in phytoplankton densities and kokanee numbers. There are currently no plans to cease the program although biologists are always exploring new methods of dispersal to improve the efficiency of the nutrient up-take. ●

Want to know more?

There are more FAQ's about the Fertilization Program on our website including the cost, who pays, and where exactly the nutrients are dispersed. Visit www.fwcp.ca

The Harsh Side of Mother Nature: Rocky Mountain Bighorn Sheep Die in Avalanche



Tobi Anaka

Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep with radio collars after their release in 2005.

The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) undertakes regular telemetry flights that track the movements and health of radio-collared wildlife in various corners of the Columbia Basin. Species that come under the scrutiny of the radio antennas include White-tailed deer, caribou, Mule deer, Grizzly bear, cougar, and Townsends big-eared bats to name but a few.

The radio collars send out a special signal when the animal dies, allowing biologists to locate it on the ground and

determine cause of death. It was this ability that led FWCP biologists in the early summer of 2006 to discover the untimely death of not one Rocky Mountain Bighorn sheep, but five. It also served as a reminder about how harsh Mother Nature can be.

All five were discovered at the bottom of a greened-up avalanche chute near White Swan Lake in the East Kootenay.

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The snow from the chute had receded with fresh green growth tempting the animals in to feed. However, there was still a deep, and obviously unstable, snowpack above them and somehow an avalanche was triggered.

It is believed that the majority of sheep that were caught in the avalanche were from the White Swan herd.

“When dealing with species at risk with small and isolated herds, whether they be Bighorn sheep, caribou, or whatever,” says FWCP wildlife biologist Larry Ingham, “it highlights the potentially devastating impacts that natural events can have on their long-term survival.”

A total of 25 sheep, with the help of FWCP and a number of other partners, were relocated from Radium to Premier Ridge in February of 2005.

On a brighter note, a lamb survey of the relocated ewes was conducted in the summer of 2006, and of seven of the ewes identified, four of them (59%) had lambs. “Although these are early days we are very satisfied to find out that some of the ewes are successfully producing offspring,” added Larry. “Of course we will continue to monitor the survival of these lambs throughout the year.”

If the sheep relocation project is proven to be successful, more sheep may be relocated in 2008. ●

Just one Snag with Prescribed Burns: Can Wildlife Trees Take the Heat?

Prescribed burns are a very valuable tool when it comes to habitat enhancement. They reduce conifer in-growth and encroachment, enhance forage quality and quantity for a variety of ungulates, and provide better sight lines for prey to avoid predators.

So when might a prescribed burn be detrimental to wildlife? The answer may be when wildlife trees are involved.

A wildlife tree is any standing dead or live tree with special characteristics that provide valuable habitat for the conservation or enhancement of wildlife. They play a very important role in forest ecosystems. Typically, the most valuable wildlife trees are old, large and relatively rare structures. When a fire comes through an area, prescribed or not, there is a danger that such valuable wildlife trees are lost, or negatively impacted.

So Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) biologists will be identifying and assessing valuable wildlife trees in East Kootenay treatment areas scheduled to be burned. They will then return to those same trees post-burn to assess the impacts on them and the species that rely on them, including the Lewis’ woodpecker, Flammulated owl, and Williamson’s Sapsucker - all species-at-risk.

“If the prescribed burns are having negative impacts on the wildlife trees a number of options may be considered,” says FWCP wildlife biologist Irene Manley. “These may include altering the burn plans or taking steps to protect particular wildlife trees from the fire’s path.”

Biologists will also be looking at the other side of the equation. Prescribed burns can negatively impact existing

wildlife trees but can also generate new ones. Depending on the intensity of the fire and the condition of the forest, the fire can kill mature trees, resulting in more standing dead timber. Newly created wildlife trees will be surveyed to determine the extent to which they provide habitat for wildlife and species-at-risk.

In addition to the prescribed burn assessments, FWCP biologists are exploring other techniques to generate wildlife trees, such as topping trees or using fungal inoculation. The latter is when live trees are inoculated with native heart-rot fungi, increasing habitat for cavity nesters. ●



A Three-toed woodpecker explores a wildlife tree in Rock's Pasture, in the East Kootenay, after a prescribed burn.

Doug Adama

Eggs Up!

Meadow Creek Spawning Channel Full but Kokanee Numbers are Down

Preliminary numbers indicate that the number of kokanee spawners in both the Hill Creek and Meadow Creek Spawning Channels are down from last year (see table below). Absolute kokanee returns are only part of the story, however, and for the full story it is worth digging deeper. The fact is one of the two spawning channels (Meadow Creek) is actually full. How come? Fewer fish overall, but a full channel?

