

Bridge Coastal Restoration Program: Bridge-Seton Watershed Plan Update

Public Information Session: Meeting Notes

**Lillooet, BC
March 26, 2009**

Morning Session

Introduction

The meeting began with an introduction of participants and a welcome from Mike Gage, Chair of the BCRP Board.

The purpose of the workshop was to provide a forum for local community members and First Nations to provide input on fish and wildlife restoration priorities for the Bridge-Seton system, as suggested by BCRP agency partners: Ministry of Environment (MOE), Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO), and Canadian Wildlife Service (CWS). The public input received from this session will contribute to a larger initiative of updating BCRP's watershed plans to ensure they reflect the most current restoration needs to continue to address the ecological footprint created by the construction of hydroelectric facilities. These updated plans will serve as a framework for guiding and assessing future restoration proposals seeking BCRP funding.

The Bridge-Seton Hydro-Electric System

Ahmed Gelchu gave a presentation entitled "Bridge River facilities and operational constraints relevant to environmental protection". The Bridge-Seton system is a multi-reservoir system. Downton and Carpenter reservoirs are diverted into Seton Lake and the outlet of Seton Lake is split between Cayoosh Creek and a power canal (Seton GS). There are 2 artificial fish spawning channels (upper and lower) along Cayoosh Creek.

Q: How efficient is the fish ladder?

A: There are some concerns that insufficient numbers of fish are passing, and it is being studied.

Ahmed introduced some of the projects ongoing in the watershed (e.g., aquatic monitoring, heavy metals testing).

The Bridge Coastal Restoration Program in the Bridge-Seton

Scott Allen, Program Manager BCRP, provided a summary of BCRP funded projects in the Bridge-Seton watershed since 1999. BCRP has spent \$4.01 million in the Bridge-Seton (26% of total BCRP investment to date) including the upcoming fiscal year (2009/10). This funding has been spread over 17 fish and 33 wildlife projects (which is the most wildlife programs in any watershed). These include: Kokanee and Char

assessments, Gates Creek habitat and spawning channel restoration, Harlequin Duck distribution and productivity, riverine bird responses to water flows, Mule Deer migration routes and seasonal ranges, Grizzly Bear population trends, population density and distribution, powerhouse foreshore restoration, upper and lower Seton spawning channels, owl inventories, and fish passage studies.

Q: What is the relationship between megawatts produced in this area versus BC Hydro overall in terms of investment focus?

A: There is no relationship between the amount of funding and the proportion of power output. There are limits of people power available for doing the work as well.

Q: The fishway screens, are they the same as the Puntledge screens?

A: Same principle, but they divert fish from the canal, versus penstock.

Q: Is that working well?

A: Yes, mostly dead fish sucked against screen but they haven't studied it in detail. The water is moving slowly through the screen, so it shouldn't be sucking live fish in or holding them against the screen.

Agency Priorities – Fisheries: Ministry of Environment

Al Caverly gave a presentation on the MOE fisheries program - they have authority for non-salmon freshwater fish. The fisheries program developed a new strategic plan in 2007. Goal: naturally rich and sustainable freshwater fish resource supporting diverse uses for all British Columbians. Guiding principles: wild fish, healthy aquatic ecosystems, social and economic benefits. Relationships: First Nations, partners, stakeholders. Stewardship: all British Columbians.

Al outlined the provincial fisheries priorities (see handout). Priorities in upper Bridge River: Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout. There are large IPP (Independent Power Project) proposals on Hurley River and Gun Creek. There are also IPP proposals for Truax, Tommy and Keary Creeks.

Kokanee are a priority in Carpenter Reservoir. Steelhead Trout (part of a valued fishery in the Fraser system) are a high priority in the Lower Bridge River, they are a conservation concern. Rainbow Trout are a medium priority in the Lower Bridge. Fish passage past Terzaghi Dam is not a priority. Projects of concern: MOE does not support introduction of non-native species and IPPs in watershed will add to footprint.

Seton/Anderson System: Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout are high priorities. Kokanee populations are healthy and sustainable, and are lower priority than Bull and Rainbow Trout.

Portage River: Rainbow Trout and Bull Trout are high priorities.

