

WATERSHED NEWS

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**Canadian
Okanagan
Basin
Technical
Working
Group**

**DFO-MWLP-
ONA**

September 12, 2003

Your coffee break update on regional fisheries issues!

Sockeye Numbers are Looking Good

So far this year 28, 973 sockeye have passed through Wells Dam which is located approximately 160 km downstream of Osoyoos Lake. This count should translate to about 14-16,000 sockeye on spawning grounds in total.

As of September 10, 2003 Okanagan River temperatures were 20 degrees Celcius at Deer Park Estates. The Oliver station had readings of around 17 degrees. Now that temperatures are dropping the Sockeye just above Wells are probably starting to migrate further up the system. Three sockeye were also observed in the river holding.

This years sampling program will include enumeration and biosampling, genetic and disease sampling. We will also be running Salmon in the Classroom programs at several schools which will require collection of eggs in conjunction with the sampling program.

If approval is received in time, there will also be a small test egg-take conducted in preparation for a planned experimental reintroduction of Okanagan Sockeye into Skaha Lake for 2004.

Low Water in Regional Streams

Small and large streams and rivers throughout the region are experiencing low flows including the Granby, and Similkameen right on through to zero flows into the Dee and Beaver Lake Chains.

With Kokanee spawning time fast approaching, the Ocoela Fish and Game Club is actually looking at buying water to pump into the Middle Vernon Creek to maintain flows for spawning and incubation. (For more information contact Ron Taylor at 250 766-2559)

These problems are not only occurring in the arid Okanagan. The Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council recently released a new report "Conflicts Between People and Fish for Water".

Historically low water flows in key BC watersheds are poised to destroy critical salmon recovery efforts. The independent conservation council's new report, investigates dramatic examples and consequences of over-use of water on salmon survival.

The report concludes that unprecedented water demand for industrial, agricultural and domestic purposes in BC watersheds has led to historically low water flows and, as a result, intense stress on salmon and their ability to reproduce. "Many had hoped that the implementation of a new provincial Fish Protection Act, combined with changes to the pro-

vincial Water Act, would help governments better protect water flows for fish. But that hasn't happened. So, despite a lot of provincial and federal legislation, policy and regulation, historic problems with the over allocation and often inefficient use of water persist...as does the salmon's struggle to survive," Angelo added.

"The PFRCC welcomes this report and wholeheartedly supports the authors' recommendations. We request their immediate consideration by the relevant provincial and federal government ministries and agencies," said PFRCC chair, the Honourable John A. Fraser. "It is clear from this report that governments must take a much more precautionary approach with respect to the allocation of water, especially in sensitive watersheds like the Nicola Basin and Englishman, and in light of changing environmental and demographic conditions."

The report authors noted that global climate change may further exacerbate an already tenuous situation in the water-scarce parts of British Columbia by facilitating a drying trend in some locations or disrupting the hydrologic cycle to which salmon and aquatic ecosystems have historically become adapted. As a result, conflicts over water between fish and people will likely only increase as a result of the consequences of global warming and increases in human population in this province. <http://www.fish.bc.ca/>

Canadians Waste Water

Excerpts from Vancouver Sun article by Daphne Bramham

Like the rest of the world, we have to value what we have and use less of it. Canadians are among the biggest water pigs in the world. The Americans, of course, are the only ones who use more than we do.

It's shocking how much water we use. At 1,600 cubic metres (1.6 million litres) of water per Canadian each year, we're water hogs, using more than eight times the amount the average Dane uses and four times as much as the average Swede. We use three times more water than Germans and twice as much as the French.

Take the amount of water the average person uses in the average developed country. Then add 65 per cent and you've got us. And the gap is growing between the Europeans and us.

In the past decade, the Dutch have cut their total water consumption by 52 per cent even with a growing population.

The Finns and the Swedes use 34 per cent less water, even though they have more people, and in the U.K., total consumption is down 31 per cent.

I just can't imagine that all those people in all those other countries are all dirtier than we are. In fact, I find it hard to figure out just how we do manage to use so much water.

But now we've come to the nub of the problem. There is no incentive for anybody to conserve water other than altruism, and we know how far that takes most of us. Couple that with an overwhelming disbelief that we even have a problem and voila, we've got a crisis right now -- and a bigger one coming if nothing changes.

So it comes down to this: We could all agree to follow the Europeans and cut our consumption substantially over the coming years or we could spend hundreds of millions of dollars on a new water supply.

Seems like a no-brainer to me. Let's just use less water.

Upcoming Events 2003

Sept 13-21 - Great Canadian Shoreline Cleanup! Help clean up river, stream lake or ocean shorelines this. Register online at www.vanaqua.org/cleanup or call 877-427-2422

Sept 18 - Pacific Salmon Foundation: Okanagan Dinner & Auction. Kelowna Coast Capri. Contact John Macdonald 878-5599 or ICI@shaw.ca for tickets or auction donations

Sept 19-21 - Stream Restoration Hydraulic Design by Bob Newbury in Kelowna, British Columbia. www.bcfi.ca.

Sept 22-26 - The Art and Science of Ecosystem-Based Conservation Planning. Salmo. <http://www.silvafor.org>

Sept 26 - Electrofishing Recertification and New Technologies. Castlegar. <http://web.mala.bc.ca/faep/>

Sept 27-28 - Electrofishing: Theory, Uses and Safety. Castlegar. <http://web.mala.bc.ca/faep/>

Sept 28 - BC Rivers and Fisheries Awareness Day, Mission Creek Regional Park, Kelowna.

Oct 14-15 - Watershed: Research Informing Public Policy. Calgary, AB. <http://www.albertaingenuity.ca>

Oct 17-18 - Electrofishing: Theory, Uses and Safety. Merritt. <http://web.mala.bc.ca/faep/>

Nov 23-26 - Banff Mountain Summit - Mountains As Water Towers. <http://www.banffmountainfestivals.ca/festivals/>

March 2-6, 2004 - Species at Risk 2004: Pathways to Recovery Conference Victoria. For more info: www.speciesatrisk2004.ca. e-mail distribution update list, please contact Clare.Rumball@gems1.gov.bc.ca

May 2-6, 2004 - 4th World Fisheries Congress, Vancouver. Reconciling Fisheries with Conservation: The Challenge of Managing Aquatic Ecosystems. <http://www.worldfisheries2004.org>.

May 13-15, 2004 - Land Summit 2004 Conference. University of British Columbia.

June 6-10, 2004 - North American Benthological Society 52nd Annual Meeting. University of British Columbia. <http://faculty.forestry.ubc.ca/richardson/NABS2004.htm>

Job Postings

- ECOSYSTEM DATA TECHNICIAN (MARINE/COASTAL), Parks Canada, Vancouver, BC
<http://www.jobs.gc.ca/jobs/p030597e.htm>. Temporary full time position of up to 6 months.

- EMPLOYMENT EQUITY INVENTORY - SCIENTIFIC POSITIONS, Various locations on Vancouver Island
<http://www.jobs.gc.ca/jobs/p029108e.htm> Federal Government

- ENVIRONMENTAL PROTECTION OFFICER 2 Positions, LSO Engineer 3 (Under Review) Smithers/Williams Lake
\$53,982.94 - \$64,521.71 (Isolation allowance \$858) <http://www.postings.gov.bc.ca/data/048/wl200315602.html>

Resource Best Bet:

Southern Interior Region: Water Information
[Http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/sir/okanagan_water/index.html](http://srmwww.gov.bc.ca/sir/okanagan_water/index.html)

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