

The following provide further information regarding fish and fish habitat inventory standards and procedures, presented in the Resources Inventory Committee (RIC) Standards. RIC Standards must be consulted to provide a context for this information.

## RULES FOR MAINSTEM DESIGNATION

**This information relates to:** Reconnaissance (1:20,000) Fish and Fish Habitat Inventory, Watershed coding and mapping procedures.

### Purpose/Problem

When dealing with new mapping, or incorrectly mapped areas in NTS/TRIM mapping, that requires identification of the mainstem and stream network, a set of consistent rules needs to be employed.

### Discussion

Review existing 1:50K Watershed Atlas (WSA) and utilise where possible. For new streams or where WSA in question appears incorrect or does not extend far enough above the stream fork, choose the branch with a official (“gazetted”) name. If unnamed, choose the fork with the greatest perennial discharge as following:

- Choose the longest fork as mainstem, *or* a fork with a lake > 5 ha at its head, unless the other fork is longer by at least 30%, or has a tributary stream.
- If the forks are of equal length, choose the fork with a lake (any size) or glacier at its head.
- If forks are of equal length but have no lake or glacier at head, choose the fork displaying a course similar to the main valley channel.
- If forks are of equal length with no lake or glacier at head and display a similar valley trend, choose the one with a tributary stream.
- If the forks are still equal after examining the above-mentioned criteria, choose the one that drains the largest watershed area.
- If still equal, select mainstem randomly.

### Comments

The following are some anomalies to be aware of:

- cases where the official (“gazetted”) name of a river is depicted along one fork but a lake/glacier with the same gazetted name is present on another fork.
- On some new map editions, changes have been made in the placement of official (“gazetted”) names. For clarifications contact Janet Mason, Geographic Data BC, Tel: (250) 387-9328; Fax: (250) 356-7831; [jmason@mail.gdbc.gov.bc.ca](mailto:jmason@mail.gdbc.gov.bc.ca), or Geographic Data BC (Internet) at <<http://www.gdbc.gov.bc.ca/bcnames/>>.BCGNIS can also be accessed through the data warehouse (GOAT).