

What Does a Fish Say When it Swims into Concrete?

Submitted by Duane A. Wells, Environmental Services Coordinator

Dam.

If fish could talk, for all intents and purposes, that is what they would say in the lower reaches of Heart Creek after the stream channel eroded out below the Highway 6 culvert near Fauquier. This left the fish trapped and up against the rocky road perimeter, and with fewer places to spawn.

That is until this summer, when the ministry installs a new 18-metre long clear span bridge to replace a 3.5-metre structural plate corrugated steel culvert.

This is being accomplished through the ministry's Environmental Enhancement Fund and Bridge Rehabilitation Fund, and generous donations of time and money from our partners, the Nakusp Rod and Gun Club, the Department of Fisheries and Oceans' Recreational Fisheries Conservation Partnership Program and the Columbia Fish and Wildlife Compensation Program.

This restoration project is phase one of two on Heart Creek. Construction has just begun, with completion scheduled for October.

Phase two, anticipated to happen in 2016 or 2017, will remove another barrier further upstream on Heart Creek. Planning is in the



Kokanee in the plunge pool at the outlet of the Highway 6 culvert on Heart Creek.

early stages now, but once the barrier there is replaced with a bridge, fish will be able to swim unimpeded up to 1.5 kilometres, until they encounter a natural waterfall. The area available for the stream's Kokanee, Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout will be doubled.

It's a project the environmental folks here in Kamloops are pretty excited about because our enhancement projects are usually a lot smaller than this. Special thanks to all of our project partners for their support, and to the financial gurus (and Sean Wong) at HQ for understanding and working with our complicated accounting methods. ♦

QUICK KOKANEE FACTS

Kokanee are sockeye salmon that spend their entire lives in fresh water, never going to sea.

Natural populations are found from California to Alaska, and in northeast Asia. Populations of native kokanee are more abundant and widespread in B.C. than anywhere else.

During spawning season, kokanee change colour from silver, to crimson with a green head (though sometimes they will change to black).

Courtesy B.C. Fish Facts: www.env.gov.bc.ca/wld/documents/fishfacts/kokanee.pdf

West Kootenay Inspection Stations Upgraded

Submitted by Greg Kinnear, Road Area Manager



The upgraded scale with larger deck, in Midway.

Recently two scale decks at Commercial Vehicle Safety and Enforcement inspection stations received much needed upgrades, in the West Kootenay District.

The local maintenance contractor Emcon Services Inc., completed projects at the Midway and Castlegar weigh scales, which received replacement scale decks this spring. The work consisted of replacing scale decks with larger 12x16-foot decks on top of heated and enlarged scale pits, installing new drainage to minimize maintenance, and erecting new weight readout boards.

In fall 2013, the Castlegar vehicle inspection station was outfitted with a newer building to replace the much older and smaller building. The newer facility and now the scale deck upgrades have been a vast improvement for CVSE operations, especially as there are often multi-agency inspections at this location.

On April 30, West Kootenay District, CVSE and maintenance contractor staff were joined by special guests Rocky Mountain District Manager Jack Bennetto and Southern Interior Region Director Mike Lorimer, for a coffee and doughnut-fueled celebration to re-open the scales at the Castlegar inspection station. ♦



Work underway in Castlegar to install heated and enlarged scale pit.



Celebration on April 30, to mark completion of the Castlegar weigh scales upgrades.