The answer lies in fecundity, or potential reproductive capacity. There are fewer fish but each female is carrying, and laying, more eggs than last year. In Meadow Creek, for example, there was an average of 315 eggs per female in 2006 compared with an average of 255 during the previous 10 years - a 23.5% increase. The target for egg deposition for Meadow Creek Spawning Channel is 50 million eggs and that figure has been reached this year.

The increase in average egg quantity is a reflection of the average size of the fish. For Meadow Creek the average length of females was 249 mm in 2006, a 12% increase compared to the previous ten-year average.

It is a similar story at the Hill Creek Spawning Channel. Although 2006 kokanee returns were 65% of last year's count, egg deposition was approximately 80% compared to 2005. The egg deposition target is 12 million eggs, and this year, just over 10.6 million eggs were laid.

"Eggs per female entering the channel also give us only part of the story," says Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program



Beth Woodbridge

The colourful sight of kokanee heading into Meadow Creek Spawning Channel

fisheries biologist Steve Arndt. "Another is egg retention, and that is the average number of eggs retained in the fish after spawning has occurred. For Hill Creek the average egg retention was 6.2 eggs per fish, which is lower than last year. The lower the average egg retention, the better."

Average egg retention rates likely decrease when the fish are in better condition and there is less overcrowding and fighting in the channel.

Of course the real measure of success comes in the spring when the kokanee fry emerge and, ultimately, make their way to the lake. Watch this space. ●

KOKANEE RETURNS AND EGG DEPOSITION

	Kokanee Returns*		Fecundity (Average # eggs carried/female)		Total Eggs deposited (millions)	
	2005	2006	2005	2006	2005	2006
Hill Creek Spawning Channel	142,755	92,567	214	234	13.0	10.6
Meadow Creek Spawning Channel	510,000	331,800	226	315	41.7	51.0

*Number of fish allowed to spawn in the channel

A Lot o' Lota in Arrow:

Burbot Study Results

In recent years FWCP, BC Hydro and Ministry of Environment fish biologists have been assessing the status of burbot (*Lota lota*) populations in the Arrow Lakes Reservoir (ALR). Their findings indicate that this population is relatively healthy, to say the least. The data, collected in 2003 / 04 and analyzed last winter, shows both higher than average abundance and size of burbot in ALR compared to some other lakes in B.C.

Burbot numbers in some locations have declined due to habitat changes, including the formation of reservoirs in the region, making them a species of concern in many parts of the Columbia Basin. The B.C. Conservation Data Centre, for example, has added Kootenay Lake and lower Kootenay River burbot populations to the red list, meaning they are endangered or threatened provincially. Burbot in the ALR are faring relatively well by comparison.

Relative abundance in the ALR was measured by catch-per-unit-effort using cod traps similar to those used in coastal commercial fisheries. These traps were placed overnight in various locations between the Narrows and Galena Bay. The majority of burbot angling in the reservoir occurs near Nakusp, which might indicate that it is a single area of highly concentrated fish. Relatively little burbot fishing occurs in Galena Bay.

The traps caught an average of between 4.5 and 4.7 burbot each night. This indicates that there are multiple locations in ALR with highly concentrated populations of burbot – not

just one. The sampling was repeated in fall 2004 for Nakusp, and the average catch was 8.5 burbot per night, with a maximum of 18 in one overnight trap set. These were the highest observed catch rates recorded in the Kootenay region to date.

These figures show that the burbot catch-per-unit-effort for the ALR was more than ten times higher than a selection of other lakes in B.C. The median values for catch-per-unit-effort for the ALR were actually higher than the maximum values recorded in most other sampled lakes in the province. The results of the work, using this sampling method, suggest that the ALR could have one of the highest levels of burbot relative

abundance in the province. Angler catch rates for burbot are also high for the reservoir.

Not only is there a high relative abundance, but burbot that call the ALR home are also larger than those found in some other lakes in the province. Ninety per cent of the burbot sampled exceeded half a



Juvenile burbot

metre (530mm) in length, and sexually mature fish were typically 600mm or greater in length. ●

Want to know more?

Visit www.fwcp.ca and click on Reports – 2006.

