

**Fraser South**

**March 2023 SEHAB Report**

**Representative: Lesley England**

**Community Advisor: Paul Neufeld**

**1. Any issues that are affecting groups and their projects that are directly related to DFO.**

***Serpentine Enhancement Society – Tynehead Hatchery***

- ***Confusion on stewardship designation.***

We have always been deemed Stewardship under the SEP program/Production Planning. This means educational designation. In the past, we have made use of our fry (primarily Chinook) for School Field Trip Salmon releases and to top up our annual Coho Smolt release – always a great hit with children and adults. These events are necessary for fundraising and education of our community.

This year we are under the direction of releasing all of our Chinook at the same time to improve survival and enhancement of Chinook in the wild and not use for School Field trips. This is creating an issue of lack of salmon for the public to release. So, as a PIP Hatchery, what is our real designation?

***Nickomekl Enhancement Society – Nickomekl Hatchery***

- The Production Plan does not allow Nickomekl Hatchery, and Tynehead Hatchery to share Spawning Coho if the need arises. Both hatcheries have Boundary Bay Coho. Our CA is looking into having that added to the next production plan if possible. This last fall, we had an emergency order from Production planning to provide more Coho to Inch Creek for Nickomekl Hatchery.

This last year Nickomekl had a bad return for their Coho with a lot of Coho returns with teeth marks on their bellies. And the few eggs that they had for their Salmonid in the Classroom Program died at hatch as eggs for unknown reason. Due to loss of Coho eggs, the Salmonids in the Classroom Fieldtrips are now jeopardized as the hatchery does not have salmon for them to release.

***Cougar Creek Streamkeepers***

- It would be really helpful to have a summary provided to SEP groups of the various funding sources available from the federal and provincial governments, as well as PSF. Are these sources one-time only, ongoing, what are the funding deadlines, etc.?. Groups are often being asked to come up with projects on very short notice making it impossible to consider applying. So much money, too little time for advance strategizing and planning of cost-effective projects.

**2. Any positive things that are directly related to DFO.**

- All hatcheries are very happy and working well with their new DFO Community Advisor. We appreciated the two-month handover time.

***Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS)***

- LEPS is excited to be working with DFO and the Glen Valley Watersheds Society (GVWS) to construct fish habitat using stage zero concepts thanks to work from the restoration team with DFO.
  - Murray Manson has been a great help to design and bring together so many fabulous DFO staff to enhance a Township of Langley Park on the banks of Nathan/Beaver Creek. A testing site for the Stage Zero concept the hope is to rewild an old farm field for Coho and Chinook. This creek does not have flood controls so is an ideal location to try this out. Involved in the data logger program for temperatures in West Creek.
- Yorkson Watershed Enhancement Society (YWES) - very enthusiastic volunteers working with Nikki Kroetsch (DFO) to install and download data from dataloggers looking at both temperatures and salinity in their creek. Still love going out yearly to count their spawners, last year was pretty miserable though. Trying to work with the Township to further expand salmon habitat upstream in their system.

**3. Any things coming up that DFO should know about**

Nothing. All good..

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

***Nickomekl, Tynehead and Little Campbell Hatcheries***

- Hatcheries are still wanting answers on why they have to pay for well water when the water is used directly for raising salmon.
  - Under the Water Sustainability Act, the Nickomekl has been charged for using the water from their well which is used only for raising salmon. Several years ago, they were back charged five years and had to pay out over \$1,000. They have not heard anything else since

***Nickomekl Enhancement Society: Nickomekl Hatchery***

- Sea Dam – they have been informed by the City of Surrey that the new Sea Dam will once again be at Bailey Bridge and will not be completed until 2027. There has been an engineering contract awarded; however, the hatchery does not know how they are going to make this new project fish friendly.
  - Issues with late returns of Salmon and Salmon that have obviously had interactions with seals (bite marks)

***Serpentine Enhancement Society: Tynehead Hatchery***

- Sea Dam – The City of Surrey has a new Sea Dam in the planning, and it will be moved. Not sure of current plans and timelines.

### ***Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS)***

- The township of Langley is changing their bylaw related to stream side setbacks. Maybe not a DFO issue, more province but folks did question if this would be something DFO should have had input on. We await results from council to the public hearing mid-April.

### ***Cougar Creek Streamkeepers***

- Cities /Federal Government / DFO need faster, easier mechanisms for issuing tickets that, if unpaid, get added to property taxes. And cities themselves need to be held accountable by DFO, for storm sewer systems that empty directly into creeks.

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

### ***Abbotsford Ravine Park Salmon Enhancement Society (ARPS) – Ravine Hatchery***

- We are presently raising 10,000 coho to smolt stage that will be released in to two creeks in the Abbotsford area.

### ***Nickomekl enhancement society: Nicomekl Hatchery***

- Chum – managed to get quota this last fall and fry will be released within the next few weeks.

### ***Serpentine Enhancement Society: Tynehead Hatchery***

- Planning for an incubation room upgrades to include changes to well water flow, UV lighting for Coho water recirculation system and add a UV lighting system for our Chinook heath trays. The latter is to increase our survival rates. Application for funding has been sent to PSF and our Community Advisor is able to add some funds.

### ***Semiahmoo Fish and Game Club– Little Campbell Hatchery***

- Have just completed coded wire tagging and adipose clipping on 40,000 Chinook for the second year. In the following fall ROCHA will take the heads of clipped Chinook and send them for checking tags. No clipped fish are used for broodstock.
- Had an infection go through their Coho eggs which has only allowed 40,000 to fry. Down 6-10,000
- Same infection went through the Chinook eggs so down by 20,000 Chinook fry of usual years.
- Due to last year's flood, there are only approximately 9,000 Coho in their rearing pond. Usually have around 20,000.
- Classes are starting up but only 40 classes are running this spring. That is down from 100 classes.
- New Hatchery is in the planning. Finalization of plans is in process. Then the contractors will take the plans to the City of Surrey for building permits. Once approved, fundraising will go into full swing.

### ***Langley Environmental Partners Society (LEPS)***

- Working on wrapping up an 18-month project to reduce coliforms in Nooksack River tributaries and Little Campbell River. Education, and water sampling. Hosted quite a few webinars on the subject that were unfortunately not well attended but they are up on our YouTube channel for future viewing. The water quality is extremely poor in many of the tributaries. Quite upsetting and while many landowners don't seem interested in doing anything we have had a great time meeting so many folks that are taking great strides in reducing the impacts to their streams and understand their actions have impacts as far reaching as the ocean. The project was started due to the closure of the traditional indigenous harvest of shellfish in Boundary Bay and Bellingham Bay. LEPS continues to focus on salmon in all of their work while mostly indirectly.
- ***Bertrand Creek Enhancement Society (BCES)*** - they do have DFO support because their Salmon originated in the USA. However, they continue to educate and enhance their watershed. They have monthly events to clean up, pull invasives, and plant. Very active.
- ***Little Campbell Watershed Society (LCWS)*** - very active politically with letter writing and meetings with decision makers in their watershed in both Surrey and Langley and regionally with Metro Vancouver. They have initiated a project to have their watershed become a national urban park and they are very excited and motivated to see enhanced protections on their wonderful watershed. While not directly related to salmon they are trying to support a group that is in court trying to protect air quality due to a factory that has been allowed to operate in Campbell Heights. Fallout from the factory is impacting soil, animals, and water.

### ***Cougar Creek Streamkeepers***

- First year of a program of installing eyed chum eggs directly into stream gravel to hopefully help the developing chum imprint on our watercourse. We have been releasing 150000 chum smolts for several years and our returns have not been great. Our coho return is now self-sustaining since our reintroduction program (incubator box) started in 1980's and ended in early 2000's.
- Undertaking water quality testing after installing data loggers in conjunction with Nikki K (conductivity and temperature). This will give us strong data on a daily basis moving forward.
- Working with Vancouver Island University to collect and analyze water samples for detection of contaminants, specifically 6PPD-Q (a car tire chemical additive) that is shown to impact spawning salmon.
- Weir, spawning platform construction and other instream enhancements.
- fry release programs with several schools on a yearly basis to continue the education of our youth in regard to the importance of protecting our green spaces, watercourses, and wildlife.

- Yearly public seminars in conjunction with BCWF.
- Riparian planting and invasive plant species removal on-going projects.
- Raingarden programs continue.