

Fraser South

October 2024 SEHAB Report

Representative: Lesley England

Community Advisor: Paul Neufeld

1. Any positive things that are directly related to DFO.

A. All groups are working well with their Community Advisor

- All feel strongly supported by Paul Neufeld and his team.

A. Semiahmoo Fish and Game Club– Little Campbell Hatchery

- Underwater camera has been installed to monitor salmon returns

2. Any things coming up that DFO should know about.

A. Abbotsford Ravine Park Salmon Enhancement Society (ARPS) – Ravine Hatchery

- Question regarding who can work in water when?
 - There is gravel extraction currently being done on the Vedder River. Plus, there is digging with excavators being done to clean out drainage into creeks that has been observed this month (October). ARPS is being told by those involved that if it is for flood mitigation, work in water can be done anytime regardless of whether the water is salmon bearing.

B. Serpentine Enhancement Society: Tynehead Hatchery

- Chinook are arriving this year. One egg take-already done. A big difference from last year when we thought we had lost our Chinook run

3. Any issues that are affecting groups and their projects that are related to other agencies.

B. Abbotsford Ravine Park Salmon Enhancement Society (ARPS) – Ravine Hatchery

- A big spill occurred in July with after an accidental release of firefighting foam ran into a storm drain and into Stoney Creek in Abbotsford. 1,000 fish died, and another 1,200 were moved into fresh water.
 - Pacific Streamkeeper and SFU have done invertebrate studies and have found some forms of invertebrates

C. Cougar Creek Streamkeepers

Metro Van planning initiative along Lower Cougar Creek:

- Changes are in store for Lower Cougar Creek – a human-made channel cinched in between a railway line, a sanitary sewer, and a trail / sewer service road that is the future Delta South Surrey Regional Greenway.

Fraser South

October 2024 SEHAB Report

Representative: Lesley England

Community Advisor: Paul Neufeld

- The changes are coming primarily from two sources, **Metro Vancouver Parks** and **BNSF Railway**, both of whom want to reduce or eliminate creek overflows during rainy weather.
 - Metro Vancouver Parks has undertaken a planning initiative to bring Delta Nature Reserve (through which Lower Cougar flows) and the trail / sewer service road up to regional standards, with year-round accessibility to all.
 - BNSF Railway has indicated its intention to dredge a portion of Lower Cougar that is in fact **prime spawning & rearing habitat, as well as the migration route to much more habitat upstream.** *(This issue is in limbo for now; BNSF was supposed to coordinate with DFO, Delta and Ministry of Environment to arrange for authorization.)*
- Streamkeepers have proposed achieving the goal of reduced creek overflows by re-routing a portion of Lower Cougar Creek away from the railway and trail, into a spacious forested wetland area where it can expand, contract and meander as healthy creeks do. *(Thanks, Al Jonsson.)* This would provide additional habitat, reduce fish strandings and provide a real solution that doesn't just push the flooding problem downstream as diking the creek would do.
- We also continue to partner with City of Delta on stormwater infiltration projects that reduce the volume of piped stormwater flowing into North Delta creeks and contributing to flooding & pollution.
- These are urgent priorities for us, as densification of development is only going to make matters worse.
- You can see short video clips of Lower Cougar trail flooding at these links:
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/umzfdyr08hdw6cg7jku6k/Lower-Cougar-Creek-overflow-along-72-Ave-Overpass-pedestrian-access-trail-2024-Jan-27.MOV?rlkey=eeztgttoec59xpusq8ow16xwa&dl=0> Shows overflow across main trail and onto pedestrian access trail to 72 Ave Overpass
 - <https://www.dropbox.com/scl/fi/7e7r9lm2rqtg zr2nd581a/Lower-Cougar-walk-CCS-with-BCWF-2023-Dec-4-1.MP4?rlkey=4vy0wjrzdfwu62pyyct9rb5ml&dl=0> Shows overflow at "The Beaches" onto main trail / future Regional Greenway

Fraser South

October 2024 SEHAB Report

Representative: Lesley England

Community Advisor: Paul Neufeld

4. A general update of what has been happening with your society that you would like to share.

A. Abbotsford Ravine Park Salmon Enhancement Society (ARRPS) – Ravine Hatchery

- All are aware of the spill this September in the Hope Slough. A positive has occurred - ARRPS has become aware of other groups (First Nations and others) working on same projects in same areas. Networking is now occurring between all groups.
- Gearing up for brood stock collection
- Stream walks planned for spawner counts in three creeks

B. Serpentine Enhancement Society: Tynehead Hatchery

- Working with the DFO stock assessment group (STAD) technician who is helping with BCIT's fish and wildlife students' projects. The project chosen was a three-creek adult salmonid population estimate of three creeks/ivers in the Lower Mainland to create an Area Under the Curve population estimate. These creek/river walks historically were performed by the DFO on these three systems in the past for adult spawning salmon so by restarting this project with the BCIT students, new and past data will be able to be compared on these systems. All three systems would be surveyed on one single day per week for the length of the spawning season starting pre spawn until post spawn.

One of these three systems included in this is/was the Serpentine River. Historically there was a reach below the hatchery and two reaches above the hatchery that were surveyed.

The hatchery will be used as their access point. Also working together with Metro Vancouver Parks and the City of Surrey as the areas being worked with cross all boundaries.

C. Semiahmoo Fish and Game Club– Little Campbell Hatchery

- Chinook and Coho have started to arrive at the hatchery
- Have received the building permit for the new hatchery. Call for bids are out. Unfortunately, costs are rising so will need more funds than originally planned
- Low on volunteers for the weekends

Fraser South

October 2024 SEHAB Report

Representative: Lesley England

Community Advisor: Paul Neufeld

D. Cougar Creek Streamkeepers

- BCWF workshop (4 new spawning weirs, 370 riparian plants, flexi-baffles for Blake culverts, invertebrate testing, minnow trapping)
- Large new Sungod Recreation Centre Rain Garden receiving runoff from east parking lot: it will be planted in early November by CCS with youth and KPU volunteers.