



Flylines

Fall 2014



The view of Comox Lake, looking west from the Courtenay Fish and Game Clubhouse where we held our 2014 Annual General Meeting. Comox Glacier merges with the clouds. A fly casting clinic was held by Peter Caverhill on the flat lawn in the foreground. (photo supplied by a member of the Courtenay Fish and Game)

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Contact information

Mail: PO Box 41023
RPO Woodgrove
Nanaimo, BC V9T6M7

Email: general@bcfff.bc.ca

Website: bcfff.bc.ca

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MEMBERSHIP

Members can join directly or through any of the member clubs (locations on the website)



SUMMARY of AGM/Dinner/Auction – May 17, 2014

Prepared by Peter Caverhill for the “Osprey News” (Ospreys FF)

If you ever have a chance to visit the Courtenay F&G Club Facility on Comox Lake, do so! With the Comox glacier in view at the head of the lake this is the “Lake Louise” of Vancouver Island. Spectacular!

The BCFFF AGM day came off rather well considering that the only time to secure this facility was the May long weekend and time for intricate planning wasn't possible. Forty seven attendees had signed up for the dinner which was a relatively small number to do well at the dinner/auction.

The large majority of those taking in the day were from the Island. These are a very keen group (nearly 60% of BCFFF's membership is on the Island). The **AGM business meeting** was attended by about 28 people (a good turnout considering past AGMs) and was very stimulating. There were a number of issues discussed with lots of questions. Here are some of the interesting things that came up during the two and a half hour meeting:

-BCFFF membership sits at around 758 members (one long-serving club, the Lonely Loons, has folded)

- During the Gilly Fund discussion there was interest in the idea of doing a “Gilly 2” (perhaps an e-edition) with updated info (ie 1986 versus now).

- The Gilly Committee (they review applications to the fund) has been missing members for the last few years. Volunteers have now been found and the Committee will be expanded from five to six members. BCFFF will make a larger effort to regularly inform the membership that the fund exists and that dollars are available.

-A lot of discussion surrounded the following fisheries management issues:

1) Angler ethics (BCFFF should buy a big ad on ethics for the freshwater regs synopsis),

2) Thompson River angling regs for steelhead (opening strategy, catch and release limits),

3) How to maintain the quality angling experience on steelhead and other waters (need more effective angling guide management as too much AG presence on some streams has become problematic for the resident angler),

4) The increasing effectiveness of fly gear for the diminishing steelhead resource (include boats in this, be they jets or water masters).

- “Fly Lines”, the BCFFF newsletter, has just been released as a spring issue. Also, the BCFFF website has been undergoing renovations and a new site will be with us soon. BCFFF will have a donated 2-handed Meiser fly rod and there is the suggestion that it be used to generate more Direct Members.

- Women and youth are two demographics that are largely absent from BCFFF (How to attract? Can we have a presence in the schools to interest kids?). One of our Board members in the Tofino area will be hosting fly tying and will possibly try to have this sort of presence in the area's elementary schools.

- Elections were held with most of last year's Board staying in their roles. A vacant VP job was filled, and we have a couple of new Board members. (see page 2)

After the business meeting there was a **Fly Casting Tune-up** via I-pad video capture out on the grass in front of the clubhouse (see separate article on this).

The **Dinner/Auction** was spiced with a lot of items out for bid on a "silent auction" basis. Much of this was populated by items from the estate of Don McDermid. There were rods, reels, dyed polar bear hair, fly plaques, artworks that Don had collected from club and BCFFF functions over the decades, and lots of other stuff. Don's widow, Marsha donated a lot of this, and the rest was done on a percent basis to BCFFF and the estate. Don had been a member of the Totems, the Osprey fly Fishers, and the Comox Fly Fishers over the years. He always had a presence in BCFFF (Board member; newsletter editor, and at the time of his death last August, he was VP #2). Other donors had provided items as well. There were three spectacularly framed fly plaques (one fly tied by the late Harry Lemire, donated by his friend and two flies tied and donated by Chris Wesson). Folks were generous and the silent auction and raffle items did very well considering the number of people present.

There was a bar with reasonably-priced drinks. Dinner was catered by BCFFF Board member Jesse Blake and his crew. Jesse runs the "Wildside Grill" in Tofino. The food was local seafood with salad and all the trimmings (it was truly yummy!).