Seton Lake: Kokanee, Rainbow Trout and Bull Trout are high priority.

Lower Seton River: Steelhead and Rainbow Trout are high priorities.

Seton and Cayoosh Rivers: slow development of riparian habitats is an additional issue.

Also covered were 'Projects of Concern':

- Try and avoid the single species approaches.
- Look for potential of off-channel projects that can benefit multiple species
- Pre-project surveys needed for projects that may impact species at risk.

Q: Are there any bats in the mine (Cadwallader Creek - removal of old mine dam for Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout)

A: Likely yes.

Q: How do we the public get involved with IPP proposals?

A: MOE gets involved if project produces >50 megawatts (which is a big facility).

Q: What if there is SAR (e.g. Bull Trout) at a site an IPP is proposed?

A: MOE is not the statutory decision agency for land/water tenures on IPP's. MOE gets involved in review of all IPP's to some degree through referrals, provide resource information, guidelines, assess risk. Projects over 50 MW go into the provincial process led by the Environmental Assessment office of MOE based in Victoria. An EA has a decision (EA Certificate) following a decision by both the Minister of Environment and another agency such as Ministry of Energy, Mines and Petroleum Resources.

Q: What is primary source of food for Bull Trout?

A: Primary food for juvenile Bull Trout is aquatic insects. For larger Bull Trout, food source includes other fish species such as minnows, whitefish, sculpins, Rainbow Trout

Q: What is your definition of "restoration value"?

A: Sustainable long-term, functioning as intended with little need for ongoing work.

Q: How closely do you work with MOF to ensure planting of cutting above these creeks? Worried about water retention by forests.

A: Very little. Only high-level work with MOF on issues such as climate change and effects of Mountain Pine Beetle.

Q: Beaver complaints on lakes and rivers, could they be affecting things (with respect to Mowson and Pearson Pond failure)

A: Many liability problems and engineering issues.

Q: Comment on the lack of habitat in lower Bridge?

A: Marine survival seems to overshadow the freshwater issues.

Q: What is the priority of removing 7 km obstruction on the Yalakom?

A: Obstruction at 7 km on Yalakom provides Bull Trout with a nursery habitat area where they do not compete with other species. This is the only Bridge River habitat downstream of Terzhagi where the other species are not annually present spawning and rearing. Some feasibility work has been done.

Agency Priorities – Wildlife: Ministry of Environment

Doug Jury outlined provincial wildlife priorities (see handout). He suggested that if it isn't possible to recreate footprint habitats in the affected drainages that it would open opportunities for new projects if they can be re-created elsewhere.

- May remove Sharp-Tailed Grouse from priorities list because they are on the Fraser, not Bridge-Seton (livestock grazing is the issue with them).
- Grizzly Bears are highest priority game species – lost a lot of habitat in the impoundment area. Transmission corridors have opened up a lot of access, which is detrimental.
- Mountain Goats not as affected by impoundments (flooding), but populations have significantly declined west of the Fraser so any projects that help them are good.
- Bighorn Sheep: affected by bacterial infection that is carried by domestic sheep.
- Mule Deer: have declined west of the Fraser (possibly due to over-hunting in the past). Antlerless LEH hunting permits have been greatly decreased.
- Moose: heavily impacted by impoundment, use the bottomland habitats a lot. 20-40% of winter range was destroyed.
- Species at Risk in general: Gopher Snakes, Racers, Flammulated Owl need distribution inventory (presence/not detected), habitat potential assessments, habitat restoration and securement.
- As per handout: Spotted Owl, Western Screech-Owl, Tailed Frog, Fisher, riverine birds, riparian habitats, wetlands.
- Add to list: Wolverine, Bats.

Access management was an over-riding theme. Winter range management for ungulates is crucial. 90% of the species on the priorities list have received BCRP funding in the past.

Q: For wildlife outside footprint, what is BCRPs funding?

A: Doug Jury: BCRP needs to fund outside footprint. Scott Allen: Now that BCRP has been realigned under compensation programs its priorities are under review for discussion at the Policy Committee level. Redefinition or a renewed interpretation of footprint may be considered, especially if it helps us pursue projects that are a 'best fit' in addressing the limiting factors of particular species.

Agency Priorities – Fish: Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Sean Bennett provided an overview and rationale of DFO's identified priorities (see handout).

Bridge:

- Chinook: good opportunity to change gravel composition to increase egg survival.

- Fish passage: low priority.
- Many opportunities for cross-linked projects for wildlife (e.g., cottonwoods in spawning areas for fishers and bats).

Seton:

- Sockeye in Seton is a high priority (change from priorities in hand-out).
- Fish passage at Seton is a high priority.

Q: What do you think are Coho opportunities in the Lower Seton channels?

A: Unknown, it needs to be properly assessed.

Q: Why not use flow management to clean things out in the channels?

A: Could augment flows to mimic natural conditions.

Q: Was gravel work ever carried out for Chinook above Horseshoe Bend?

A: Yes, but probably all washed out. Gravel content/mixture is an issue.

Q: WUP isn't signed off and it recommends flushes, but the arms of BC Hydro don't communicate well and when it comes into effect it will have implications to these projects?

A: Agree that there is some risk, but experience to date has shown that there is more often synergy between the programs and little conflict.

Q: Can attendees get copies of the presentations?

A: Yes.

Q: Are you monitoring species in spawning channels?

A: There are counts done by BC Hydro. It should be done. May not be doing full counts – it should be a permanent program. Ahmed: Seton channel is enumerated with visual counts.

Q: There is a pseudo spawning channel near the hydro facilities on the Cayoosh, anything being done with it? It was heavily used in the past (when first put in). Lots of beaver use there now.

A: It's been a big problem due to interrupted flows (dewatering) and silt but the issues haven't looked at it in a long time. May be causing more harm than good.

Q: Are lock systems for moving salmon more effective than ladders?

A: Leaves it to engineers! Ladders have been effective in many places in BC.

Afternoon Session

Breakout Groups

During the afternoon session, two breakout groups were facilitated – one for fish, and one for wildlife. The general direction provided to the groups was to review and discuss the initial agency priority ratings and identified project areas. Participants were then asked to indicate their level of support, to suggest any potential changes, and to provide supporting rationale for their comments.

Fish Breakout Group – Summary

The fish breakout group was facilitated by Dan Ohlson (Compass Resource Management). The breakout group reviewed and commented on the agency priorities in the handout table.

In general, there was broad support and agreement on the identified agency priorities and projects for the watershed (unless noted otherwise below). Specific comments by location and species are summarized below.

Lower Bridge River

- There was strong support for the High priority on Coho and a recommendation to raise the overall priority on Chinook up to High as well.
- It was noted that there is good consistency between having a High priority on projects that support Coho, Chinook and Steelhead in the river.
- A High priority was recommended for a feasibility study to investigate overall restoration opportunities in the Terzaghi Dam – Yalakom confluence reach. The potential for conflict with the WUP monitoring and implementation studies was noted, and a request was made for clear direction on whether any proposal in this reach would be supported. Should such a project be considered, it should investigate opportunities for both Coho and Chinook.
- Recommended to raise the priority on re-establishing the Chinook spawning platforms upstream of Yalakom to High. Noted the need for mixed gravel sizes.
- Recommended to raise the priority on the partial barrier removal assessment on the Yalakom up to High. Such a project could restore salmon access to the area. As emphasized by MOE, such a project would need to include an assessment of potential interactions with Bull Trout, which currently access this area.
- There was general support for the Low priority rating given to Sockeye and Pink Salmon, although some interest was stated in a genetic study that could explore the possibility of a riverine run relative to strays that enter the system for refuge. Regardless of such a study it was agreed that restoration opportunities were currently considered low.
- The High priority rating on Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout was supported.

- Fish passage priority rating of Low was accepted by most participants. Larry Casper, on behalf of the Seton Band noted that at the present time, fish passage at Terzagi Dam remains a High priority to his people even though it may not be to Ministries.

Upper Bridge River (above Terzagi)

- The High priority rating on Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout was supported.
- There is significant interest in moving ahead with the potential dam removal project on Cadwallader Creek.
- There is significant interest in re-establishing the lake outlets on Mowson Pond and Pearson Pond, although there were questions raised regarding whether these projects fall within the geographic scope of BCRP funding on the Bridge-Seton system. Clarification should be provided before a project application gets developed.
- There was support for a High priority project aimed at undertaking an overall feasibility assessment of restoration opportunities in the Middle Bridge River / Carpenter Reservoir area (i.e., not simply focussed on Hurley and Cadwallader Creeks). Within this assessment, focus should be given to the identifying fish passage improvements (e.g., culvert replacements).
- There is considerable concern over the proposals for IPPs in the area. As a result, it was recommended that as part of any BCRP application being developed, consideration should be given to the actual water license status of each IPP. For example the medium priority on McParlon Creek was questioned given the status of the current IPP application.

Seton River

- There was strong support for the High priority on Coho and a recommendation to raise the overall priority on Chinook up to High as well (similar to the Bridge River).
- It was noted that there is good consistency between having a High priority on projects that support Coho, Chinook and Steelhead in the river.
- There is a recognized spill risk on the Seton River, therefore it is understood that any habitat restoration projects there will likely need an ongoing commitment to maintenance and re-establishment.
- It was recommended to raise the priority of Chinook on the Seton to High, while keeping the priority at Medium for Seton Portage.
- Although the general Low priority for Sockeye was supported, it was recommended to raise the priority of Sockeye at the Gates spawning channel to High.

- An assessment of the opportunity to improve fish passage (both in and out migration) at Seton Dam for all species was broadly supported. Rating should remain at High.
- There was a request to include a project to improve the spawning gravels around Seton Lake to compensate for those that were lost to inundation.

Wildlife Breakout Group – Summary

The wildlife breakout group was facilitated by Glen Hearn (Compass Resource Management). The breakout group reviewed and commented on the agency priorities in the handout table. There was consensus on most of the High priority rankings, but there was some confusion on how rankings related to the Ministries internal priorities versus local watershed rankings and how the priorities are going to be used by BCRP. Clarification was given that the end result would be a table of priorities that can be used by potential proponents to guide what may be funded by BCRP.

General Comments

- The Horseshoe Bend and Bridge River were given a high priority for restoration if the mineral claims are given to First Nations (purchasing the placer mine licence would be beneficial- see reference to riparian conservation).
- ‘Restoration’ can take on many meanings, at its highest level addressing land use planning is critical. LRMP Strategy, Conservation Strategy, St’at’imc Land Use Plan – should all be assessed to determine how they affect each other in terms of habitat conservation. First Nations asked for clarification regarding the definition of ‘restoration’ in the BCRP context.
- Inventory studies should always be associated with the intent to look at restoration activities (e.g., Mountain Goats on Mission ridge could be studied with intent to preserve corridors, maintain winter grazing etc.).
- The threat of Independent Power Producers (IPP) was discussed. Thoughts ranged from targeting drainages which had IPP licenses on them to conduct inventories and see if endangered species were there; to determining whether rehabilitation work was worthwhile in light of possible impacts from an IPP.
- First Nations identified a need for government-to-government discussions on management of many of the species on the wildlife list and felt they should all retain a “High” priority ranking. There is concern that MOEs decisions are from the standpoint of encouraging development.
- All species remained a High concern. After the discussion, when participants had a sense of many of the opinions surrounding each of the species a general indication of importance was indicated through a quick ‘top 3’ vote. The results of those are in parenthesis following the species name in the table. Caution must be taken in applying this ranking to projects as it does not fully represent the entire list of stakeholders nor a detailed prioritization methodology.
- Projects outlined in the table given to participants are in regular text, comments from the workshop are included in *italics*.

- Priority classification reflect discussions regarding the priority that should be given to BRCP activities and importance given to it by the participants in their area, and NOT the priority given to it by the agencies.

Species / Habitat	Conservation Framework Rating (goal 1, 2, 3)
<p>Mule Deer (7)</p> <p>Winter and spring range enhancement and conservation. Migration corridor conservation through buffers and habitat enhancement. Studies on deer use of winter and spring range, and migration. Winter/spring range and habitat mapping. Mineral lick site documentation and conservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Participants agreed mule deer are a HIGH priority. They are a low conservation priority but a high management priority.</i> • <i>Access management was added to the list of projects (especially with potential for IPPs)</i> • <i>Whether to add predator/prey studies to the list of projects was considered, but Doug Jury suggested government can't get people to hunt cougars and wolves so it may not be useful to identify such needs.</i> • <i>Migration corridors are of particular importance.</i> • <i>Issues that may address limiting factors for health.</i> • <i>Whether to add habitat securement to ungulate winter range objectives was discussed but Doug Jury felt it likely couldn't be extensive enough, but it could be beneficial if there was a small piece of critical habitat.</i> 	<p>6, 6, 6</p>
<p>Grizzly Bear (9)</p> <p>Enhancement and increased quantity of foraging habitat & denning habitat. Conservation of movement corridors <i>to prevent genetic isolation.</i> Projects should link to provincial Grizzly Bear Conservation Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agreed grizzly bears are a HIGH priority.</i> • <i>Added to project list: population and habitat inventory, access and disturbance management.</i> • <i>Added to project list: mortality risk reduction (through Bear Aware and Bear Smart. Enhancement of habitat should be away from human access (other valleys etc.)</i> • <i>Need to link grizzly bear priorities to the St'at'imc Resource Management Plan</i> • <i>The minutes from the grizzly bear workshop held the day before are going to be added to the priorities table for grizzly bears.</i> 	<p>3, 2, 3</p>
<p>Mountain Goat (2)</p>	<p>4, 1, 3</p>
<p>Inventory - <i>should include both population and habitat inventory</i> Winter range habitat enhancement. Movement corridor conservation through buffers and habitat enhancement</p>	

<p>Access management <i>including disturbance by ground and air.</i></p> <p>Mineral lick site documentation and conservation.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Overall mountain goats were dropped to a MEDIUM priority while the Mission Ridge and Bridge River goats should remain a high priority. Projects that identify why mountain goat populations are declining are a high priority. They are a high priority species to MOE.</i> • <i>Perhaps transmission lines and access roads are impacting populations?</i> • <i>First Nations identified two areas where mountain goats used to be but aren't seen anymore: Mission Ridge and Bridge River.</i> 	
<p>Spotted Owl</p>	<p>5, 6, 2</p>
<p>Needs landscape-level management.</p> <p>Projects to link with Recovery Strategy.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>A HIGH priority. The Bridge-Seton is some of the little remaining habitat for the species.</i> • <i>Related to the extent and causes of the problem (large scale landuse issue) there is limited ability for BCRP restoration activities to address it. Added to project list as the highest priority: habitat protection.</i> 	
<p>Coastal Tailed Frog (4)</p>	<p>4, 1, 2</p>
<p>Conservation of streams and riparian habitats.</p> <p>Conservation covenants on private lands.</p> <p>Water quality initiatives.</p> <p>Inventory and research needed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agreed it is a High priority species.</i> • <i>The need for research was emphasized.</i> • <i>Added to project list: the need for inventory on secondary and tertiary streams before any IPPs are developed.</i> • <i>Baseline studies on existing streams to determine extent of habitat and distribution. Research is important as they live in fishless streams and have received little attention to date.</i> 	
<p>Sharp-tailed Grouse</p>	<p>3, 2, 4</p>
<p>Breeding and winter habitat enhancement potential.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This species garnered much discussion as to whether they ought to be kept on the list since they are more out in the grasslands (a threatened ecosystem) on the Fraser (outside of the footprint) and are impacted by ungulate and cattle grazing.</i> • <i>It was decided to keep them on the list because of High need for inventory.</i> 	
<p>Bighorn Sheep (3)</p>	<p>4, 6, 3</p>
<p>Winter range habitat enhancement.</p> <p>Winter range securement.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Remove from project list: securement of winter range (can't get enough to make a difference).</i> • <i>Lungworm and bacterial infection a big problem for this species, work on these issues would be valuable..</i> • <i>Added to project list: access and disturbance management.</i> • <i>First Nations identified a footprint issue with bighorn sheep: there was a</i> 	

<p><i>movement corridor at Tommy Creek before the flooding, they can't cross there anymore.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>The canal blocks movements as well.</i> <i>Need to build on previous work: there was a radio-tracking study to the north in the William's Lake Forest District. Implement recommendations.</i> 	
<p>Fisher (2)</p>	<p>4, 6, 2</p>
<p>Inventory and landscape-level habitat management.</p> <p><i>Retain birthing and denning habitat – cannot recreate habitat.</i></p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Agreed it is a HIGH priority.</i> <i>Retention of cottonwoods for birthing and denning habitat.</i> 	
<p>Moose (1)</p>	<p>6, 6, 6</p>
<p>Population and habitat inventory.</p> <p>Winter range and foraging habitat enhancement and increase.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Considered a HIGH priority.</i> <i>Added to project list: access management.</i> 	
<p>Riverine Birds (2)</p>	
<p>Mergansers, American Dipper, Harlequin Duck, this species group affected by multiple BC Hydro operations.</p> <p>Water quality, stream productivity and fisheries relationships are important.</p> <p>Riparian conservation.</p> <p>Research on genetics and dispersal of birds between river systems, connectivity of populations over larger scales.</p> <p>Expansion of restoration beyond the BS watershed.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Considered a HIGH priority.</i> <i>There are cumulative effects of Hydro projects on these species.</i> 	<p>AMD I 6, 6, 6 HADU 4, 1, 3 COME 6, 6, 5</p>
<p>Western Screech-Owl</p>	<p>3, 1, 2 or 4, 6, 1</p>
<p>Riparian dependent Species at Risk, habitat restoration and securement potential.</p> <p>Inventory lacking</p> <p>Nest box programs?</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Agreed it is a HIGH priority.</i> <i>Are included within Species At Risk and Riparian categories too.</i> <i>Little is known, inventory or protection of known nesting sites important.</i> <i>Conservation Framework ratings are dependent on which subspecies is in the Bridge-Seton.</i> 	
<p>Riparian Associated Raptors</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>This group was added to the table as important to the St'at'imc.</i> <i>This group would include western screech-owl, but this group would be more all-encompassing.</i> 	
<p>Wolverine (2)</p>	<p>3, 2, 3</p>
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> <i>Added to list as a priority species.</i> <i>Inventories are important (fewer than Grizzly Bear),</i> <i>Access to their habitat is a problem, in particular disturbance at winter</i> 	

<i>denning sites (Heli ski, snowmobiles etc.)</i>	
Species At Risk in general – wildlife (14)	
<p>Inventory is key, we know very little about many species' distribution and abundance.</p> <p>Assessment of species distribution and habitat potential.</p> <p>Restoration of habitat.</p> <p>Securement of critical habitat.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Agreement on High priority.</i> • <i>Species at risk in the area include*: Wolverine (SC), Grizzly Bear (SC), Lewis's Woodpecker (SC), Peregrine Falcon (SC), Western Screech-Owl (E), Pallid Bat (T), Spotted Bat (SC), Short-Eared Owl (SC), Common Nighthawk (T), Rusty Blackbird (SC), Olive-Sided Flycatcher (T), Barn Owl (SC), Flammulated Owl (SC), Spotted Owl (E), Long-Billed Curlew (SC), Gopher Snake (T), Rubber Boa (SC), Western Yellow-Bellied Racer (SC), Coastal Tailed Frog (SC) and Western Toad (SC).</i> • <i>Two insect species at risk may occur in the area: Monarchs (SC) and Dun Skippers (T).</i> • <i>Little may be known about these species and thus greater knowledge, protection of denning or roosting, nesting habitats, hibernacula for bats, etc. are of great importance.</i> 	
Species At Risk – plants and ecosystems	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Added to the list as a priority.</i> • <i>Potential species at risk in the area include*: Alkaline Wing-Nerved Moss (T), Columbian Carpet Moss (SC), Mountain Holly Fern (T), Rusty Cord-Moss (E), and Stoloniferous Pussetoes (E) but no surveys have been conducted.</i> • <i>Include whitebark pine</i> • <i>Projects: invasive species management</i> 	
Riparian Habitats	
<p>Conservation covenants and restoration of damaged sites.</p> <p>Permanent loss in BS watershed requires compensatory habitat in other watersheds as options are limited in BS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Re-ranked as a "VERY HIGH" priority.</i> • <i>Range use has impacted a lot of streams, how can that be managed or restored? Can't fence it all...</i> • <i>Land use planning is important. See above general comment regarding harmonisation of LRMP, Conservation Strategy, St'at'imc LUP.</i> • <i>Focus on success at small scale actions initially (examples of range management in other districts – Kamloops).</i> • <i>Horseshoe Bend is a key area for work (possibility to purchase mineral license).</i> • <i>Participants want the focus to remain on restoration where possible before compensatory habitat elsewhere, except in the case of grizzly bears where compensatory habitat away from human activity would be preferable to restoring habitat in high human-use areas due to mortality risk.</i> 	
Wetlands	
<p>Conservation and restoration to more natural conditions.</p> <p>Long term conservation.</p> <p>Permanent loss in BS watershed requires compensatory habitat in other watersheds</p>	

