

**For Immediate Release**  
**May 5, 2014**

## **Funds Announced for Hupacasath First Nation Steelhead Project**

**PORT ALBERNI** – Steelhead trout in the Ash River watershed will benefit from close to \$54,000 in funding from the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP). The Hupacasath First Nation will use the funds to study the impact of fish hatchery enhancements on wild Steelhead.

This project will get underway this spring and conclude by early 2015. It is among 31 fish and wildlife projects approved for more than \$1.7 million in funding this year in the FWCP's Coastal region. Learn more at [www.fwcp.ca](http://www.fwcp.ca).

### **QUOTES:**

*Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines*

"In BC, we are blessed to have hydroelectric facilities that generate clean power. This electricity is the backbone of our economy. It is our responsibility to ensure our resources are cared for and preserved. This year alone, more than \$7 million will go towards protecting fish and wildlife in areas with hydroelectric operations, through more than 80 individual projects. The projects are carefully selected by local boards in each region, which have representation from the public, First Nations, DFO, the Province and BC Hydro."

*Brian Assu, Chair, FWCP – Coastal Regional Board*

"Salmonid stocks are of great importance to First Nations and others and this project will support long-term Steelhead stocks. We are fortunate to have strong working partnerships with First Nations in this watershed."

*Patrice Rother, Manager, Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program*

"We are pleased with the strong interest in the FWCP and the quality of project proposals that support the FWCP vision of thriving populations in watersheds that are functioning and sustainable."

### **A few facts about the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program**

- The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program funds conservation and enhancement projects in the Coastal, Columbia River and Peace River regions. The Coastal Region includes Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland and the Southern Interior.
- In 2014, the FWCP will provide more than \$7 million towards more than 80 fish and wildlife projects province-wide in its Coastal, Columbia and Peace regions.
- FWCP funds are provided by BC Hydro and managed in a partnership with the Province of British Columbia, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and the public to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife impacted by the creation of BC Hydro dams.
- Funding applications are received each fall and reviewed annually in the Coastal Region by technical committees and FWCP Coastal Board members. Projects are chosen based on technical merit, linkages to watershed-specific priorities, cost-effectiveness, level of partnership, and overall benefit to the FWCP's mandate and vision.
- For a full list and descriptions of all 2014 projects funded by the FWCP across the province, and information on how you can apply for funding next year, visit [fwcp.ca](http://fwcp.ca).

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**FWCP Projects Funded in Ash River Watershed – 2014-2015**

**Ash River Genetic assessment of summer and winter-run steelhead salmon in the Ash River  
Hupacasath First Nation  
\$53,790**

The project will provide a statistical comparison of genetic variation in tissue samples from summer-run and winter-run wild historical samples from wild steelhead prior to the influence of hatchery enhancement and barrier modifications. This will provide information that will contribute to the ongoing discussion of potential impacts to current populations in the Ash River resulting from fish enhancement strategies.

The FWCP is a partnership of:

