

Media Advisory

Public Input Invited on Local Ecosystem Enhancement Project Catalogue

A team of local contractors and First Nations claiming traditional territory in the local area is working together to create a catalogue of potential ecosystem enhancement projects. The public is invited to provide input on the draft project catalogue which is available on the [Columbia Mountain Institute website](#).

The project team leader, Cindy Pearce of Mountain Labyrinths Inc. explains “Historically there have not been many project proposals sent to funders such as the Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and the Columbia Basin Trust from this area, so compared to other areas, fewer projects have been funded. We’re hoping to facilitate more project proposals by bringing together community groups, First Nations and local contractors to create this catalogue.’

The catalogue covers the area from Shelter Bay to Mica Dam. The construction and operation of hydropower dams have highly modified the natural environments in this area. There have been permanent changes to a substantial area of upland, riparian, wetland and aquatic ecosystems, with impacts to fish and wildlife habitats. Opportunities exist for on the ground projects to protect, restore and enhance the existing ecosystems, such as fish habitat restoration, which would partially mitigate these impacts.

Although there are well over 40 scientific reports that describe the environmental impacts of reservoirs and hydropower operations in this area, with some suggesting potential ecosystem projects and priorities, much of this information is not readily available or easily understood by potential project sponsors. As well, interested groups do not have relationships in place to partner on projects when this is needed.

These barriers have slowed the development of on-site projects. This catalogue aims to reduce these barriers by compiling the scientific information and local perspectives on potential projects.

Input is welcomed before September 12, 2016. For more information contact Cindy Pearce, Project Team Lead, at cindypearce@telus.net or 250-837-8505.

The project team includes technical specialists from local consulting firms - Harry van Oort and Ryan Gill from Cooper Beauchesne and Associates Ltd. and Mandy Kellner of Kingbird Biological Consultants Ltd. - and from the Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission, Okanagan Nation Alliance and Splots’in First Nation Development Corporation. The team is also getting input from Columbia Mountains Institute, the North Columbia Environmental Society, the Revelstoke Rod and Gun Club,

the Columbia-Shuswap Invasive Species Society, BC Hydro and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations.

The team is grateful for funding support from the Columbia Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program and Columbia Basin Trust as well as in-kind contributions from the team members and representatives of local groups and agencies.

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