

Round table Report
October/2024 SEHAB meeting
SEHAB Rep Kyle Milburn, NCVI
CA: Jacob Melville

Summary

Any issues that are affecting groups and their projects.

- Low summer flows and fish stranding ongoing/identifying salvage areas within problematic watersheds/reaches
- Increased development Rampant Riparian Areas Protection violations
- *DFO CA's ability to support habitat work*
- Brood stock capture for all groups can be difficult for CA to support all groups is challenging as it all happens at once.
- Regional/provincial/federal government responsibilities regarding enforcement. Habitat loss is happening faster than ever before. (no teeth)
 - Regional level working on "volunteer compliance" is not acceptable as timelines for compliance is in many cases taking >4 years only to then being forced to the province or DFO or court. In the meantime, valuable habitat and fish populations are being lost forever. (STILL ON GOING)
 - Historical HADD's are not being acknowledged or smaller system infractions not being pursued by DFO due to lack of resources (Small stream matter and legislation should still apply).
 - DFO not able to operate outside of their statute of limitations timelines or 3 yrs
 - No monitoring or identification of habitat issues. When it is often longer than 3 years leaving the idea don't get caught to private property owners
- The need for more accurate stream mapping to support responsible development. Smaller first and second order streams, wetlands and groundwater sources are in many cases not accurately mapped and as development increases many are being infilled, completed rerouted, culverted or buried by private property owners.
 - Limited response from SEHAB requests for group reports.
- Shifting base lines after habitat loss is identified DFO enforcement officers then saying "no significant fisheries values" meaning no enforcement
- Many small habitat impacts = loss of a species (a little bit plus a little bit equals a big problem)
- Confusion/concern regarding DFO separation of enhancement and stewardship. (they are interconnected)

Any positive things that are directly related to DFO:

- Resounding support and appreciation for CA: Jacob Melville (active on site, not afraid to get dirty and get things done, comments received back are he is the best thing from DFO we have seen in our area in the last 4-5 years)
- DFO for paying for all the Stream keeper group's insurance 2023-24
- The River Never Sleeps Festival!!!
- Baynes Sound Eco forum ongoing (State of the Sound report to be developed with multi stake holder engagement)

- BC parks foundation property acquisition of the Chef Creek Estuary with aims to acquire additional adjacent properties.

Group reports

Roy Creek Enhancement Group

- No comments at this time

Fanny Bay Salmonid Enhancement Society

- River Never sleeps festival was a huge success with >750 people in attendance in the rain.
 - Mapping small streams initiative continued with CVRD, RDN and PSF grants being awarded to Weaver Technical FBSE has matched contributions >20k
 - Recruiting and retaining managing and engagement of volunteers is difficult and time consuming
 - Technical support contract is potentially being cut to support Fanny Bay (Dave Clough)?
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