

For Immediate Release
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Funds Announced for Local Fish and Wildlife Projects

CAMPBELL RIVER – Four conservation projects in the Campbell River watersheds are being given more than \$360,000 of funding through the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP).

Some of the funds will go toward efforts to recover the endangered Vancouver Island Marmot. Other projects include the purchase of 67 hectares of private land in the Salmon River Estuary, an important coastal wetland habitat for herons, owls, and many fish species. Other funds will be used to improve fish habitat in Grilse Creek and provide improved habitat for steelhead, coho and resident trout.

Projects start this spring and will conclude by early 2015. They are 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.

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

"Some of the projects funded by FWCP this year address land conservation and habitat restoration, which are critical to sustaining fish and wildlife populations. We are fortunate to be working with such capable groups committed to making a real difference 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.

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FWCP Projects Funded in Campbell River Watersheds – 2014-2015

Grilse Creek Large Woody Debris Rehabilitation

British Columbia Conservation Foundation

\$70,783

This project will repair, maintain and build new fish habitat upstream of the Salmon River Diversion to provide rearing and holding habitat for Steelhead, Coho and resident trout of all life stages. A minimum of eighteen main-stem large woody debris (LWD) sites will be built or repaired in the lower portions of Grilse Creek. Benefits will include increased habitat complexity in the restored reach to help boost production capacity of this area for Steelhead and Coho.

**Assessment of Distribution of 2014 Brood Coho Adult Migration Below and Above the Salmon River Diversion Dam
 Campbell River Salmon Foundation**

\$36,132

Fish passage improvements for the Salmon River Diversion Dam have been approved with the goal of scheduled completion by fall 2015. This project will monitor Coho Salmon abundance and distribution in the Salmon River for a minimum of two years prior to the planned fishway upgrade/replacement project being completed. This will ensure adequate preconstruction data is available to compare to post-construction assessments on habitat utilization and fish passage at Diversion Dam. Unimpeded access to the upper watershed is critical to the long-term adaptability and sustainability of salmon populations in the watershed.

Salmon River Estuary Acquisition

The Nature Trust of British Columbia

\$170,000

The Salmon River Estuary is the only significant area of coastal wetland habitat located on a relatively steep and rugged 250km stretch of coastline from Campbell River to the network of estuaries on the Quatsino lowlands of Vancouver Island. The goal of this project is to purchase the remaining 67ha of private land in the Salmon River Estuary and lower Salmon River to complement the existing 104ha already secured by The Nature Trust, Ducks Unlimited Canada and their conservation partners, including FWCP. The acquisition includes several intertidal areas of the Salmon River Estuary, which provide critical foraging, rearing and roosting habitat for Great Blue Heron, Northern Pygmy Owl, Cutthroat Trout and Dolly Varden.

Vancouver Island Marmot – Buttle Lake Supplementation

Marmot Recovery Foundation

\$84,832

This is the final year of a three-year project. During 2012 and 2013, more than 30 captive-bred, and 20 wild-born marmots were translocated to eight sites in the Buttle Lake area. At least four sites now have fledgling colonies with multiple marmots remaining on-site for two years or more; and successful reproduction has occurred at three of those sites.

The goal of this year's project is to evaluate the effectiveness of new release techniques for the Vancouver Island Marmot. The objective of releases and translocations to the Buttle Lake area is to re-establish two functioning populations of Vancouver Island Marmots at historic sites around Buttle Lake.

The FWCP is a partnership of:

