



FWCP
Fish & Wildlife
COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Annual Report

Peace Region
2024–2025

fwcp.ca



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada



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

Message from our board co-chairs

Welcome! Thanks for taking a moment to read our chair's message! As co-chairs of the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) Peace Region board, we are pleased to share our annual report with you and reflect briefly on 2024-2025.

Projects: In fiscal year 2024-2025, our board approved approximately \$1.9 million for 25 fish and wildlife projects. Final reports from these projects are available at fwcp.ca/results. Our annual summary of project outcomes and results is also posted there so everyone can see how the funding we approve each year compensates for the impacts on fish and wildlife. Read our project list at the end of this report to learn more about the projects approved by our board. They addressed many of our conservation priorities, including fish passage and caribou habitat restoration, to name a few.

Many of the projects underway this year are of cultural and conservation importance to our Indigenous partners. These include projects supporting moose habitat restoration, filling data gaps on bull trout abundance, assessing wolverine density and abundance, and more.

In late 2024, our First Nations partners started discussing ideas for a collaborative project supported with FWCP funding. This unique collaborative project will see participating Nations lead moose habitat enhancement work that will support sustenance harvest, food sovereignty, amongst other values important to the Nations.

Audit update: We continued to implement recommendations from our 2019 independent [evaluation and financial audit](#) this year, including the submission of a completion report. See page 5 for an overview.

We completed a logic model—as recommended in the audit—to guide our strategic approach to funding projects and track our progress through a performance measurement strategy. Both of these initiatives provide a framework for a new and more flexible approach to funding projects and enable tracking of performance metrics that relate back to our mandate. These will get underway in 2025-2026.

Board news: This year, we said goodbye to board members Gord Haines, Jessica Wiens, Chris Addison, Heather Middleton, Deeanna Izony, Rosemarie Sam and Ray Pillipow. We welcomed Al Mottishaw, Stephanie Bellehumeur, Alyssa Lepka, Luke Gleeson, and James Jacklin.

Thank you: To all the grant applicants who develop project ideas, submit grant applications, and all the hard workers – Thank you! Being one of your funding partners is the easy job, and we could not do our job without you!

If you have any questions about our projects, grants, or this annual report, please contact our [regional manager](#). We'd be happy to answer your questions.

Stephanie Killam



Stephanie Killam
Peace Region
Board Co-chair

Margo Sadler



Margo Sadler
Peace Region
Board Co-chair

Front cover: There were a couple of Arctic grayling projects funded in F25, including one led by Chu Cho Environmental that determined abundance and critical habitats for the species on the west shore of Williston Reservoir. This female was captured and tagged in the Mesilinka River. [PEA-F25-F-4051](#). Photo: J. Hagen



1. Overview

FWCP Peace Region

The FWCP's Peace Region was established in 1988 to support the conservation and enhancement of fish, wildlife, and habitats in watersheds impacted by construction of the W.A.C. Bennett and Peace Canyon dams, and the creation of the Williston and Dinosaur reservoirs.

Compensating for dam impacts

BC Hydro has water licence obligations in the Columbia and Peace regions and has made voluntary commitments to address the impacts of dams in the Coastal Region. BC Hydro fulfills the applicable obligations through the work of the FWCP. The FWCP does not compensate for Site C impacts to fish and wildlife. Site C's water licence obligations require BC Hydro to establish separate environmental monitoring, mitigation, and compensation programs and, under the water licence, BC Hydro will report to the Comptroller of Water Rights on these programs.

With annual funding from BC Hydro, the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) conserves and enhances fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by 31 BC Hydro dams. The FWCP directs those funds toward priority actions across its three regions: Coastal, Columbia, and Peace.

The FWCP is governed through a framework that recognizes the regulatory accountabilities of agency partners (i.e., BC Hydro, the Province of B.C., Department of Fisheries & Oceans Canada: DFO). The framework also ensures public and Indigenous participation in decision-making, project planning and delivery. Independent regional boards review, evaluate, and approve funding for all projects. Our boards include representatives from each of our FWCP partners: First Nations (21 seats), public interest holders (9), BC Hydro (5), and the Province of B.C. (5). While DFO has the opportunity to participate on the Peace Region board, it currently does not. Appendix B shows the full list of board and committee members for our Peace Region during F25. When it comes to decision-making, input from each board member is given equal consideration through collaborative discussion. Learn more at fwcp.ca/our-story.

Since 1988, BC Hydro has provided more than \$230 million to the FWCP to compensate for dam impacts, and the FWCP has funded more than 2,500 projects across our three regions. Our Peace Region has received more than \$47 million since it started, and typically funds between 20 and 30 projects each year.

