

File: 204-20/FPCODEJSC

OCT - 3 2007

JSC Communication Distribution List

Introduction: Stream Crossing Structures and Fish Passage

The Government of British Columbia (MFR, MOE), the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, the Council of Forest Industries (COFI) and the Coast Forest Products Association (CFPA) are addressing a number of circumstances where closed bottom structures have led to issues restricting the passage of fish. In 2002, these organizations jointly produced a Fish-Stream Crossing guidebook which reflected the most recent best practices to provide for fish passage. Recently, a number of crossing structures (closed bottom structures) have been identified where fish passage and/or fish habitat has been limited or restricted. While some of these structures have had cooperative remedial works to rectify the issues, there is a continued need to identify and prioritize future works and ensure new installations do not create new fish passage or habitat related issues.



Through the Joint Steering Committee (JSC) and the Joint Management Committee (JMC), the Ministry of Environment (MOE), the Ministry of Forests and Range (MFR) and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) have been working together to develop and initiate an action plan to address the fish passage issue across the province.

To date, the following action plan items are underway:

1. **New Standard:** A Fish Passage Protocol document for assessment of potential barriers is in its final review stages. This document will become one of the standards for fish passage assessment for Forest Investment Account (FIA) funded projects. It was developed in a collaborative nature with licensees, MFR, MOE and DFO.
2. **Prioritization:** A Fish Passage Process Document is in its final review stages. This document outlines a process for prioritizing watersheds to assess crossing structures on fish streams. Once assessments are complete, a process is provided to prioritize problem structures as candidates for remedial action. Again, this was developed in a collaborative approach.
3. **Detailed Assessment:** A Fish Passage Detailed Assessment Document is under development. This protocol will help both government and licensee staff gather the information necessary to understand the cause of a stream crossing fish passage

Page 1 of 3

failure. With the help of information gathered in this process we hope to understand and improve future practices where necessary.

4. **Compliance and Enforcement:** The Inter-Agency Enforcement Committee (IAEC) is developing an action plan to continue to address the effectiveness of compliance and enforcement measures. The first two components consist of delivering training to staff, and reviewing legislation to determine compliance & enforcement (C&E) options.
5. **Training:** Training Workshops for government, industry and consultants are being designed. This training will cover assessment methodology for fish passage, with the first pilot sessions planned for the fall of 2007.
6. **Monitoring:** Forest and Range Evaluation Program (FREP) is planning to pilot fish passage evaluation in several forest districts. These pilot projects will help government understand the full scope of the problems and which remediation actions from the past have been successful at maintaining fish passage. In addition, MOE is initiating (in 2007) monitoring of non-forestry (*Water Act* approvals) for fish passage effectiveness.

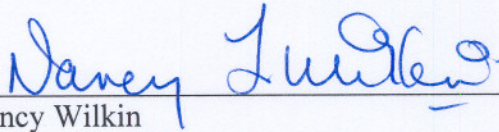
Under the *Forest and Range Practices Act* (FRPA) all new crossing structures on fish streams are required to be designed and installed to provide fish passage. The provincial scope of existing crossing structures and their ability to pass fish (number of structures, regional distribution) is not well documented. The JSC expects this action plan to identify existing problem structures and then adopt a "risk based approach" to deal with them. This approach will allow remediation to focus on the structures which will restore fish passage and provide access to the greatest amount of fish habitat in a cost effective manner. Field staff will continue to identify areas where fish passage appears to be at risk. Findings should be recorded for action and where appropriate, these areas can be identified as possible FIA funded projects.

The JSC expects a concentrated effort to deal with areas of fish passage concern. During this period of problem identification and prioritization, there are a number of key tasks that we in the branches, regions and districts can focus on:

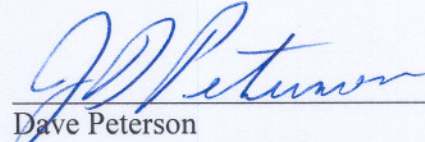
- C&E working with the IAEC, on an approach that would involve strict enforcement of fish passage legislation.
- BC Timber Sales (BCTS) should identify opportunities to integrate upgrades to existing fish passage issues into ongoing operations when operating in areas where these occur. New fish passage measures and standards will be included in all new road systems and will be applied to existing road systems as they are upgraded for use.
- Districts and Regions should highlight fish passage problem identification and ensure these issues are properly tracked.
- Districts can work with Licensees, BCTS and other operators to deal with identified fish passage problems on a priority basis to facilitate remediation.

JSC Communication Distribution List

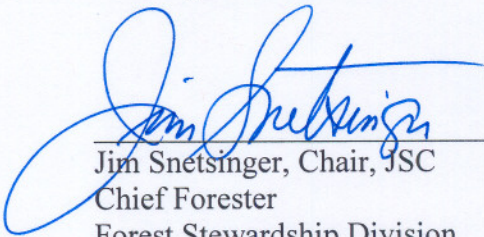
The JSC would like to ensure a concentrated effort is made to ensure that no new fish passage problems are created, and that we make progress dealing with the highest priority historic fish passage problems. To accomplish this, JSC would like to encourage cooperation amongst parties' involved and continued effort on this issue.



Nancy Wilkin
Assistant Deputy Minister
Environmental Stewardship Division
Ministry of Environment



Dave Peterson
Assistant Deputy Minister
BC Timber Sales
Ministry of Forests and Range



Jim Snetsinger, Chair, JSC
Chief Forester
Forest Stewardship Division
Ministry of Forests and Range



Tim Sheldon
Assistant Deputy Minister
Operations Division
Ministry of Forests and Range

Attachment

pc: Shirley Turcotte
Coordinator, Joint Steering Committee

JSC Fish Passage/Stream Crossings Communication Letter

Distribution List:

Ministry of Forests and Range

MFR Regional Executive Directors
MFR BCTS TSMs
MFR District Managers
MFR HQ Branch Directors
cc Bob Friesen, Assistant Deputy Minister, Tenure & Revenue

Ministry of Environment

MOE ADM Environmental Stewardship
MOE Regional Executive Directors
Stewart Guy, Ecosystems Branch, MOE

Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans

Executive Director, DFO
Peter Delaney, JSC DFO Representative

Forest Practices Board

Fred Parker, Executive Director, Forest Practices Board

Forest Industry Associations

John Allan, President & CEO, COFI
Rick Jeffery, President & CEO, CFLA
Les Kiss, Vice President, CFLA
Sharon Glover, Executive Director, ABCFP
Jim Hackett, President, ILMA