

CBFWCP Annual Report Fiscal 2003 – 2004

Co-Chairs Report

The Columbia Basin Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program (CBFWCP) continues to work with a range of partners across its mandate area to deliver fish and wildlife projects aimed at conserving and enhancing populations impacted by the construction of BC Hydro dams. In the 2003 – 04 project year, a total of 47 fish and wildlife projects were delivered, with a total value of \$3,919,266. The CBFWCP worked with more than 150 local groups and organizations to deliver these projects. This is five times as many project partners as compared to 1996 – 97 and is a testament to the Program's success. Many of these projects focused on species at risk.

Projects delivered this year include: the ongoing fertilization of the Arrow Lakes Reservoir and Kootenay Lake, one of the largest lake restoration projects in the world. Land acquisition for conservation purposes and habitat enhancement in the East and West Kootenay were also on this year's list of projects. Recovery projects for endangered species such as the northern leopard frog, mountain caribou, badger and white sturgeon were also undertaken. Watershed enhancement and restoration projects, bull trout and burbot initiatives, and a range of inventory and monitoring projects were also funded this project year.

The successful delivery of the CBFWCP's many projects would not be possible without the ongoing commitment and expertise of our partners, volunteers, and the CBFWCP staff. We are pleased to welcome Fisheries and Oceans Canada to the CBFWCP team as a partner on the Policy, Steering and Fish Technical Committees. We welcome Sue Farlinger, Bruce McDonald and Jayson Kurtz respectively. FortisBC, formerly Aquila Networks Canada, joined the CBFWCP this year as a funding partner and made a five-year commitment to fund projects in collaboration with the CBFWCP.

Local fish and wildlife organizations elected Greg Mustard of Invermere, to a three-year term as a Public Representative on the CBFWCP Steering Committee. Acting as a volunteer, Greg will represent the Southeast Kootenay area, from Golden to the U.S. border and from the Alberta border to the Creston area. The Steering Committee is responsible for a range of decisions and actions including providing direction, advice, and recommending approval of the CBFWCP's strategic plan to the Policy Committee.

This year, two new staff joined the CBFWCP team. Eva Schindler is the new Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection (MWLAP) / CBFWCP fertilization limnologist and coordinates the fertilization program in Kootenay Lake and Arrow Lakes Reservoir. Amy Waterhouse is the new Geographic Information Systems (GIS) Co-ordinator and is contributing her expertise to a wide range of projects.

The CBFWCP commitment to delivering fish and wildlife conservation and enhancement projects with the support and involvement of partners ensures that resources are focused

on projects while enabling the CBFWCP to keep staffing and administrative support to a minimum. This approach is working.

The Steering Committee is more than satisfied with the progress the CBFWCP is making towards the conservation and enhancement of fish and wildlife impacted by the construction of BC Hydro dams in the Canadian portion of the Columbia Basin. The Steering Committee is looking forward to working with its many partners, volunteers and the CBFWCP staff in the coming year.



Kevin Conlin
BC Hydro



Wayne Stetski
Ministry of Water, Land and Air Protection

Fish Project Overview

Fertilization and monitoring of the Arrow Lakes Reservoir (ALR) and Kootenay Lake continued this year. Monitoring in the ALR confirms that the phytoplankton biomass has increased as a result of fertilization, improving the nutrient balance and providing a stronger base for the entire food web in the reservoir. Hydro-acoustic surveys put kokanee abundance in the ALR at 11.6 million in 2003, which is close to what the reservoir may have sustained historically. In Kootenay Lake, kokanee spawning in the north arm were estimated to be one million in 2003, which is 25% above the target and more than double the 2002 results.

Based on low survival rates for the **blue-listed bull trout** released from the **Hill Creek hatchery on the ALR**, a decision was made not to reopen the hatchery. Efforts will now focus on possible habitat protection and enhancement opportunities to support the bull trout, along with other impacted species in the reservoir.

The **Kootenay Lake fertilization project** in the south arm received monitoring support from the **Kootenai Tribe of Idaho (KTOI)**. The Steering Committee is looking forward to the continued involvement of KTOI in the monitoring and fertilizing of Kootenay Lake's south arm.

Wildlife Project Overview

Acquiring land for conservation purposes is an important tool to ensure the long-term protection of wildlife habitat. In 2003 the CBFWCP joined with other like-minded groups, including The Nature Trust, to acquire **the Rankin Property in the Elk Valley**. The 26.5-hectare parcel features forest and mixed open forest/grassland, and provides habitat for the red-listed badger and other species. Acquiring this land will compensate for the loss of valley bottom and riparian habitat resulting from the construction of BC Hydro dams.

This year's **great blue heron inventory project was basin-wide and encouraged public input**. The West Kootenay Naturalists' Association, together with the CBFWCP, asked the public to report sightings of this blue-listed species. This "baseline" information will act as a benchmark to measure potential future changes.

Conservation efforts aimed at red-listed (endangered) badgers in the East Kootenay continued this year. Much of the focus was on continuing to relocate badgers to the East Kootenay and monitoring the success (i.e., survivorship and reproduction) of the translocated and resident badgers. The objective of this project is to reduce mortality, improve reproductive success and increase numbers through translocations.

Habitat enhancement efforts in the East Kootenay continued this year with more than 1,100 hectares identified for burning or slashing. More than 3,500 hectares of ungulate habitat has been enhanced to date in the West Kootenay.

2003 – 2004 Financial Report

The Columbia Basin Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program had \$4,008, 597 available in the 2003 – 04 project year. This includes a carryover from last fiscal, the fund deposit from BC Hydro and a one-time contribution from the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho.

BC Hydro provides \$3.2 million annually to the CBFWCP. These funds are indexed for inflation based on 1995 dollars. The funds are allocated to the four, core services provided by the CBFWCP: 1) wildlife, 2) fisheries, 3) public communications, and 4) administration.

In 2003 – 04, \$1,660,255 was spent on wildlife projects. This actual expenditure was .4% or \$7,068 less than the estimated allocation of \$1,667,323 at the start of the project year. Reduced travel costs and project delays contributed to the under spending. Fisheries projects accounted for \$1,742,307 in 2003 – 04, which was 1.7%, or \$30,937 below the estimated allocation for the year. Forest fires in the area impacted the number of project flights taken, resulting in cost savings. BC Hydro paid for some spring flights and the reduced number of small works fisheries projects contributed to the budget being under spent.

Public communications activities cost \$124,999 in 2003 – 04. This actual expenditure was 13% or \$19,219 below the estimated allocation of \$144,218. Cost savings were achieved by focusing on electronic distribution of material and avoiding printing costs. Paid advertising was also reduced, further contributing to the cost savings, without negatively impacting strategic objectives.

Actual administration expenditures for 2003 – 04 were \$391,705, which was .6% or \$2,605 over the estimated budget of \$389,100 for the year. Increased computer costs contributed to the total administrative costs.

Item	Budget Estimate	Actuals	Variance
Total Funds Available			\$4,008,597
Fisheries	\$1,773,244	\$1,742,307	\$30,937
Wildlife	\$1,667,323	\$1,660,255	\$7,068
Public Communications	\$144,218	\$ 124,999	\$19,219
Administration	\$389,100	\$ 391,705	(\$2,605)
Total	\$3,973,885	\$ 3,919,266	\$54,619

Core Service Spending