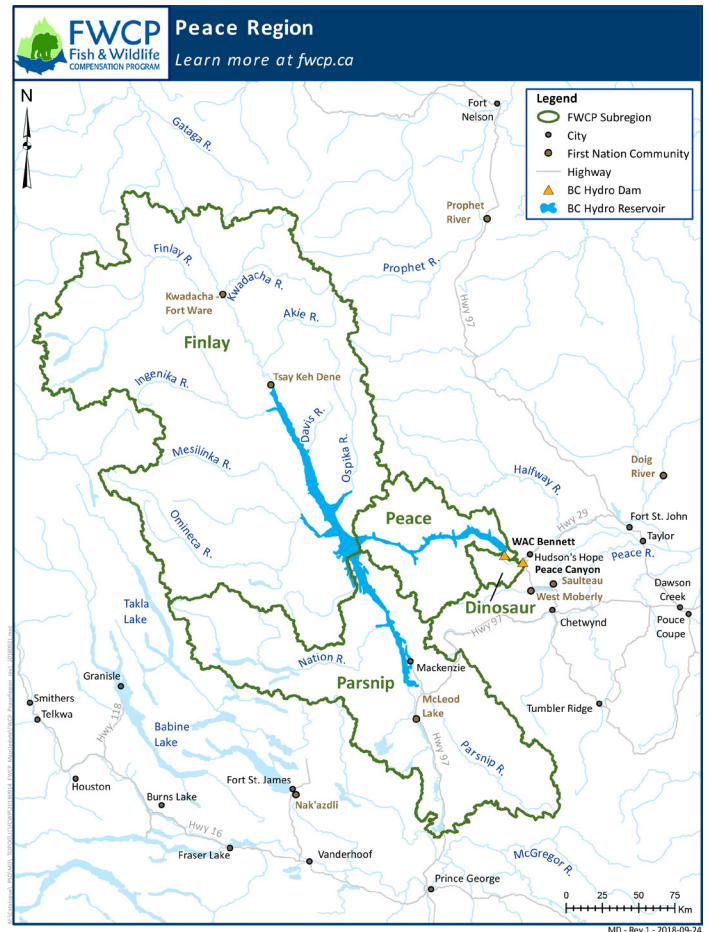


Figure 1.1: Map of the FWCP's Peace Region



In 2024, the BCWF, in collaboration with local First Nations and other partners, installed 71 beaver dam analogues in the province. Our Peace Region manager, Chelsea (in red, at front), helped at one installation near McIntyre Lake. [PEA-F25-W-4035](#). Photo: C. Regina

2. Our strategic approach

VISION AND MISSION

Our vision is for thriving fish and wildlife populations in watersheds that are functioning and sustainable. Our mission is to compensate for fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams.

We take a forward-looking, ecosystem-based approach that defines the desired outcomes and takes actions to restore, enhance, and conserve priority species and their habitats, in alignment with our strategic framework as in figure 2.1, below. More details on our three strategic objectives can be found in the [Governance Manual](#).

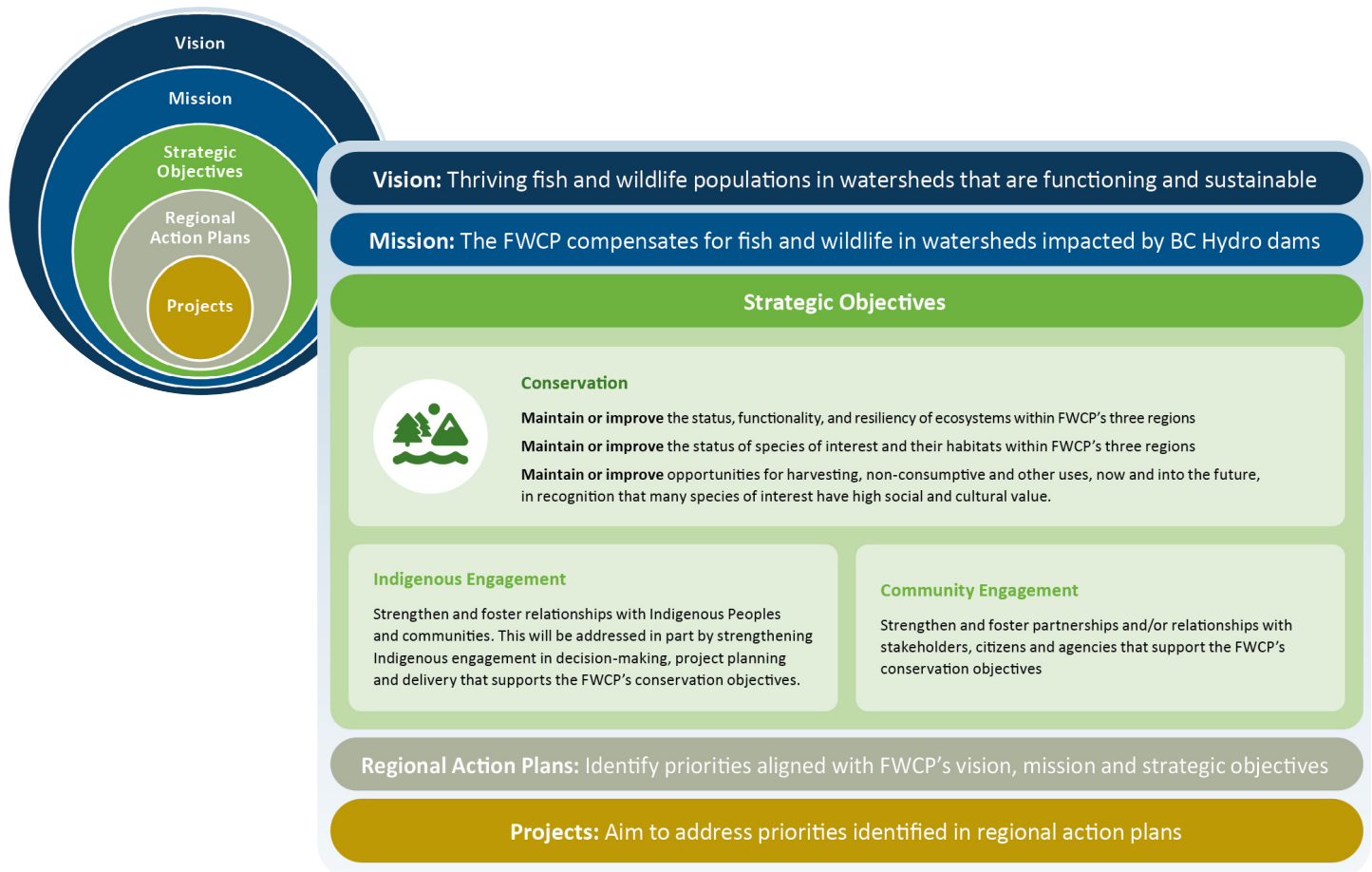


Figure 2.1: Strategic framework. The projects we fund align with our regional action plans, reflect our strategic objectives, and align with our mission and vision.

