

Peace River Site C Hydro Project

Stage 2 - Socio-economic Studies

Study Outline: Angler and River Recreation Use Survey

Introduction

Sport fishing and river-based recreation are important to the communities and economy of the Peace River region. The region's population has nearly doubled since the late 1970s, increasing fishing and recreation use. The potential Site C project would create a reservoir between Hudson's Hope and the potential dam site. To identify potential angler and recreational concerns, an Angler and Recreational Use Study was initiated in 2008 and will continue in 2009.

Study Objectives

The Stage 2 angler and recreation use study will:

- Review historical use by summarizing previous studies and document current use patterns by conducting a creel (angler) and recreation use survey along the Peace and Pine Rivers;
- Identify and map existing angler and recreation access areas, use areas and amenities; and
- Develop a statistically valid estimate of angler effort and success. Collect baseline data and interview secondary sources to develop recreation usage, or other empirical relationships such as: boating, camping, geographic distribution, species harvested and social value.

The creel survey analysis will focus on bull trout, Arctic grayling, mountain whitefish, northern pike, walleye and rainbow trout as these are the species commonly caught by anglers (unless the creel survey indicates otherwise).

Scope of Work

The study area in the Peace River extends from the Peace Canyon Dam to the B.C.-Alberta border, including the inundation areas of major tributaries within the potential Site C reservoir and the Pine River. Areas downstream of the B.C.-Alberta border could be included if field based information suggests expanding the study area.

The sampling period is year round. Randomly stratified rotations will be selected to capture use periods throughout the day, and will concentrate efforts on high use periods (summer) and sites (boat launches).

Existing Peace River, Moberly River or Halfway River angling and river-recreation use studies and methodologies have been reviewed. The study has documented angling sites, angling effort and biological data to allow replication during this and future studies. Data collected should allow identification and characterization of critical sport fish species and spatial and temporal variability.

Based on the review and currently accepted methodologies, a complete methodology will be developed suitable for a large geographic area with multiple access points and fishing methods (shores or boat).

Angler and recreation access points and site amenities throughout the study area will be identified and mapped. Information will include, but not be limited to:

- Boat access points, including formal and informal boat launching sites and any constraints on use (seasonal, property access, etc.);
- Foot access points, shoreline angling, shoreline recreation activities (hiking, wildlife viewing, etc.);
- Shoreline and upland facilities, formal and informal camping facilities, including capacity and related facilities and remote access only sites; and
- Pullout sites and destination sites, including private access points.

Reporting

The Angler and River Recreation Use Study will be conducted from May 2008 to fall 2009. An interim report will be available at the end of Stage 2, and a final report is due in 2010.