



BACKGROUND

EAST KOOTENAY-KOOCANUSA FISH AND WILDLIFE PROGRAM

*Columbia Basin Trust and Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program
partner to conserve and enhance the region's environment*

1. As a result of Kootenusa Reservoir being created by a U.S. dam, and the fact there is no water licence associated with Libby Dam issued by the Province of BC, there is currently no fish and wildlife compensation program associated with the historical footprint impacts of Kootenusa Reservoir in Canada.
2. An East Kootenay-Kootenusa Fish and Wildlife Program (EKKFWP) has been identified by Basin residents as a regional priority through a variety of processes, including the Columbia River Treaty community education/consultation sessions currently under way. This has been a long-standing issue identified by both public residents and agencies alike.
3. Columbia Basin Trust (CBT) has approved funding of \$3 million for the purposes of establishing the EKKFWP. This funding is a one-time amount to be expended over a period of time not exceeding five years.
4. The existing Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program (FWCP) delivery framework will be used to support implementation and delivery of the EKKFWP. The FWCP has a long history of delivering similar programs elsewhere in the Basin and the Province, and has a delivery framework already in place. The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of British Columbia and Fisheries and Oceans Canada to conserve and enhance fish, wildlife and their supporting habitats affected by the creation of BC Hydro-owned and -operated generation facilities in the Coastal, Columbia and Peace regions of British Columbia. By building on this existing framework, cost savings can be realized and an effective, integrated approach can be taken for delivering this new program.
5. The geographic scope of the EKKFWP is based on a watershed boundary approach. The scope of this program is the Kootenay River drainage and its associated tributaries above the 49th parallel. This excludes the Kootenay River as it re-enters Canada in the Creston and Kootenay Lake area. It also excludes the Flathead River Basin in Canada. It includes major tributaries such as the Elk, Bull, St. Mary's, Lussier, White and Wigwam rivers and the Kootenusa Reservoir itself. See a map at www.cbt.org/KootenayKootenusaProgramMap.
6. CBT funds will be directed toward fish and wildlife habitat conservation and restoration activities within the defined geographic scope.

DEVELOPING A WATERSHED ACTION PLAN

1. The next step is to develop a Watershed Action Plan (WAP) for the EKKFWP that will set community- and science-based goals, outcomes and proposed activities to conserve and

enhance fish and wildlife. This planning framework is already being used by the FWCP in other watersheds.

2. A working group made up of representatives from CBT, the FWCP Board, provincial government agencies, First Nations, local governments, industry and community groups within the EKKFWP geographic area will provide input and support the development of the Watershed Action Plan.
3. Development of the Watershed Action Plan will involve the following:
 - i) A technical review and evaluation of fish and wildlife issues in the East Kootenay-Koocanusa region. The Watershed Action Plan will be structured to highlight priorities for ecosystems (lakes, streams, riparian areas/wetlands, upland/dryland areas) and species of interest.
 - ii) Input from public, First Nations and stakeholders on high-priority fish and wildlife issues of the East Kootenay-Koocanusa region through a series of engagement workshops throughout the area.
 - iii) Incorporation of input from the public, First Nations and stakeholders into the draft Watershed Action Plan.
 - iv) Review of the draft Watershed Action Plan by the public, First Nations and stakeholders. Comments on the draft Watershed Action Plan will be collected through email and websites (CBT, FWCP, VAST Resource Solutions), as well as at public open house gatherings where people can provide feedback.
 - v) Incorporation of review comments by the public, First Nations and stakeholders into a final Watershed Action Plan.
4. The tentative timeline for development of the WAP is as follows:

Technical review	Oct. to Nov., 2013
Face-to-face public, First Nations and stakeholder engagement workshops	Nov. to Dec., 2013
Online surveys (to gather information about fish and wildlife concerns)	Nov. 2013 to Jan. 2014
Deadline for public input	Jan. 6, 2014
Draft WAP (available online for comment)	February 2014
Draft WAP review by the public, First Nations and stakeholders	March, 2014
Open house for feedback on the draft WAP	April 2014
Final WAP (to be made available online)	April 30, 2014

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