



For Immediate Release
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Year Five of Five for UKEEP

Apply now for fish or wildlife projects in the Upper Kootenay River Watershed.

(East Kootenay) The Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) is now accepting grant applications for the coming year. Stewardship groups, First Nations, consultants, agencies or individuals are invited to apply for a grant to help conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in the Columbia Region. In the East Kootenay, through a partnership with Columbia Basin Trust (the Trust), the FWCP has funds available to deliver projects under the Upper Kootenay Ecosystem Enhancement Plan (UKEEP).

This is year five of the five-year partnership so if you have project ideas, for work beginning after April of next year, please apply by October 27, 2017.

Since UKEEP's inception, more than 40 projects have been supported with an investment of nearly \$2 million. Applicants have then leveraged the same amount again to help deliver projects valuing at more than \$4 million.

"The strength of this program isn't only the partnership between the Trust and the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program, but the fact that it draws upon the expertise and efforts of so many passionate groups and individuals," said Kindy Gosal, Columbia Basin Trust Director, Special Initiatives. "Together, we've had real impact on this area's ecosystems and the species that inhabit them. We look forward to seeing what projects will be realized through this next intake."

There has been a variety of projects that have received funding through UKEEP to date. These include: restoration of critical wildlife habitat; Westslope Cutthroat and Bull Trout research; controlling the spread of invasive species; wetland and amphibian inventories; monitoring of Kokanee populations in Koocanusa Reservoir; Mule Deer relocation and survival work; and restoring grassland ecosystems.

"UKEEP is one of seven strategic plans that guide the Board's funding decisions each year, and applicants must propose projects that align with actions within those plans," said Crystal Klym, FWCP Columbia Region Manager. "Given that this is the fifth year of the agreement with the Trust we are encouraging applicants to focus on those actions that are ranked as priority one."

The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of B.C., Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and Public Stakeholders, to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife impacted by BC Hydro dams.

To see the full list of projects supported under UKEEP for 2017-18, and to access the Grant Application Information Kit for 2018-19 projects, visit fwcp.ca. The deadline for the online application is 5 p.m. October 27, 2017.

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