There was a **dinner speaker** (Craig Stephen DVM PhD – Fish Health Specialist). Dr. Stephen is a Professor of Ecosystem and Public Health, Faculty of Veterinary Medicine, University of Calgary. He is also the Director of a new group – The Centre for Coastal Health.

<http://www.centreforcoastalhealth.ca/>

Dr. Stephen gave a very thought-provoking power point talk inter-relating ecosystem and fisheries health with human well-being. He emphasized the importance of a holistic approach when dealing with environmental issues (don't focus attention and resources on single aspects of what is really a larger picture).

All considered, a great day!

Pete Caverhill, May 30/14

Editor's comments: *The Annual Report, which was presented at the Business meeting, can be viewed in the website. It shows the accomplishments of the BCFFF over the past year.*

Also, we would like to thank the Courtenay Fish and Game club for their help, without which the AGM would not have been a success.

Background - I was asked by the organisers of the AGM if I would lead a fly casting session after the AGM meeting and before the Dinner/Auction. What would be interesting about this session is that we would video each of the participant's casting using an I-Pad. I would be assisted by three members of the Mid – Island Castaways (Murray Coen – with the I-Pad; Dan Hudson, and Bruce Morrison).

The plan was to ask the casting participants their name, years of fly casting experience, and what they felt their casting issues to be. This information was recorded on a table. We'd then meet for a pep talk while we set up our gear and I'd explain how things would work. I had brought my bucket of casting props.

Each caster would run through a series of casts, be videoed, then have a chance to watch his or her own video capture on the pad and we would provide suggestions for improvement. It would be almost "instant feedback"!

Concerns – I was concerned that: 1) the turnout for this would either be non-existent or possibly overwhelming 2) no-one would have brought their fly rods 3) the weather would be pouring rain.

What happened? – The turnout was fantastic – 14 casters (they all had their gear, and the weather was cooperative!). The F&G facility was fabulous for this – lots of level lawn and building under-covers to escape the rain. My measured casting line was strung out by a volunteer. On-lookers were able to stand outside or on the clubhouse balcony just above the casting field. Good natured heckling was rampant.

It was interesting to see what the participants had indicated were their casting difficulties: distance, double haul, accuracy, tailing loops, everything.

I explained that we'd run each person on the list through a series of casts that I demo'd (pick-up and laydown; cast for accuracy; false cast for loop control and tight loops; cast for max distance. We allocated about 2 minutes for each caster to run through these casting sequences (not much time, but with this many casters it had to be short). Murray videoed each caster, focussing on arm/hand/body actions since capturing the full movement of the fly line is almost impossible under most circumstances. Adequate casting analysis is possible by just observing what the caster is doing, and then relating this to the actual cast. All 14 casters had their turn over about

a 40 minute period. There was lots of good-natured bantering from a number of non-casters, who were observing from the clubhouse balcony.

After having watched all the casters, I gave an overview of: 1) the 5 essentials that are the basis of good fly casting 2) the most common issues that show up in casters of every experience level 3) use of the horizontal casting plane to help in perfecting loops, single and double hauls.

We then worked with each individual and their video segment. We suggested that the caster do some self-critique. Then we provided a short analysis of the casting, and indicated ways to overcome the issues and generally improve each person's casting.

Observations - the group's fly casting – Within the group of 14 casters, the casting/fly fishing experience ranged from a few lessons to many decades. Most of the individuals had been fly casting for many years. According to what they reported on the sign-up sheet and what our observations were, all of the casters had casting issues, either big or small, that they needed to work on and correct.

The most prevalent fly casting issues, apparent within this group were:

- Too much wrist, resulting in wide open loops and a loss of accuracy and distance
- Inability to form tight loops by not concentrating on a straight line path of the rod tip
- Unawareness of how important it is to keep slack line out of the casting process (including starting each casting sequence with the rod tip held too high)
- Inability to use single and double hauls to smooth out the casting and to achieve better accuracy and distance by increasing line speed (more rod bend/greater rod load).
- Waving the rod back and forth, often without paying attention to where in the casting stroke speed and power should be employed (start slow and accelerate to a crisp stop)

This is pretty typical of any group with mixed casting experience.

Improvement Suggestions for Next Time – Here are a few ideas to make a session like this go more effectively:

- With a group of this size, more time would be helpful. This would allow for more individual attention
- Try for a smaller group size (6 casters versus the 14 that we had) or a larger number of instructors and videographers with pads.
- Find a way to transfer the video captures from the I-Pad to a flash drive so this could be used for further/future instruction, perhaps using regular PC equipment.
- Spend more follow-up time with each participant to emphasize specific ways that they could improve.

INDIVIDUAL MEMBERS CAN MAKE A DIFFERENCE

The following conversation was extracted from a series of emails between Pete Caverhill (Ospreys) and Bruce Morrison (Mid Island Castaways). You know from the previous article that Peter held the casting clinic and Bruce helped. The emails were shared with the board members, and I have edited the comments.

Bruce (to Pete) Subject: Teaching: “Yesterday we fished the formal part of our month long fly fishing course. I feel like I should go into rehab for a month. But thanks to our volunteers, we somehow manage to pull it off every year. I’m sending you a copy of the evaluation summary to show you the sort of stuff we do. We don’t always get it right, but this year things seem to come together better than in some other years. Every year we try to learn from the course and make the changes required.

This year, in addition to the orientation session and four three hour classes, we have added four more informal sessions, two are fish outs one on a lake and another on a river. The idea is to connect the classroom stuff to the situations on the water. We also are doing a two hour session on a river identifying bugs. People really get a kick out of that one. Then we continue the learning with a Wednesday evening drop-in casting session after supper. This is so people get the basics in place before they starting going for distance and ruin their shoulders. It’s good fun and it gives us a chance to introduce them to fun kinds of learning stuff like hoops on the ground or standing, work with the iPad etc. It’s all good and I think the casting instructors keep learning. I know I sure do.

I have a debriefing with the folks who teach fly tying and a separate one for the casting coaches and knot instructors. I make asking them to do yet another meeting palatable by doing it over breakfast. For some reason eating sure makes sitting around talking more fun. Everyone has received a copy of the evaluation summary, which gives us a place to start in terms of talking about what needs to be changed for next year.”

Pete (to Bruce) Subject: Teaching: “I think that what your group is doing (under the category of reaching out to the world to get folks interested in fly fishing and hence the environment) is truly admirable. It can be a model, perhaps, for other clubs. However, the likelihood of other clubs, and their members, knowing about this is probably pretty low. BCFFF should take this sort of information and provide it to the rest of our member clubs. In BCFFF, we have often talked about a survey of our clubs just to see what everyone is doing. We all need this info to give us ideas and to recognize clubs that are doing things that are special.

So, by way of this memo, I suggesting to BCFFF to get on with it.”

Bruce (to Pete) Subject:Teaching: “You know we started from scratch, frantically trying to figure out what to do and how to do it. Over the years, we have worked to improve both our teaching and performance skills. I sure wish that we had been able to get information, suggestions and even program coaching from someone in the BCFFF. It would be a real asset if someone like you and perhaps someone else on the board could be identified as resource people that clubs could contact to talk about setting up fly fishing programs. Sometimes even having someone to bounce ideas off of really helps. Similarly, having someone like you who could, if requested, visit a club and coach potential casting instructors. I’m not suggesting that you would take over the whole task because as we know, it takes time and skill to develop both casting and coaching skills. There are casting instructors out there who could come to do workshops. Our volunteer casting coaches have been going through workshops of one kind or another, since we got started. It would be wonderful if the BCFFF could take some kind of a supportive role in terms of learning fly fishing.”

Pete (to Bruce) Subject: Teaching: “I had thought that profiling what you are doing in the information that BCFFF sends out would be interesting to BCFFF members and perhaps be a stimulant to them to take on similar projects in their own communities. As far as a fly casting “outreach” is concerned BCFFF should perhaps be discussing this. One of the objectives of BCFFF (in addition to all of the conservation stuff and the Gilly Fund) is to support the needs of our member clubs.”

Bruce (to Pete): “I would feel more comfortable about that if other groups were featured also. I’m not aware of what everyone is doing, but I know the folks in Cowichan worked with 200 kids and the Comox club runs the Fishing part of the Fish and Games summer program for kids. I think they also host a bunch of Spey casting workshops. For me the point of something like that would be, hey look what these folks are doing I can contact them if its something we might like to try.”

Pete (to Bruce): “As I see it, BCFFF would aim to profile what interesting things our clubs are doing and, by way of some medium (newsletter/blog/ or??), let everyone know about these things. This information, shared, adds interest and can stimulate others to consider additional worthwhile activities. This information could be provided as a regular feature that would appear in the medium that we used to get the word out.

Editor comments: *To me the above conversation is the essence of the BCFFF, sharing the experiences or activities of clubs and members, supporting them and recognizing their accomplishments. I would like all the clubs to send me information I can include in this newsletter . Information can include casting clinics, flytying sessions, fishing outings, conservation projects, and all related activities. It would be nice to have pictures included.*

CLUB NEWS

Long Beach Fly Fishers

The 'Long Beach Fly Fishing Foundation' began last year as an inclusive fly fishing club that calls its home the regions of Clayoquot and Barkley sound. The club was started by local steelhead fly advocates who were frustrated with the culture of fishing illegally on our local rivers. The conceptual idea of the club was to create an environment for developing local angler ethics to help protect our waters and fish. There was a lot of frustration from local steelhead anglers about what was happening on our rivers. The use of illegal bait, fishing closed waters and constant garbage showing up on our rivers helped spur local fly anglers to organize and create a club that would teach people how to fly fish and be proper stewards for the fish, environment and the ethics, art and sport of fly fishing. Our club has fall, winter and spring fly tying and information clinics put on in the towns of Tofino and Ucluelet. Our members belong to all communities in our region and anyone may join. This fall we will be working on building our membership as the rainy, dark winter season approaches and our tourist communities slow down enough that we can focus again on our fly tying and casting demo nights. The future for the 'Long Beach Fly Fishing Foundation' will be in how many new fly anglers we can bring into the guild of fly fishing and have them grow to be stewards for fish, fish habitat and fly fishing. The LBFFF can be contacted on Facebook at 'Long Beach Fly Fishing Club'. We are looking forward to seeing past members and new members this fall! See you on the water!

Jesse Blake

Secretary LBFFF



Ash River by Jesse Blake

A brief over view of its History

Flowing from the mountains of Strathcona Park, the Ash River winds its way down through many valleys and lakes to the Upper Stamp River that connects Sprout River to form the Somass River draining into the Alberni Canal. Untamed, the Ash river sustained wild populations of steelhead believed to be the strong hold of wild summer run steelhead that use the Stamp River system. Most of these summer fish would be in the Stamp River main stem and would wait for rains below the Ash confluence in its cool waters waiting for rains to draw them up river past Lantern man Falls, into the cool canyons then again above Dickson Falls into the upper regions of the Ash river.

As the Alberni Valley grew, forestry began the removal of first growth trees. In time over the next hundred years the Ash has seen most of its watershed logged at least twice. Forestry initially left zero riparian zones along the main stem and tributaries causing much loss of the cool forest waters that would help sustain the river's life during the hot summer droughts. The Ash River watershed was heavily logged with near zero environmental oversight but its geography containing steep rock walled canyons and deep shaded pools kept most of the rivers course and helped with creating the natural sanctuary water needed for summer steelhead to survive. Elsie lake Dam was constructed in the late 1950s on the Upper Ash River to produce power for the mill in Port Alberni. Elsie Lake dam would now mark the end of the road for any migrating steelhead that made it up into this upper watershed. Its flow now regulated for industry needs.

As the Somass Rivers salmon populations became reduced from over harvest, fish ladders were installed at the Stamp falls and on the Sproat falls in the 1950s allowing access for Chinook, Coho and lake spawning sockeye to use these large central island lakes. The Sockeye population would grow substantially and soon there would be a commercial and First Nations fishery booming with life. Unfortunately for the lower returning summer run steelhead these net fisheries nearly wipe them out. The Robertson Creek hatchery was built to help boost salmon returns on the Stamp River and now would also be used for hatchery production of steelhead. There has been some hatchery fish placed in the Ash River but now only strays migrating up from the Stamp are the non-wild fish that would access the Ash River. The once prolific run of summer run steelhead that General Noel Money fished and made famous on the Upper Stamp was nearly wiped out as a bye catch of the sockeye salmon commercial and First Nation fishery. Sport anglers would harvest the last few that made it through the quagmire of nets. The Somass River system would now begin to rely heavily on the Robertson creek hatchery to provide the