ACTION PLANS

Our action plans guide FWCP investments in fish and wildlife projects. They are referenced annually by our regional boards to track progress toward implementation, set priorities, and guide decision-making in setting out and approving the annual operating plan for each region. Actions in our action plans are eligible for FWCP funding and align with our vision, mission, and geographic scope.

In our Peace Region, we currently have four ecosystem-based [action plans](#). F25 projects approved by our Peace Region board align with the priority actions identified in the Peace Region action plans:

1. Cross-Ecosystem Action Plan
2. Riparian & Wetlands Action Plan
3. Rivers, Lakes, & Reservoirs Action Plan
4. Uplands Action Plan

UPDATE: EVALUATION AND FINANCIAL AUDIT

In 2019, an independent third-party evaluation and financial audit, as required in our Governance Manual, was completed. The auditor made nine recommendations to refine, support, and strengthen our approach to conserving and enhancing fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams. Since 2019, the FWCP team has been methodically working on the recommendations, and many of them have been completed or nearing completion. See [website](#) for more details.



A trail cam captures a bait-station in action as part of a project to determine wolverine density and abundance in the Chase caribou herd range. [PEA-F25-W-4068](#).

Photo: Chu Cho Environmental

3. Financial report

APPROVED BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Our Peace Region board allocates annual funding toward fish and wildlife projects, and other operational tasks, as shown in Figure 3.2. These allocations form the annual operating plan. Any unallocated funds are carried forward as uncommitted available funds for future spending.

The annual funding provided by BC Hydro to the region for the year was \$1,835,075. Our Peace Region board approved a budget of \$2,644,628 for this year, utilizing unspent surplus funds from previous years.

Figure 3.1 shows nearly \$4.28 million available to our Peace Region as of April 1, 2024. This comprises the approved budget of approximately \$2.64 million, the uncommitted available funds of approximately \$492,593, and the remaining prior-year funding commitments from F24 to F18 of approximately \$1.14 million.

Figure 3.2 illustrates the approved budget for F25 as of April 1, 2024. Funding for wildlife projects accounted for 43% of the budget, while funding for fish projects accounted for 28%. Administration accounted for nearly 12% of the budget, and First Nations engagement a further 6%. The remainder comprised communications, strategic initiatives, including logic model development and planning for revising the action plans, as well as Seed and Community Engagement Grants. See Figure 3.2 for the full breakdown.

