

Columbia Region strengthening engagement with First Nations

Our Columbia Region board is committed to strengthening First Nations engagement in decision-making, leadership, operations, and project delivery. Several projects - selected by the Nations and funded by FWCP - are getting underway now. Here's a sample:



Recovering endangered frogs

Nupqu Resource Limited Partnership (owned by the communities of the Ktunaxa Nation), in collaboration with the Province of B.C., is helping the recovery of endangered northern leopard frogs in the Creston Valley. Work includes night calling surveys, daytime egg mass searches, protecting and monitoring egg masses, capturing and tagging adult frogs, and helping reintroduce the species in other locations.

Photo: Barb Houston



Increasing bat habitat

The **Okanagan Nation Alliance** is leading a project to create roosting habitat for West Kootenay bats using synthetic bark sleeves called BrandenBark. The artificial bark is being installed on selected trees near Nelson. It provides enough room for the bats to shift around underneath the bark depending on where the sun is, so they can regulate their temperature. [Read more and see the video](#) of the BrandenBark being installed.

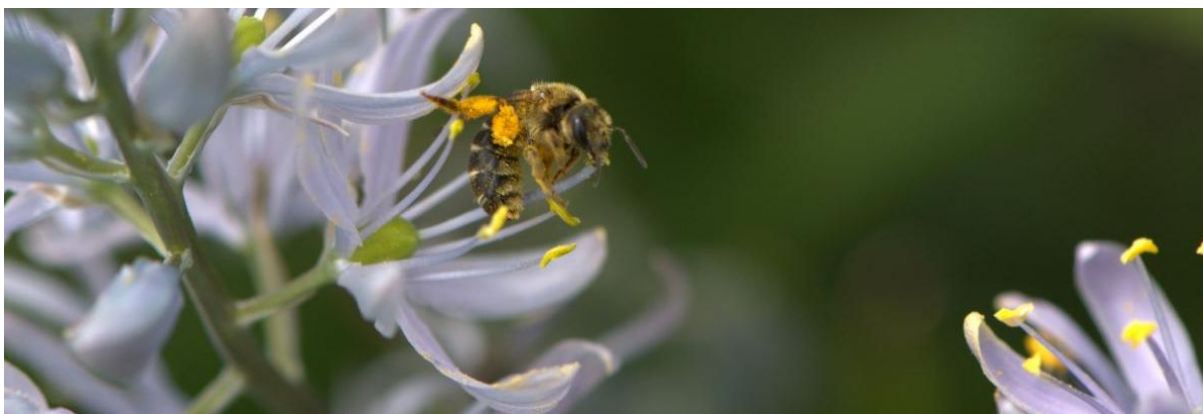
The arborist hoists the synthetic bark and then suspends it in place before screwing it on to the tree. The top edge is sealed with silicon to keep water out. Photo: Todd Manning



Adding nesting habitat

Yucwmenlúcwu (Caretakers of the Land) with the Splatsin - a tribe of the Secwépemc Nation - is leading a project in collaboration with the Province of B.C. and Kingbird Ecological to install floating loon platforms. The work focuses on Whatshan Reservoir but monitoring of previously installed platforms is also taking place in the North Columbia. This floating platform was installed in May and it was home to a nest and an egg within a month!

Floating platform on Whatshan Reservoir. Photo M. Kellner



A native bee collecting nectar and pollen from camas flower in the West Kootenay. Photo: Valerie Huff.

Camas meadows a-buzz with native bees in the West Kootenay

Eighty-four different bee species, including two at-risk native bee species, were recorded at nine camas meadow sites located at low elevations in the West Kootenay. The multi-year project, led by the Kootenay Native Plant Society with funding from the FWCP, is documenting native bee abundance, diversity, and their use of the meadows. Camas is a native perennial herb in the lily family that was historically a valuable food source for First Nations. It is now a rare find in the Columbia Region and covers less than one per cent of its historical range. The decline is potentially having a significant impact on pollinators, including native bees. [Read the full report.](#)



Communications survey: please give us your feedback

Lynne and Angus, our communications team, are updating our three-year communications and engagement strategy, and they'd really like your anonymous feedback. Let them know how we're doing, what you want to know more about, and the best ways we can share FWCP project updates, grant information, and other news. [Please take our short survey.](#) It's open until Monday, July 19, 2021. Thanks in advance!

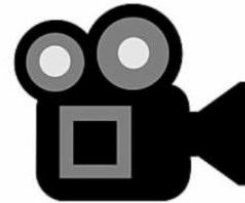


A newly emerged western painted turtle hatchling makes it to the relative safety of Elizabeth Lake. FWCP photo.

Learn more about turtle restoration work and stewardship: watch the videos!

Several videos were shared during our recent online information sessions. Watch them now!

- [Elizabeth Lake turtle video](#) - Rocky Mountain Naturalists
- [Baynes Lake turtle video](#) - Baynes Lake Community Society
- [Stewardship Solutions Toolkit video](#) - Kootenay Conservation Program



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 in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams.

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