returns of Chinook and Coho for the growing sport and commercial interests. Sockeye salmon boomed in their lake environment and DFO annually fertilises Sprout and Great Central Lake to ensure larger sockeye fry and larger escapements of sockeye for harvest. Traditional summer run returns of steelhead June-July has been reduced from over fishing as a by catch during the sockeye salmon fishery. Robertson Creek Hatchery steelheads tend to return later in the summer to early fall. There may be a completely different run all together now of fall-early winter fish. The Upper Stamp River, once the domain of wild summer steelhead, is now the domain of a hatchery fish culture dependent on an ever-increasing quantity of hatchery fish.

The Somass River system with the external pressures we have put on it have meant it has been treated differently than other wild systems by DFO and fisheries managers. The economic pressures that have been put on the system are not conducive to this system sustaining itself. We have tried to augment with the hatchery system but are experiencing a gradual trend down after experiencing short-term success in the beginning. This is also a common trend among hatchery production in northwest rivers. What we lose by heading towards and engaging in hatchery production of fisheries is loss of evolutionally traits and diversity needed for the sustainability of wild anadromous fish. These traits are so subtle that they are difficult to trace even through genetic studies done between wild and hatchery fish.

One answer from commercial exploitation that could be implemented by the local First Nations on the Somass River is to change course from gill nets and manage their fishery in a back to the future style of modern fish traps, wheels or weirs designed to have zero by catch. This style of fishery would be sustainable for all fish using the Somass River and would even allow for fisheries to happen when certain stocks would have caused a closure to net fishing like what happened in 2013 during the low Chinook returns. What fish on the market could be more valuable than a truly sustainable caught, zero by catch wild salmon?

In order for wild fish to survive we need to recognize a need for change in our current demands we are putting on our fisheries. If the Somass system including all of its tributaries were to be treated and managed as important wild diverse systems, then they need better protection and regulation. That change must come from a population that understands that to achieve healthy fisheries we need to serve the needs of wild fish.

Jesse Blake



NEWS FROM THE PAST

The following article is reprinted from the *Winter 1993* issue of *Flylines*.

The BCFFF on Fishery Issues

In the coming months, one of the most important tasks for the BCFFF will be to construct a *Fishery Issues Committee* polled the BCFFF membership to identify Fishery issues on a local, regional and provincial level, and to ascribe a level of importance to each of them. This report is a brief summary of those results.

A total of thirty-three written responses, representing a 4% rate of return, were received between July 5th and November 4th from BCFFF members throughout the province. The largest

number of responses (57%) came from the Lower Mainland Region. Not unexpectedly, they identified concerns that apply to almost all regions of the province.

Some 126 identifiable issues were presented:

- Local Issues 18
- Regional Issues 29
- Provincial Issues 79

These issues can be further grouped into various categories of concern and are presented here in order of priority: **The BCFFF Top Ten**

- 1. Angling Regulations:** Conservation and Gear Type
- 2. Overharvest:** Steelhead Interception and Angling
- 3. Habitat Loss:** For Fishery and Anglers
- 4. Inadequate Provincial Fisheries Budget**
- 5. Recreational User Conflict**
- 6. Hatchery Program:** Pros and Cons
- 7. Native Fishing Rights**
- 8. Enforcement**
- 9. Education**
- 10. Land Access :** To Angling Waters

Thanks to all those who took the time to give their input. These results will provide an excellent guiding base for the *BCFFF-Fishery Issues Action Plan*.

Stay tuned... we will be coming back to the membership for comments, input and assistance during the remainder of this process

You will have plenty of casts at this riser! Fishery Issues Committee November 1993

Editor's comments: *Nothing much has changed in over 10 years. These are pretty much the same issues that members raised with respect to the Steelhead Management Framework this month.*



Roderick Haig-Brown Festival – September 28, 2014. By Trevor Nowak

As a kid I used to hate September, no need for an explanation there. When I finally graduated University and became a “grown-up” I soon realized how special a time of year September really is. If you live in BC and you’re a serious river angler, I would say that September is the start of some of the best river angling in the province. With waning daylight and decreasing temperatures trout seem to develop a voracious appetite. In addition, with millions of anadromous fish such as salmon, steelhead, and sea-run cutthroat ascending the coastal rivers, opportunities seem to be endless. That’s why I think it’s fitting that the Roderick Haig-Brown Festival in Campbell River, BC falls on the last Sunday of September, coinciding with World River’s Day. There couldn’t be a better time of year to celebrate the legacy of BC’s foremost fly fishing author and conservationist.

