

Roundtable

SEHAB Member: Jim Armstrong

Area: South Fraser River

Community Advisor: Bob Schaefer

Date: October 6, 2014

Presented in Memory of Magnus Lundt.



Key Issues:

What top three points can you distill from community input to take to DFO RHQ?

1. Community Advisors and their importance to the community organizations/hatcheries.
2. Lack of direction from DFO in regards to fisheries protection/habitat and enforcement.
3. Steelhead/Cutthroat license and lack of clarity from DFO/Province of BC.

Stories:**Success:**

Nicomekl Enhancement Society has undertaken to undertake an extensive habitat enhancement program to the reaches of the Nicomekl at the hatchery. Since June, NES has had our membership working in riparian enhancement through the replacement and planting of over 200 mixed species trees, river bank stabilization, completion of spawning beds and the addition of more spawning gravels.

Our education program continues to reach out to approximately 22 schools, which are critical to the release of our fry.

Another success is the Youth Hatch Program that was started several years ago by a local high school student in Langley. Each year she comes back with more students who are eager to become involved in the work that the hatcheries undertake. As a professional scientist, I have been rewarded with sharing my career experience with these students and am now bringing other professionals out to assist and discuss why we are involved in fisheries and the rewards that we have in our careers to guide them in their futures.



**Figure 1: Youth Hatch Volunteers-
Nicomekl Enhancement Society – May 25-2014**

Failures:

We have not yet succeeded in removing the sea gates on either the Nicomekl or Serpentine Rivers which restrict fish passage. Our fish have to pass through the “dead zone” at the lower reaches of each river before they can pass to the ocean or our spawning adults can return in the fall. The adult numbers are greatly reduced as the gates remain closed until sufficient water is flowing downstream for them to open and they are feed for the seals.

Since September 7/14, the stream work that I have identified earlier has been under threat through the actions of a contractor horizontally drilling under the Nicomekl upstream of the hatchery. During this process , the drilling caused the streambed to slump and has effectively destroyed the ability of returning Coho, Chinook and Chum to spawn in the area of the hatchery or upstream of the drilling works.

Our volunteers have donated hundreds of hours to mitigate the damages but are resources are limit

Issues Specific to SEHAB’s Work Plan:

SEHAB Work Plan	Local Issue, Specific Examples	Actions by Community or DFO	SEHAB Opportunity
Wild Salmon Policy (Stock Assessment, Habitat)	DFO has approached each hatchery to discuss reducing our Coho production numbers; not seeing increase in rate of returns/survival rates	Community is adamant that production numbers need to be increased dramatically and to meet the capacity of each community group	SEAHAB can voice the community direction to DFO/assist community groups to meet desired production numbers
Aquaculture	Steelhead/Cutthroat licensing	No action by DFO/BCMOE	SEHAB is the voice of the community groups
Capacity and Core Funding	Hatcheries being underfunded/utilized	Community groups are excellent in raising funds to carry on programs/ Need more technical/scientific support from DFO	Identify additional funding opportunities/coordinate funding/scientific expertise to communities