



For Immediate Release
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Habitat Improvement Projects Announced

Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program Approves Funding for 2015 Projects

SOOKE – An innovative project to create dens for local black bears will continue with funding support from the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP). The FWCP’s Coastal Region Board approved funding for this project in the Jordan River watershed where naturally occurring dens are scarce. This project involves the Pacheedaht First Nation and is one of two local FWCP projects announced today.

The second project to conserve and enhance local fish and wildlife is led by the Pacheedaht First Nation and will assess water flow and substrate in the Jordan River side channel. Research projects like this are an important first step to future hands-on work to improve fish habitat.

Together, the two projects will receive more than \$85,000 from the FWCP, which conserves and enhances fish and wildlife impacted by BC Hydro dams. Learn more at fwcp.ca.

These projects get underway this spring and conclude by early 2016. They are among 41 projects approved by the FWCP-Coastal Region Board, which will provide approximately \$2.1 million in projects this year.

The Board, which includes First Nations, public stakeholders, BC Hydro, the Province of BC and Fisheries and Oceans Canada, funds projects that align with its watershed and action plans. The Board may direct funds later in the year to other projects it deems a priority for the region.

“Each project we approve for funding aligns with our local Action Plans, and goes through a technical review before being reviewed by our Board members who make the final decisions,” says FWCP Manager, Trevor Oussoren.

The FWCP-Coastal Region includes Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland and the Southern Interior.

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For more information contact

Stephen Watson, *on behalf of the FWCP*
BC Hydro, Vancouver Island Community Relations
250-755-4795
steve.watson@bchydro.com



Suggested caption: Creating bear dens in watersheds where natural dens are in short supply due to human activity is one of many habitat-based actions the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program will fund this year. Pacheedaht First Nation member Michael Charlie uses his chain saw to create access to a hollow tree that could become a bear den.

(fwcp.ca)

Photo Credit: H. Davis

FWCP BACKGROUNDER

FWCP Overview

- The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (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.
- The Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) funds conservation and enhancement projects in its Coastal, Columbia and Peace regions.
- The FWCP's Regional Boards approved 124 fish and wildlife projects for 2015-16 with a combined value of approximately \$8.9 million.
- 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.

FWCP Fish and Wildlife Projects

- Projects that receive funding from the FWCP: align with the FWCP's strategic action plans; and are assessed based on technical merit, linkages to watershed-specific priorities, cost-effectiveness, level of partnership, and overall benefit to the FWCP's mandate and vision.
- Eleven First Nations are directly involved in the delivery of FWCP-funded projects including:
 - **FWCP-Coastal** approved applications were received from the following: Pacheedaht First Nation; Katzi First Nation; K'omoks First Nation; Splitsin First Nation; Split Rock Environmental (St'at'imc First Nation); and the Lillooet Tribal Council.
 - **FWCP-Peace** approved applications were received from the following: Kwadacha First Nation; Doig River First Nation; and the Tsay Keh Dene Nation (with several other First Nations involved in delivery of other projects where they will support the lead proponent in project implementation).
 - **FWCP-Columbia** approved applications received from the following: Okanagan Nation Alliance (ONA); and the Ktunaxa Nation Council.
- The FWCP often works with partners; it may be one of many funders supporting important fish and wildlife conservation efforts or it may be the sole funder.
- For a summary of the 2015-16 fish and wildlife projects funded by the FWCP across the province, and information on how you can apply for a FWCP grant next year, visit fwcp.ca.