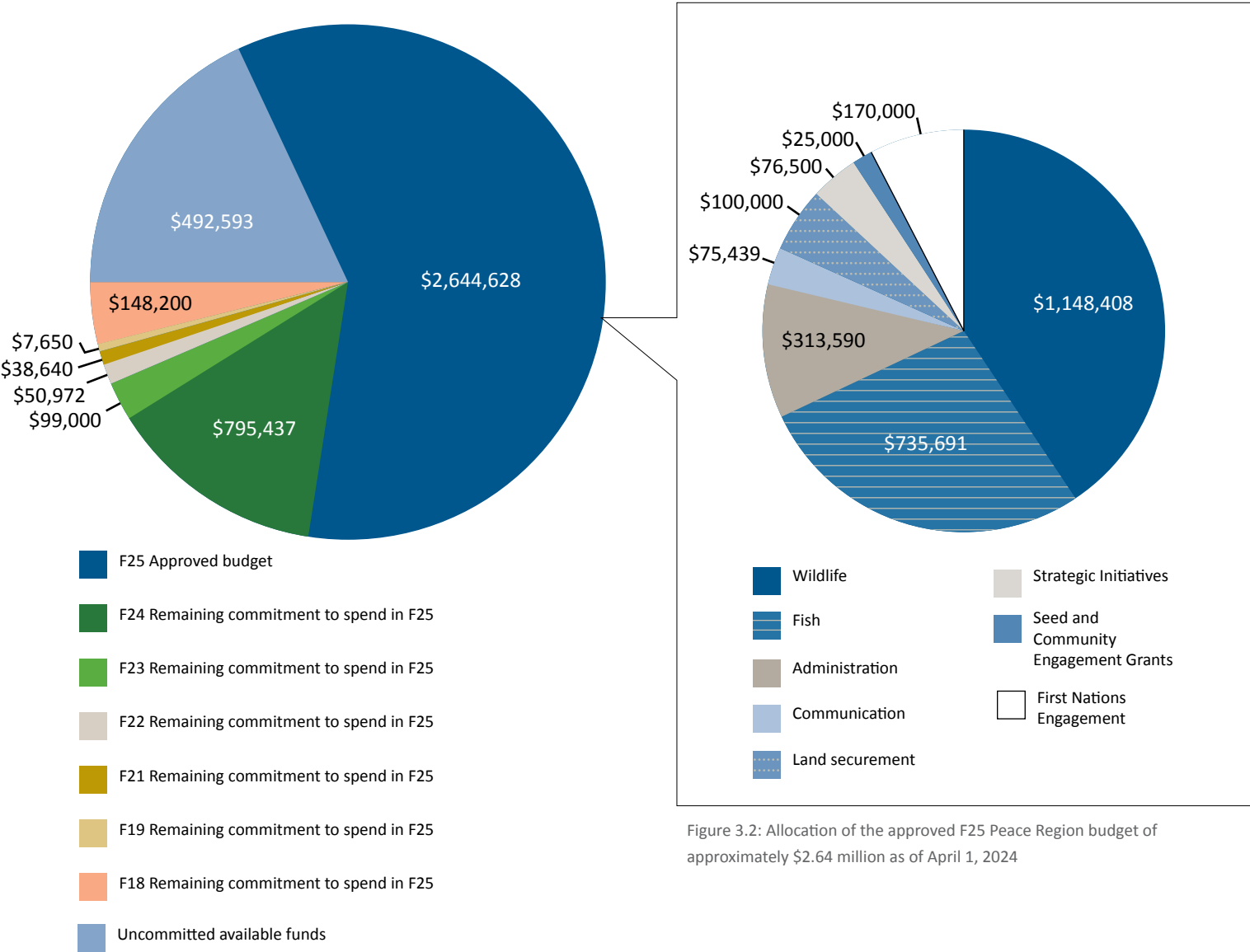


Figure 3.2: Allocation of the approved F25 Peace Region budget of approximately \$2.64 million as of April 1, 2024

Figure 3.1: FWCP Peace Region financial summary on April 1, 2024. The F18 remaining commitment to spend of \$148,200 is related to a land protection project that was delayed due to issues with acquiring one parcel of the intended conservation lands. The remaining commitment to spend in F19 and F21 were related to projects that saw delays due to COVID-19 and other weather events and personnel shortages that prevented project activities from occurring. The F18, F19 and F21 commitments to spend will be spent in F26.

Peace Region expenditures up to the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2025) are shown in Table 3.1. This reflects a snapshot of actual and planned payments made related to this year's finances. Funding allocated each year may not be fully expended by year-end, and as shown in Table 3.1, F25 allocated funds not yet expended by March 31, 2025, are labelled as planned payments.

Occasionally, projects come in under budget (unspent funds in Table 3.1)¹. Funds not spent during the fiscal year will be carried forward as unspent surplus budget and made available for new spending in future fiscal years.

Table 3.1: F25 budget status as of March 31, 2025

Fund category	F25 approved budget	Paid up to March 31, 2025	Unspent Funds ¹	Planned payments ²
Fish	\$735,691	\$479,136	\$89,828	\$166,727
Wildlife	\$1,148,408	\$502,893	\$29,137	\$616,379
Administration	\$313,590	\$237,727	\$50,705	\$25,157
Communications	\$75,439	\$64,215	\$ (503)	\$11,726
Land Securement	\$100,000	\$-	\$-	\$100,000
Strategic Initiatives	\$76,500	\$35,299	\$12,017	\$28,183
Seed and Community Engagement Grants	\$25,000	\$5,052	\$19,984	\$-
First Nations Engagement	\$170,000	\$11,985	\$60,024	\$97,990
TOTAL	\$2,644,628	\$1,336,309	\$261,157	\$1,047,163

Note 1: Unspent funds are carried forward and available for the next fiscal year.

Note 2: Planned payments represent expected invoices for approved ongoing projects that have not yet submitted final reports by March 31, 2025.

In addition to the planned payments of \$1,047,163 from F25, the balance of prior-year funding commitments anticipated to be spent in F25 was approximately \$99,000 from F24, \$12,000 from F23, \$8,000 from F22, and approximately \$148,000 from F18, with \$774,039 available in uncommitted funds (Figure 3.3).

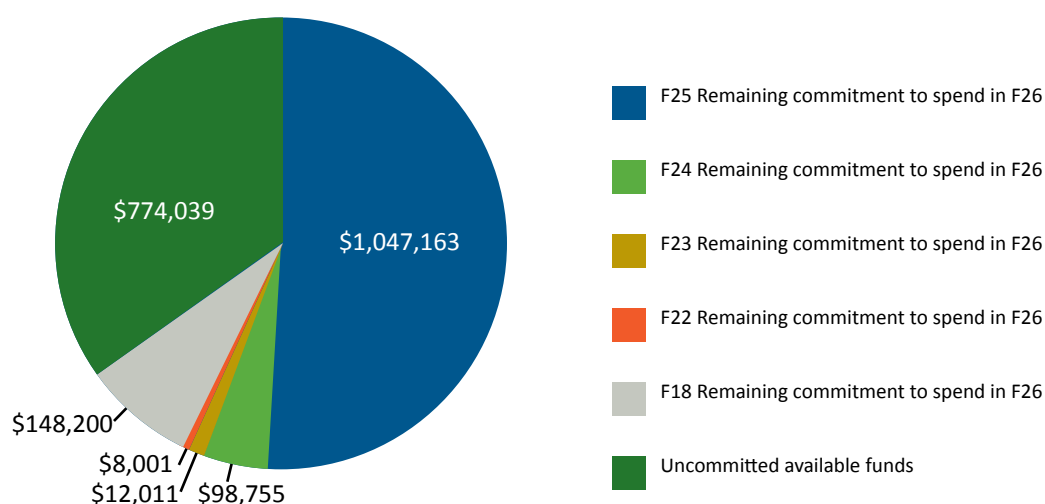


Figure 3.3: Financial summary of the FWCP's Peace Region, as of March 31, 2025 (end of fiscal year)

1. The end of F25 and the year-end deadline for project reporting are on the same day. Therefore, reports (and potentially) statements of accounts are not reviewed and accepted until after the March 31 deadline. Many final payments for F25 projects are processed in the first few months of F26, and unspent funds are allocated for future spending.

4. Project funding and grants

PROVINCIAL PROJECT FUNDING

This year, our three regional boards approved 95 projects for a total FWCP contribution of approximately \$10.4 million. The total value of these projects, including leveraged funding from other organizations and in-kind resources, was nearly \$23.7 million.

Final reports for all FWCP-funded projects are uploaded to [EcoCat](#) or [SIWE](#) provincial databases, and searchable spreadsheets of reports for each FWCP region are available at [fwcp.ca/results.html](#).

PEACE REGION PROJECT DELIVERY

In our Peace Region, the FWCP supports the delivery of fish and wildlife projects in a variety of ways, including grant applications and directed projects. Twenty-five projects were approved by the end of the fiscal year, for \$1,880,145 from our Peace Region board.

Grant-based projects

The FWCP’s annual grant intake opens each summer and closes in the fall. All grant applications go through a three-stage review process. For more details, visit our FAQs at [fwcp.ca/apply-for-funding/](#).

Grant applicants are required to develop a project idea that aligns with one or more priority actions in any action plan and that will achieve the intended outcome. Each priority action in our action plans is identified as Open, Open/Directed, or Directed. The proposed project must be aligned with an Open or Open/Directed priority action to be eligible for a grant.

In our Peace Region, all grant applicants are required to submit a notice of intent (NOI) before submitting a full application. The NOI is an important part of our commitment to strengthen engagement with First Nations. It helps inform First Nations about proposed projects and is the basis for identifying opportunities for First Nations perspectives on and engagement in the projects. It also helps our Peace Region manager provide additional guidance before grant applications are completed.

Of the 25 projects approved for the year, 18 were grant-based: six for fish and 12 for wildlife, for a total of \$1,253,682. Funding allocation was 37% (\$468,560) for fish projects and 63% (\$785,123) for wildlife.

The FWCP encourages grant applicants to seek additional funding sources (e.g., other funding agencies and in-kind contributions) to leverage FWCP funding contributions. We recognize the value of partnerships in helping to plan, deliver, and fund projects. We encourage grant applicants to build funding and project partnerships into their projects. In F25, as stated, the FWCP funding allocation for grant-based projects was approximately \$1.25 million. As a result of financial partnerships and in-kind contributions, the total value of the projects was just over \$3.78 million. In other words, for every \$1 invested by the FWCP, others contributed nearly \$2, greatly increasing the value of the FWCP’s investment overall.

Directed projects

Directed projects provide our Peace Region board the opportunity to direct funds to regional priorities with a specific scope of work issued through procurement processes (e.g., direct award, request for proposal).

Approximately \$626,000—nearly twice as much as the previous year—was approved for seven directed projects: three fish projects (just over \$272,000) and four wildlife (almost \$355,000). The directed projects included improving fish passage, UNBC Colloquium Presentation Series, Mugaha Marsh Banding Station, Arctic grayling enhancement opportunities, and moose habitat enhancement. Figure 4.1 shows the breakdown of funding versus directed projects compared to grant-based projects. For the complete list of all the projects funded, see Appendix A.

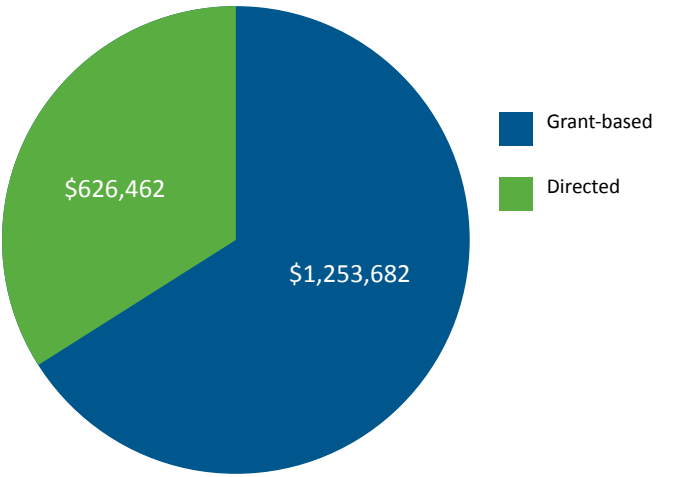


Figure 4.1 F25 directed project funding compared to granted-based project funding.

Projects delivered by proponent type

More than half (nearly 53%) of the project funding went to First Nations, with 44% allocated to projects led by non-government organizations. Figure 4.2 shows the allocation of funding by proponent type in F25.

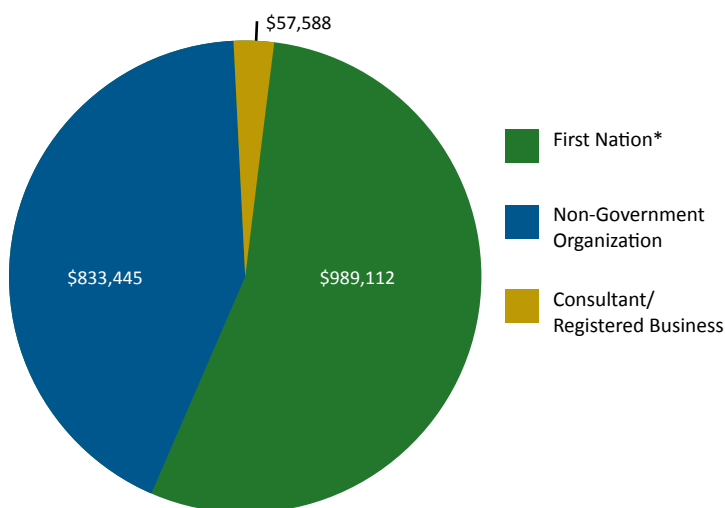


Figure 4.2: Funding for F25 Peace Region projects by lead proponent type
*Includes First Nations-owned businesses and First Nations-led organizations

Approved projects by action type

Priority actions in our Peace Region action plans are grouped into five broad action types:

- 1) research & information acquisition
- 2) habitat-based
- 3) species-based
- 4) monitoring and evaluation
- 5) land securement

This year, 61% of funding went towards research and information acquisition projects and 37% to habitat-based projects. The funding split by action type is illustrated in Figure 4.3 below.

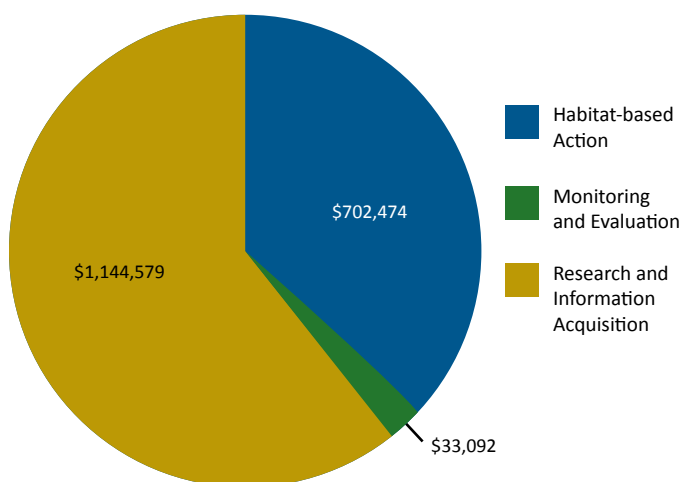


Figure 4.3: F25 project funding by action type

¹Basin-wide is defined as more than one sub-region.

There were no funds directed towards species-based actions. At the start of the year, \$100,000 was set aside for land securement, however, there were no projects approved for this category, so these funds are rolled forward for future land securement initiatives. For more information about our land securement grant, visit <https://fwcp.ca/funding/land-securement.html>

Projects delivered by sub-region

Figure 4.4 shows the funding approved for projects this year by sub-region. Funding breakdown was 37% for the Parsnip sub-region and 34% basin-wide.

