



Fly Lines

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Fly Lines

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On Our cover . . .



Intruder Fly Pattern, Tied by Perry Wilson of Port McNeil

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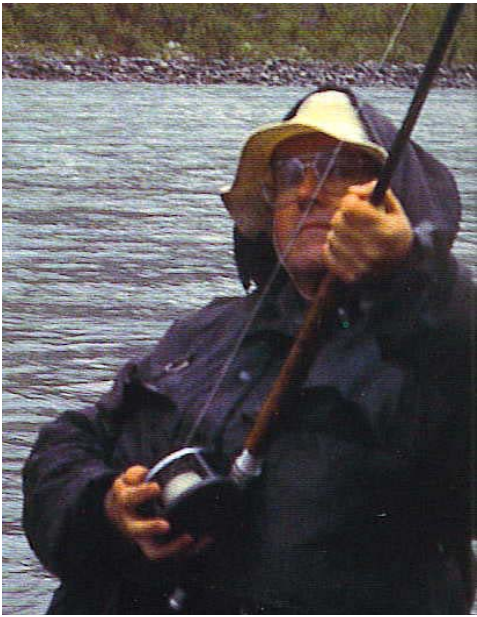
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President's Message



Due to my medical situation I have, since the November board meeting stepped back from my duties as president. I wish to thank Peter, Pat, and Dan for stepping forward to fill the void. I have not totally abandoned my duties, choosing to focus on items that are short term in nature and, selfishly, ones that interest me. I see my current role more as an advisor rather than president. I am now undergoing treatment, therefore my future ability to partake in the Federation's business will likely decrease and unfortunately I will not be seeking a second term as president. This will be my last President's report. I have been involved in the Federation, on and off, since the late seventies and I would like to take this opportunity to say that I have met many fine people through my involvement in the BCFFF over those years. I

wish to thank all of you for the work that you did in building and running the Federation. All of you have built this Federation into what it is today.

On February 28, Steve Hanson (an associate member) and I attended the Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Stakeholder Team (CERST) held in Squamish. Representatives from Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Steering Committee (CERSC) (CN, Squamish First Nation), from the Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Technical Committee (District of Squamish, Ministry of Environment) and consultants working on the river, were in attendance. There was also a representative of the local MLA and other resource people present, Because of this good representation, both Steve and I found this to be the most informative CERST meeting that we have yet attended! The CERSC and the CERTC people were there to discuss the answers they had provided to questions preciously submitted by the Stakeholder Team and to update the Stakeholder Team on current activities. CN announced that they had established a Cheakamus Ecosystem Recovery Fund with a limit of \$400,000 per year for a period of 5 years. This fund is in addition to the major projects currently being undertaken and the fund is intended to support projects being undertaken by community based and stewardship volunteer initiatives.

In early December, the Ministry of Environment announced the formation of a Freshwater Fisheries Regulations Advisory Committee (FFRAC) and invited various NGO to submit nominations to serve on it. The terms of reference state the purpose of this committee to be as follows:

“The FFRAC facilitates discussion between recreational freshwater fishing associations, angling guides, provincial fisheries representatives, the Conservation Officers Service, Fisheries and Oceans Canada and the Freshwater Fisheries Society on matters related to the regulation of freshwater recreational fishing, and in particular how fishing regulations can be streamlined and simplified to make fishing opportunities as

accessible as possible to stakeholders while still meeting conservation and management needs.”

The make up of the committee will be as follows:

“The chair is the Assistant Director or Manager of Fisheries, F&W Branch or designate. Eight members will be appointed from the identified stakeholder associations contacted (Appendix A) - 5 resident angler representatives, 3 commercial angling representatives, plus one member from the Conservation Officer Service, one member from the Oceans and Marine Division, one member from the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, one member from the Freshwater Fisheries Society, and one member will be a regional manager recommended to the F&W Director by the Director of Regional Operations Division.”

The BCFFF has nominated Peter Caverhill to serve on this committee with Dan Cahill serving as his alternate. The Ministry has accepted these nominations. The inaugural meeting will be held April 1.