This year BCFFF will be displaying a booth at the event along with several other organizations including non-profit organizations, local fly fishing clubs, local artists, DFO and other fish and conservation related groups. In addition to recognizing Roderick and his role in the community of Campbell River and British Columbia, the Ann Elmore House is a yearly contributor to the event. Ann Elmore, Roderick’s wife was a strong community role model and advocate for women in transition. The Ann Elmore House is an organization providing support and shelter for women and their children who have suffered from violence and abuse.

BCFFF will be there selling hats and other swag, as well as promoting our mission and encouraging new individuals to sign-up and become a member of BC’s advocacy group for clean-water, running rivers and world-class fly fishing opportunities.

There is no other time throughout the year that the Haig-Brown property, a local landmark, is so alive and vibrant with visitors than the day of the Festival. The festival includes presentations for local conservation awards as well as live music and readings. Nature walks, fly tying demonstrations, fly casting demonstrations, as well as arts and crafts and games for the kids are all part of the festival. The event and activities are all free of charge and there is something there for every family member to enjoy. If the angler needs anymore incentive to come visit Campbell River at that time of year, the angling opportunities in the area are seemingly endless. With saltwater beach fishing for sea-run cutthroat and salmon, river fishing for salmon and summer-run steelhead and still-water action on local lakes, there is something for every type of angler at that time of year. When the festival shuts down, you can hit the water and celebrate World Rivers Day the way Haig-Brown himself would have wanted you to!

The Roderick Haig-Brown Festival takes place at the Haig-Brown Heritage House property on the banks of the Campbell River, September 28, 2014 and runs from 12-4pm.

Spring Region 8 (Okanagan) Fishing Advisory Committee Meeting by Phil Rogers

The meeting was held at the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations office in Penticton. There were 3 Ministry staff members and 19 representatives from Region 8 clubs and organizations including BCFFF, Penticton Flyfishers, BCWF, BC Drift Fishers, Trout Unlimited, Guide Assoc and B.C. Bass Fishers.

We discussed 20 proposed regulation changes for Region 8. Some of the major proposals were:

- Proposal to change Sawmill (Burnell) Lake from a Catch & Release Trophy Lake into a Retention non-trophy lake was withdrawn by the proponent.
- Lost Lake, which had been added as a trial trophy lake, was returned to its former lake status due to frequent winterkill.
- Proposals to change Kettle/Granby Rivers into Catch and Release Only and to change Kettle/Granby Rivers into Artificial Fly Only status were passed.
- A proposal to have an in-season closure of the Kettle/Granby Rivers from July 15 to Aug 31 for low water flow and high water temperature was referred back to the Ministry to see if a closure based on yearly monitoring was possible.
- A proposal for small and large mouth Bass closure during spawning season was not supported, as the Ministry is not able to manage a bass fishery at this time.

The Region 8 MFLNRO staff will be taking the results of these discussions to Victoria for the 2015 – 2016 Provincial Regulation Meetings.

Steelhead Management Working Group by Peter Caverhill

This is an explanation so that people will know about us:

Who are we?

Non- government stakeholders participating in the Provincial Angling Advisory Team (PAAT). We are an ad-hoc group coming out of the PAAT at our own volition (ie. Not officially sanctioned by PAAT).

As of January 2014, participants from PAAT on this working group were: BC Federation of Drift Fishers (BCFDF); BC Wildlife Federation (BCWF); BC Federation of Fly Fishers (BCFFF); Steelhead Society of BC (SSBC); and Freshwater Fisheries Society (FFSBC).

Why and When we came into existence?

We are concerned about the future of steelhead in BC and, because of this, we came together as a working group in January 2014.

Our objective?

To assist, and work cooperatively with, provincial government staff toward the effective management of BC steelhead. Our focus is to be a helpful resource to PAAT, and the Province, by taking advantage of our experience, expertise and mutual interests.

Currently?

Provincial staff are preparing a "Provincial Steelhead Management Framework". There has never been an overarching view of steelhead management in BC. With our help, this "Framework", we hope, will work to provide a consistent steelhead management approach that is acceptable to provincial staff in Victoria, the steelhead regions of the province, and the angling public.

