



**For Immediate Release
October 7, 2014**

Apply Now: Funds Available for Local Fish and Wildlife Projects New Ecosystem Enhancement Plan is Final

(EAST KOOTENAY) - A new plan to conserve and enhance ecosystems in the upper Kootenay River watershed, including the Koochanusa Reservoir, is now final and ready to be implemented. The new Upper Kootenay Ecosystem Enhancement Plan (UKEEP) will guide efforts to conserve and enhance lakes, streams, uplands and drylands, wetlands and species of interest in the watershed.

Groups, agencies and individuals are encouraged to review the plan and apply to the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) for funding to undertake one of many actions recommended in the plan available at www.fwcp.ca. The FWCP hopes to get funding proposals that align with the plan by the November 14, 2014 deadline.

“Area residents have been calling for a program to improve fish and wildlife management in this important watershed,” says Kootenay East MLA, Bill Bennett, Minister of Energy and Mines. “We now have a comprehensive plan that reflects input from our local people, and we have the funding to deliver the goods.”

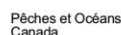
In spring 2013, FWCP and Columbia Basin Trust (the Trust) partnered to develop the UKEEP. The Trust provided \$3 million to develop the plan and fund local fish and wildlife projects over the next three to five years. The FWCP, which already coordinates and supports fish and wildlife projects in the region, will implement the new plan.

“Our partnership with FWCP, along with ideas from the many involved and committed residents, really demonstrates what we can do when we work together,” says Neil Muth, Columbia Basin Trust President and CEO. “We are really proud to be part of this plan that is strengthening environmental well-being and addressing important ecological issues identified by Basin residents.”

“The plan recommends a mix of on-the-ground actions as well as actions aimed at improving the science and our understanding, which will lead to more hands-on projects in the future,” says East Kootenay resident and FWCP Board member, Dave White. “This plan will help all of us work to conserve and enhance the ecosystems and species that make this region so special.”

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The FWCP is a partnership of:



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This new funding opportunity is in addition to the existing funding opportunities through the FWCP. The FWCP is currently delivering or supporting the delivery of dozens of fish and wildlife projects across the Columbia River Basin that address large and small lakes, streams, wetland and riparian areas, uplands and dryland, and species of interest. Learn more at www.fwcp.ca.

The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of BC, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations and public stakeholders to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife impacted by the construction of BC Hydro dams.

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