It was unfortunate that in mid December MLA Krueger choose to announce that the government was considering reducing the fishing regulations by as much as 90% in order to increase angler participation. The Federation wrote to Minister Penner, with a copy to Mr. Krueger expressing our concern over Mr. Krueger’s statements.

In early February Yellow Perch were found in the channel between White and Little White lakes. The MOE feels that the release was deliberate. Ministry staff acted quickly to contain the situation. The Federation wrote Minister Penner praising the swift action of ministry staff and suggested that the reward for the illegal transportation of live fish and release of alien species into BC waters be increased and better publicized. The BCWF is to be commended for supplying the current reward of up to \$10,000.

The BC Conservation Foundation submitted a funding request to Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) for ‘Shovelnose Creek Bank Erosion Protection’ project on the upper Squamish River. Funding was not approved and the Steelhead Society of BC, Kingfishers Rod and Gun Club and the BCFFF was concerned about what might happen to Shovelnose Creek under spring runoff if the project does not proceed this spring. While the budget for the project was estimated at \$40,000 the three groups agreed to contribute \$5,000 each towards it. There was also concern about the process used to review funding requests for work in the Squamish system. A joint letter was sent to PSF expressing our collective concern.

The letter to PSF was distributed electronically to a fairly large number of individuals so justifiably PSF distributed their response to the same e-mail list. Some of the e-mail comments that followed were constructive and informative while others were inflammatory in nature. Eventually both letters ended up on at least one the fish internet discussion boards.

When the letter to PSSF was drafted, carbon copies were listed but there was no indication of an electronic distribution list. Permission from all parties to the letter should have been obtained prior to such distribution occurring. If asked, I would likely have agreed to the electronic distribution. However, in hindsight, I am not so sure it was appropriate. E-mail is a valuable tool, but it can also be a dangerous one as a number of

politicians have found out. When we send out e-mail, as individuals or organizations, we assume recipients will act responsibly. What we must realize is that once correspondence is distributed electronically there is nothing to stop recipients from forwarding it on to others or posting it on to a website. The BCFFF routinely distributes information (as do most NGOs) and this often includes copies of correspondence to its board members and club contacts. There is a trust that the club contacts will forward such information on to the club members, again electronically. It is apparent that once information goes out electronically there is really no control over its distribution. So we, and others, must ensure that any statements made in correspondence are factual and the language is not defamatory. The last thing any organization wants or needs is to be sued for libel. To the best of my knowledge all correspondence sent out as attachments have been simply word document which can be altered by the recipient and therefore consideration should be given to using PDF format for such attachments.

On February 22 the BC Conservation Foundation (BCCF), held a meeting entitled Greater George Basin Steelhead Recovery Plan (Upper Pitt Habitat Restoration Round Table Discussion). This meeting was called to discuss past projects completed by government and NGO's, to review habitat restoration recommendations completed by the former Steelhead Society Habitat Restoration Corporation, and to open discussion to on priority projects and future directions. Unfortunately, I was not able to find a volunteer to attend this meeting. It was held during business hours, so BCFFF members were either working , had previous commitments or were ill(that would be me).. I did inform Lower Mainland fly clubs and also informed the South Coast Steelhead Coalition of the meeting, I do not know whether anyone was able to attend, however BCCF will be keeping us in the loop.

Certainly there never seems to be an end to the issues or meetings that require the Federation's attention. There are only so many individuals willing to volunteer their time and so many more willing to sit back and let them. The BCFFF, not unlike most NGOs, is short on individuals willing to step forward to serve on the board or committees. The survival of organizations like ours depends on individuals willing to step forward. Without this we are doomed.

Following is a list of upcoming meetings.

- March 29 Angler Participation /Marketing Plan Meeting, hosted by the Freshwater Fisheries Society. Dennis plans to attend.
- April 1 Inaugural meeting Freshwater Fisheries Regulations Advisory Committee
- April 25 Cheakamus Ecosystem Restoration Stakeholder Team
- May 26 Squamish River Watershed Roundtable



Hare Trout

By Harold Tinning

It was early May and the boys were getting itchy to fish Panther Lake. Over the recent years, we had been on a couple of good fish outs to Panther. That lake held some large rainbows and sometimes it took a lot of skill to get a hook up. It is a catch and release and fly fishing only lake so, early in the year, there are not too many anglers around.

