

## ENVIRONMENT AND SOCIO-ECONOMIC

### Fish and Aquatic Habitat

**Report:** 28. Site C Peace River – Mercury Levels in Peace River Fish Tissue – Data Report 2008

**Prepared by:** Mainstream Aquatics Ltd.

**Summary:** During Stage 2, baseline levels of mercury in fish in the Peace River were measured. Fish tissue samples were collected in 2008 from bull trout and mountain whitefish using non-lethal techniques and analyzed for mercury levels.

Samples were collected from 25 bull trout, 30 mountain whitefish from the area upstream of the potential Site C dam location, and 31 mountain whitefish from the area downstream. Sampled fish in each group represented a wide range of sizes and ages, and they were representative of fish populations in the study area. The study design and methods followed standard protocols. Preliminary evidence shows a decline in total mercury concentration in muscle tissue of bull trout and mountain whitefish in the Peace River from 1989 to 2008, and shows levels are below Health Canada advisory levels for mercury in commercial fish.