So You Think You Know It All? **Answers continued from page 4**

- 1 These are common terms used for burbot (*Lota lota*).
- 2 Reduce the reflective glare of the sun.
- 3 Root wad underwater, see page 1 for full restoration story. OK, we made it pretty tricky for you. We turned the photo upside down.

Catch & Release

Mayors Take to the Water

The Columbia Basin is a spectacular corner of planet earth, especially given the diversity of fish and wildlife found on our doorstep. So, it is not surprising that many residents are drawn to the outdoors, local politicians included.

This year two West Kootenay politicians were “caught” on film enjoying – and supporting – the environment; Nelson’s Mayor, John Dooley, on beautiful Kootenay Lake and Trail’s Mayor, Dieter Bogs, on the edge of the mighty Columbia River.

Mayor Dooley reeled in a very respectable 18.5 lb Gerrard rainbow trout from the cold waters of Kootenay Lake, right in front of Kaslo’s S.S. Moyie. This particular Gerrard rainbow trout was caught on a bucktail fly.

Mayor Dieter Bogs was on hand - with sturgeon in hand - to help at the 2006 Juvenile White Sturgeon Release event at Beaver Creek Park south of Trail. This event, that saw the release of more than 5,000 juvenile white sturgeon, drew 150+ school children from across the West Kootenay.

The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) is an integral part of both these “catch and release” activities.

In support of the white sturgeon, the FWCP is an active partner in the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative. Visit www.uppercolumbiasturgeon.org for more information. The FWCP coordinated the release activities near Trail and Castlegar this year, and contributes approximately \$200,000 each year towards the sturgeon fish culture program in the East Kootenay. This program, coordinated by the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, raises juvenile sturgeon to nearly one year of age and they are then released into the Columbia River.

For the Gerrard rainbow trout and other predator fish species in Kootenay Lake, funding of the Meadow Creek Spawning Channel and the Fertilization Program is key to the health of this fish species. More on the Fertilization Program on page four.

Mayor Dooley may have the bigger fish of the day, but hopefully Mayor Bogs’ sturgeon will grow to be nearly 100 times the size of the Gerrard. This is not impossible since a fully grown white sturgeon can reach a weight of 1,800 lbs! ●



Robert Frew

Trail's Mayor Bogs at the May 2006 sturgeon release.



Garry Beaudry

Mayor Dooley reels in a Gerrard on Kootenay Lake

New Fish and Wildlife Reports

Check out this year's technical reports, all available for free from our website.

Visit www.fwcp.ca, and click on the "2006 Hot Reports" on the home page.

- Kinbasket Reservoir and Upper Columbia River Kokanee Spawner Index 2005
- Koocanusa Reservoir Kokanee Spawner Index 2005
- Creston Valley Wildlife Management Area Wetland Enhancement Project Report: Corn Creek Unit 2B
- The Kootenay Community Bat Project: 2005 Summary Report
- Habitat Selection by Mule Deer in southeastern British Columbia
- Columbian Sharp-tailed Grouse
- 2005 Columbia Basin Racer Inventory
- 2005 Western Screech-Owl Inventory of the Central and West Kootenay Region
- Columbia Basin Western Skink Inventory & Assessment 2005 Results
- A work in progress: Continuation of the Yaqan Nuki Wetland Rehabilitation
- Status of Burbot (*Lota lota*) in Arrow Lakes Reservoir
- Protection of the Morrisey Old Growth Cottonwood Forest
- Survey for Endangered Yellow-Breasted Chat Breeding Occurrence, Habitat and Productivity in SE BC
- The Role of Habitat Structure in Nest Site Selection and Breeding Success of Yellow Warblers in the Revelstoke Reach, BC
- Endangered Forests of the Inland Temperate Rainforest: An inventory of old-growth in Trout Lake and the Incomappleux
- The Development and Testing of a Reconnaissance Level Wetland Assessment Form on the TaTa Skookumchuck Range Unit
- Blueprint for Action 2006: Fire-maintained Ecosystem Restoration in BC's Rocky Mountain Trench
- Great Blue Heron and Bald Eagle Inventory and Stewardship in the Columbia Basin (2005-2006)
- East Kootenay Badger Project 2005-2006 Progress Report
- East Kootenay Badger Project Summary Report
- Hill Creek Spawning Channel Rainbow Trout Studies - 2005



Aaron Reid

You will find that many staff at the FWCP have a passion for fish and wildlife and therefore spend much of their free time in "the field". Here Thomas Hill returns from one of his regular weekend bush hikes in the Creston Valley after finding a very nice set of shed elk antlers.