On-going?

We plan to have regular working sessions which will include seeking information from other sources within the steelhead angling fraternity. We will report to our respective organizations and to the PAAT process.

Progress?

The "Steelhead management Working Group" had four evening meetings beginning in January and ending in April (just before the annual spring Provincial Angling Advisory Team was scheduled to begin). These meetings were productive. We took unfinished sections of the draft Provincial Steelhead Management Framework document and discussed what we thought should be covered in these sections. The idea was to provide as much help to the Province as we could from our non-government/steelhead advocacy viewpoints.

The Provincial biologist tasked with completing the framework is Sue Pollard (Rivers Specialist, Forests Lands and Natural Resources Operations or FLNRO) out of Victoria. Sue attended one of our ad-hoc group meetings to listen and provide comment where appropriate. She has incorporated a number of aspects that we discussed in the four meetings into the draft document.

Given that the groups present do not always see eye-to-eye on all things fisheries, we had no trouble working together toward the common goal of healthy steelhead and interesting angling opportunities for steelhead.

The draft framework for steelhead management in BC is a very good start toward an effective set of directions for balancing a sustainable steelhead resource with low impact steelhead angling opportunities. Public opportunity for input to the draft (via the Angling, Hunting, Trapping Engagement website) goes until mid-September so the document will take all comments into consideration.

No further meetings of the group were felt to be necessary since the main PAAT meeting in May.

This Draft prepared originally by Pete Caverhill and Dan Cahill– January 14, 2014 with an update on "Progress" in September for BCFFF's newsletter "Flylines"

Editor's comment: After consultation, the following letter was compiled and sent to Fish & Wildlife

September 05, 2014



BC Federation of Fly Fishers

PO Box 41023
RPO Woodgrove
Nanaimo BC
V9T6M7
bcfff.bc.ca
general@bcfff.bc.ca

Sue Pollard
Rivers Management Specialist, Fisheries Management, Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations
PO BOX 9391
STN PROV GOV'T
VICTORIA BC
V8W9M8

RE: Steelhead Management Framework Draft Proposal

Dear Sue,

The BCFFF is in consensus with the principles laid out in the proposal and applaud your efforts to create this framework. We feel it provides sound guidance and the consistency that regional managers can and should follow to guide their decisions around steelhead. We would like to stress the importance of lower CPUE methods (such as fly fishing) in the context of steelhead management and their value as a tool for fisheries managers to help keep steelhead fisheries open and viable as the general downward trend of steelhead abundance continues. In addition, we would like to reaffirm our long standing position that retention of wild steelhead has no place in this province.

We would like to point out that we have seen similar documents in the past and many of them have failed to enact real positive change due to a lack of political and economic support. We feel that in order for this framework to be successful both factors will need to be in place to drive it forward as without it, it is destined to languish on the shelves and be ignored.

Ending on a positive note, we feel that the framework you have proposed is a goal worthy of striving for and on behalf of the steelhead of this province, we thank you for your work and commitment to them.

Thank you for considering our comments.

Yours truly,

Kyle Sawayama
President, BCFFF

Saving a Small Piece of the Salmon by Kyle Sawayama

The Salmon River on Vancouver Island is one of my favourite rivers as it is home to a wide range of angling opportunities in one the most beautiful settings on the Island. There are steelhead, Dolly Varden, rainbow and cutthroat trout along with coho and pink salmon which can be pursued at various times of the year. The watershed is home to one of the largest concentrations of Roosevelt Elk on the Island and South Coast. They are always a treat to watch when the fish aren't cooperating so invariably, I spend a lot of time observing them. There are also some big cats in the area which make solo walks in the bush more interesting.

It is one of the few streams on the Island where I can use the same rods that I use on the Thompson, Dean or Bulkley. As a gainfully employed Island resident, I'm lucky if I get two weeks on those storied rivers each year so the Salmon helps to justify big rod and reel purchases to my wife. More importantly, just like those famous rivers, it has some really nice water!

Sadly, like most Island streams on the east side, the Salmon has had its teeth kicked in over the years through industrial logging, hydro power projects, fish farms and countless other stressors. The once famous winter steelhead run is a pale comparison of what it was with most of the river now off limits to anglers all year in an effort to protect it.