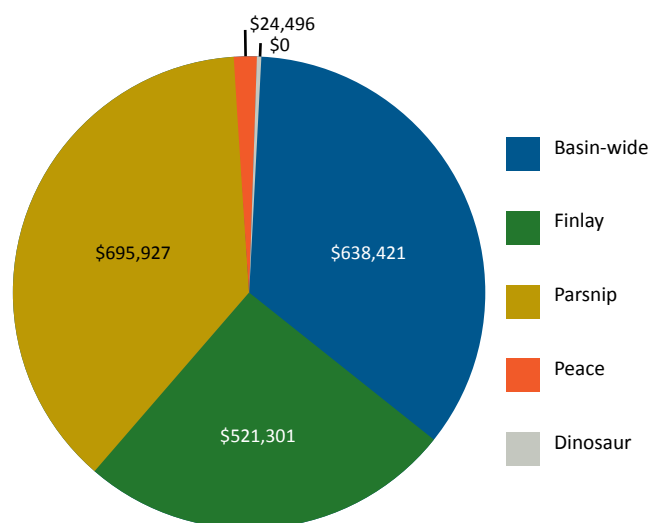


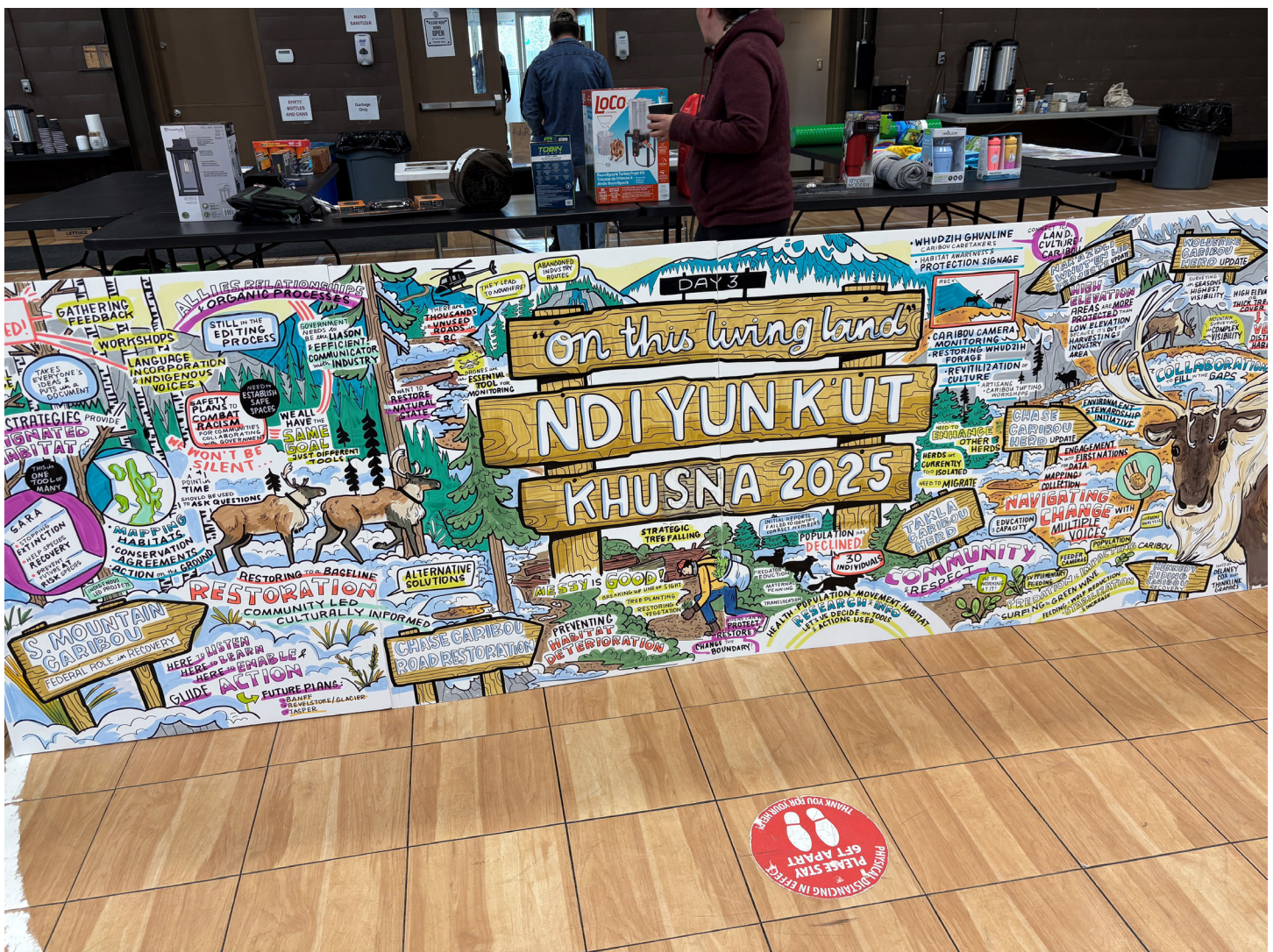
Figure 4.4: F25 project funding by sub-region

Community Engagement Grant

The goal of the Community Engagement Grant is to provide small grants of up to \$1,500 to support activities that align with our strategic objectives. Groups can apply for a Community Engagement Grant at any time during the year, while funds are available.

An initial budget of \$5,000 was set aside for Community Engagement Grant funding in our Peace Region. Six applications were received, and five were approved, totalling \$5,052. The complete list of approved Community Engagement Grants is shown in Table 4.2

Organization	Project	FWCP \$s
Society for Ecosystem Restoration in Northern BC	Northern BC Restoration Community of Practice Launch	\$1,500
Mackenzie Community Arts Council	Nature Based Play	\$600
Saulteau First Nation	Healing the Land Conference, Community of Practice Promotion	\$1,500
Hope for Health Society	Explore the Woods	\$1,200
Dawson Creek Society for Community Living	Increasing the Accessibility of Birdwatching	\$252
		TOTAL \$5,052



One of the F25 Community Engagement Grants supported the Ndi yun k'ut khusna, khusna (On this Living Land) conference hosted by the Nak'azdli Whut'en First Nation in Fort St James, where our Peace Region manager, Chelsea Regina, was recognized for FWCP's project funding and support. Image: Thinklink Graphics

APPENDIX A: Peace Region 2024-2025 projects

The table below provides a listing of 2024–2025 (F25) Peace Region fish and wildlife projects approved for funding. The funding identified may vary from the approved budget as of April 1, 2024, due to project budget increases or decreases as they progressed throughout the fiscal year. Final reports for all projects are posted to the appropriate provincial databases once available. Visit fwcp.ca/results.html for an updated list of all available final reports. Learn more about the 2024-2025 project outcomes at fwcp.ca/annual-reports.

FWCP Project ID	Project Title	Proponent	FWCP \$s
Fish: Grant-based			
PEA-F25-F-4054	Bull Trout Spawner Abundance and Critical Habitats	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$74,551
PEA-F25-F-4019	Culvert Fish Passage Assessments in Kwadacha Territory	Kwadacha - DWB Limited Partnership	\$66,908
PEA-F25-F-4052	Williston Bull Trout Population Structure and Life History	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$93,808
PEA-F25-F-4053	Modeling Thermal Regimes of the Upper Peace River Basin	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$113,849
PEA-F25-F-4051	West Shore Arctic Grayling Abundance and Critical Habitats	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$94,948
PEA-F25-F-3986	Peace Reach Bull Trout Spawning Zones 2024	Diversified Environmental Services	\$24,496
Wildlife: Grant-based			
PEA-F25-W-4075	Wolf Density and Distribution - Wolverine Herd (Year 2)	Nak'azdli Whut'en	\$66,000
PEA-F25-W-4070	Elk Distribution and Range Expansion on the Nation River	Nak'azdli Whut'en	\$59,012
PEA-F25-W-3994	Motus Wildlife Tracking System: Peace Basin Expansion	Birds Canada	\$129,649
PEA-F25-W-4038	Olive-sided Flycatcher Habitat Across a Disturbance Gradient	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$58,082
PEA-F25-W-4068	Wolverine Density and Abundance in the Chase Caribou Range	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$63,693
PEA-F25-W-4036	Enhancing Wildlife Tree Habitat - Effectiveness Monitoring	Strategic Resource Solutions	\$33,092
PEA-F25-W-4035	McIntyre Lake Wetland Restoration	British Columbia Wildlife Federation	\$42,101
PEA-F25-W-4049	Chase Caribou Road Restoration Program	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$47,924
PEA-F25-W-4017	Understanding Grizzly Bear Populations and Habitat Use	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$44,896
PEA-F25-W-4056	Stone's Sheep Range Condition in Northern BC	Wild Sheep Society of British Columbia	\$90,127
PEA-F25-W-4027	Tsay Keh Dene Herbarium for Plant and Knowledge Conservation	Chu Cho Environmental LLP	\$50,578
PEA-F25-W-4069	Restoring Caribou Habitat in the Klinse-Za herd	Nikanese Wah tzee Stewardship Society	\$99,968
Fish: Directed			
PEA-F25-F-4090-DCA	Improving Fish Passage in our Peace Region	Society For Ecosystem Restoration in Northern BC	\$215,481
PEA-F25-F-4143-DCA	Sample Collection for Brassy Minnow eDNA Assay	University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)	\$1,650
PEA-F25-F-4178-DCA	Arctic Grayling Enhancement Opportunities	West Moberly - DWB Limited Partnership	\$54,893
Wildlife: Directed			
PEA-F25-W-4136-DCA	Moose Habitat Enhancement - Year 2	Society For Ecosystem Restoration in Northern BC	\$297,000
PEA-F25-W-4177-DCA	Williston School Ecology Project	Mackenzie Community Arts Council	\$16,647
PEA-F25-W-4134-DCA	2024-25 Colloquium Presentation Series	University of Northern British Columbia (UNBC)	\$15,001
PEA-F25-W-4133-DCA	Mugaha Marsh Bird Banding Station 2024-25	Mackenzie Nature Observatory	\$25,790