<p>as options are limited in BS.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Re-ranked as a “Very High” priority due to rareness in the Bridge-Seton.</i> • <i>Need a wetland inventory because there are few wetlands and there needs to be a better inventory of those that exist and their importance - perhaps a list of priority wetlands.</i> 	
<p>Grassland Habitats</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Added as a High priority</i> • <i>The participants mentioned the importance of grasslands for grazing and ungulates and its lack of conservation or protection in the area.</i> • <i>ID of key areas, covenants, ‘AOI’ designation etc.</i> 	
<p>Invasive Plant Species</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>Management of invasive plant species was added to the priorities table because of a previous project (01.W.13) on invasive plants and because it was felt that invasive plant species are affecting many of the high priority habitats (such as ungulate winter range).</i> • <i>Project: restoration.</i> • <i>Project: invasive species management.</i> 	
<p>Whitebark Pine</p>	
<ul style="list-style-type: none"> • <i>This was added to the priorities table but could be lumped into Species At Risk – plants and ecosystems.</i> • <i>Whitebark pine is important forage for grizzly bears.</i> 	

*portions of this list were compiled by Ken Wright as a Lillooet Tribal Council venture with the Aboriginal Funds for Species at Risk. E=Endangered, T=Threatened, SC=Special Concern.

Final Plenary Session

Each break out group summarized their discussions and comments during a plenary discussion.

General comments

- The Watershed Plan Addendum should be a “living document” with ability to change it easily (review should occur as needed, perhaps bi-annually).
- Don't forget that you can do more than buy land – WHAs, Areas/Notice of Interest, etc. so that important habitats are identified in GIS (e.g., leks, mineral licks etc.) and pop up when someone proposes developments. Specific ‘points of interest’, Area of Interest (AOI), etc. should be mapped and sent to Conservation Data Centre to be available for land use planning. More understanding is needed regarding what do we mean by ‘classification’ or ‘designation’, how is it verified etc.
- Where does all the data end up? Program is considering new requirement to give data to CDC and SPI.
- Proponents want clarity on what will be supported.
- The priorities in the Addendums will take precedent over the existing watershed plans.
- Sean (fish TRC): not getting many fish proposals (2 last time), need more, lots of good project suggestions given here at the workshop. Brianne Patterson is the new BCRP Program Biologist and her job is partly to help facilitate proposals, so call her. And Sean and Mike Gage are available to help too.
- Example given of Ash River where they co-write all the proposals as a batch and there is one administrator for all the projects.
- Can put in a seed proposal (\$5,000). Used to develop a full proposal.
- Helpful to establish links with universities to get free technical assistance and support.
- Wildlife TRC (Ed Hill): need to refine review criteria. Need to get those out to proponents so they have a better idea what's wanted/needed. Also new policy decisions coming up on what is going to be funded.
- It was suggested a few times that the existing LRMP documents and the St'at'imc Management Plan be consulted for direction of local priorities.

Next Steps

The next steps expected towards updating the watershed plans were discussed as follows:

- Prepare and distribute draft workshop notes to participants
- Finalize workshop notes
- Agency representatives will review and finalize their agency priorities for the watershed
- Updated watershed plans (addendum) will be prepared and made available