All is not lost though. The Salmon River has the real potential to offer good recreational fisheries once again and Mark Hume details a lot of that on his website (<http://arivernever sleeps.com>) if the reader would like to know more. Enter Jasper Lament, CEO of the Nature Trust of BC. A short while ago Jasper reached out to the BCFFF to gauge our interest in helping out with a land acquisition project in the estuary below the lower highway bridge. His organization is working to secure a large piece of private land adjacent to property they have already acquired in an effort to further protect the area. They have most of the funds organized but they anticipate a shortfall of some \$63,000 to complete the project. Knowing the value of this habitat to the fish, the BCFFF was happy to donate \$1000 to the effort. If you as an individual would like to contribute, you can make a donation by contacting the Nature Trust of BC through their website (<http://www.naturetrust.bc.ca>). They are registered with CRA as a charitable organization so you are eligible for tax credits based on your contributions. If you are an Aeroplan member you can also donate points and help them out that way.

I'm hopeful that one day Salmon River anglers will look back to today as the low point and with the help of like-minded organizations such as the Nature Trust of BC, will see their angling future with optimism.

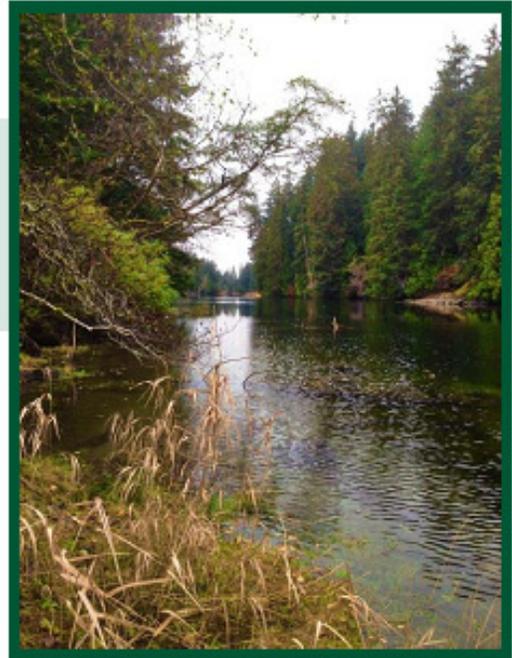
Salmon River

A Vancouver Island Treasure

The Nature Trust of British Columbia is working to secure the remaining 67 hectares (165 acres) of private land in the Salmon River Estuary and lower Salmon River on Vancouver Island. This would complement the adjacent 104 hectares (257 acres) already secured by The Nature Trust and its partners since 1978 (please see map on other side).

The proposed acquisition features riparian and estuarine habitat as well as uplands.

The Salmon River estuary is the only significant area of coastal wetland habitat located on the relatively steep and rugged 250 km stretch of coastline from Campbell River to the network of estuaries on the Quatsino lowlands. This strategic location provides critical habitat to numerous species of fish and wildlife throughout the year including Great Blue Heron, Marbled Murrelet, Northern Pygmy Owl, Roosevelt Elk, and numerous species of salmonids.



Of the approximately 3,200 Roosevelt Elk residing in British Columbia, over 3,000 live on Vancouver Island. Once widespread throughout southern BC, human activity and expansion slowly extinguished the elk on the mainland. Efforts continue to restore them to their historic range, but northern Vancouver Island, including the Salmon River, remains the core of their range in Canada. We are also working closely with the Province to designate the intertidal area as a Wildlife Management Area, which would provide additional habitat protection.

The areas that have been logged will be restored through a combination of targeted tree planting as well as promoting natural succession processes through focused invasive weed removals.

Please Help Us

The estimated total project cost is \$550,000 which includes land acquisition, legal, appraisal and land management. We are working with Ducks Unlimited Canada on this project; we are seeking to raise at least half the cost. We have firm funding commitments from BC Hydro and a generous donor. Anticipating that a pending foundation proposal will also be approved, we still need to raise \$62,500. Any help with this outstanding balance would be greatly appreciated.

To make a donation or for more information, visit our website at www.naturetrust.bc.ca, call our office toll free at 1-866-288-7878 or contact Steve Housser, Leadership Giving, at shousser@naturetrust.bc.ca or 250-732-2322.