TOTAL \$1,880,145

APPENDIX B: Board and committee lists for 2024-2025

FWCP PEACE REGION BOARD

The board guides our work and is responsible for approving our projects and budget in the Peace Region. In addition to funding projects through our annual grants, the board may choose to direct projects and approve funding to address regional priorities.

Margo Sadler, Co-chair	BC Hydro
Heather Middleton/ Stephanie Bellehumeur	BC Hydro
Gord Haines	Doig River First Nation
Jessica Wiens	Kwadacha First Nation
Anita Vallee	McLeod Lake Indian Band
T. Rosemarie Sam/Alyssa Lepka	Nak'azdli Whut'en First Nation
Andy Johnson	Public
Stephanie Killam, Co-chair	Public
Chris Addison/Al Mottishaw	Public
Vacant	Prophet River First Nation
Corey Erwin	Province of B.C.
Ray Pillipow/James Jacklin	Province of B.C.
Naomi Owens-Beek	Saulteau First Nations
Vacant	Treaty 8 Tribal Association
Deeanna Izony/Luke Gleeson	Tsay Keh Dene First Nation
Tamara Dokkie/George Desjarlais	West Moberly First Nations

FIRST NATIONS WORKING GROUP

The purpose of the First Nations Working Group is to provide First Nations advice at the regional level. It works to facilitate the collaborative planning and implementation of the FWCP, support the development and implementation of the action plans, and ensures that decision-making incorporates Indigenous knowledge, cultural, and heritage values.

Vacant	Doig River First Nation
Mason Abou/Marty McCook	Kwadacha First Nation
Margaret McDonald	McLeod Lake Indian Band
Fred Sam	Nak'azdli Whut'en First Nation
Vacant	Prophet River First Nation
Fernie Garbitt, Co-Chair	Saulteau First Nations
Vacant	Treaty 8 Tribal Association
Sean Rapai	Tsay Keh Dene First Nation
Christina Ciesielski	Tsay Keh Dene First Nation
George Desjarlais, Co-Chair,	West Moberly First Nations

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

The board is supported by fish and wildlife technical committees that act in an advisory role by providing technical review, evaluation, and ranking of fish and wildlife grant applications; supporting the development of strategic plans; assisting in the development and oversight of directed projects; and providing advice on the effective implementation of action plans.

Fish technical committee

Michael McArthur/Joe Bottoms	BC Hydro
Randy Zemlak, Co-chair	BC Hydro
James Morgan/Reece Legault, Co-chair	Province of B.C.
Nikolaus Gantner	Province of B.C.
Jason Lee	Saulteau First Nations

Wildlife technical committee

Brent Matsuda	BC Hydro
Stephanie Bellehumeur/Arshad Khan	BC Hydro
Inge-Jean Hansen	Province of B.C.
Matthew Scheideman, Chair	Province of B.C.
Krista Sittler	Nak'azdli Whut'en
Jessica Eastman	Saulteau First Nation

STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee sets the FWCP's overall direction, including the governance structure and strategic framework. It also oversees periodic evaluations, approves significant changes to the FWCP, and addresses dispute resolution, when necessary, among other responsibilities beyond the FWCP. For more details, refer to our [governance manual](#).

Karen Popoff, Chair
Director, Environment, BC Hydro

Jasmine Pouce Coupe
Doig River First Nation (Peace Region)

Alice Cheung
Director, PSSI Secretariat, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Mark Peters
Peters First Nations (Coastal Region)

James Mack
Shuswap Band (Columbia Region)

FWCP TEAM

FWCP Peace Region management and operations were implemented by our Peace Region Manager, Chelsea Regina. During this fiscal year, Chelsea was supported by FWCP Program Manager Margo Sadler, Indigenous and Environmental Initiatives Coordinator Shesley Callison-Hanna, and Environmental Project Coordinator Melissa Fiel de Sousa/Sharon Johnson/Soo Lee. Communications and community engagement for all three FWCP regions were led by Lynne Betts and Angus Glass.