The dates were set and a list of who was going was put together. Some of us elected to go to the first Nanaimo Lake on Thursday and camp there for the weekend. Others would come at their leisure and some would come only for the outing day of fishing at Panther.

From our base camp at First Nanaimo Lake we would go up to Panther on Saturday and again on Sunday if the fishing warranted it. On Friday we fished at our base camp or just hung around camp and enjoyed each other company. The fishing was no hell but the good times we had around the camp more than made up for it.

On Saturday morning, eager anglers in a half dozen trucks headed up to Panther Lake. It's about a 30 minute run over a fair gravel road with a few rough, but tolerable washouts. It's usually an interesting trip as you never know what will show up on that road. There are often sightings of deer, elk and bears plus all kinds of grouse, even marmots are common.

We were the only fly fishers on the lake and the fishing proved to be excellent when a good damsel and dragon fly hatch came on. We cast nymphs along the weeds, a technique that proved deadly, with many good fish brought to the boat and released.

Now, there are some funny stories, if you wish to call them that, about strange creatures around and in Panther Lake. Some old timers claim they have seen strange rabbits around the north shore that appeared to have what looked like fish scales on them. Others have said they had seen fish with what appeared to be a slimy fungus that looked like fur. Some of the old guys referred to them as "Hare Trout". Not many of these stories get too far away from the originator, as most people think they were more than a little strange.

We had a lot of fun with these stories! Can you imagine how the mind works- a rabbit fertilizing a mess of trout eggs? Or, a rabbit coming in contact with a mess of trout milt? The possibilities are endless, limited only by one's imagination.

After the day at Panther we returned to camp for a pot luck supper. What a spread it was, with more good grub than we could eat. The meal was topped off by Elena Toomer's home baked pies. Not little thin pies, but deep-dish apple pies, that most connoisseurs of pie would die for. They were absolutely delicious!

Sunday morning found us heading back to Panther for another few hours of fishing. We weren't disappointed. The hatch came on again and we were in the thick of it and all of us enjoyed some good fishing.

This is when a real strange event occurred. I was fishing a number eight Butlers Bug on a full sink line when I got caught up in the weeds. I gave the line a good pull and it came free but there was still a heavy weight on the line, which felt like a fish. I brought that fish up and, lo and behold, the thing was covered with dirty grey colored fuzz which

turned out to be fur. I couldn't believe what I saw! I had one of these strange fish I had heard about, a trout with fur on it. I had to show someone or no one would believe me. Some of the guys I fish with already think I'm a little strange and if I was to go and tell them this story I'd get laughed right off Vancouver Island.

I looked around to see who was closest to me and who would believe I had caught this fish. I spotted Jack Toomer. Jack was born in Nanaimo and he was one of the locals who had told me this story of the strange things around Panther Lake. I would show him. I paddled over to Jack and quietly told him what I had on my line. He had a queer facial expression, turned a little white, and just about fell out of his pontoon boat. "Yikes" he commented as the blood flowed back into his face. Where did you get that ugly thing? Then he slowly realized what I had. One of the strange fish that others had claimed they saw.

What should we do with it I asked? Should I release it or should we call fisheries or the university? They may want it for a study. We could be famous with our names and pictures in all the papers and maybe even in a scientific journal. People will want to know what I caught it on, how deep, and what color. I thought "Fame at last."

We quietly discussed what I should do with the fish. We decided that we'd tell no one about it until we had taken it to the authorities. The second thing we needed to do was to get this fish back to camp unnoticed and keep it on ice until Monday. As we headed for shore we met Dave Newman who was coming out of the water. I guess we were acting a little suspicious because he got curious to what I had in my lunch bag. We decided to bring him in on the amazing catch on the promise that he would tell no one. When I showed him the fish he had the same reaction as Jack had shown. He turned white just as if he had seen a ghost.

We decided to keep the fish in Jack's big cooler till morning. Then I realized I would not be around in the morning to take the fish to Malaspina University so Jack and Dave volunteered to take the precious specimen to the college's scientists. Time passed and I never heard from Malaspina. I decided that I would let things run their course and I believed I would hear something in due time.

Well you can imagine my utter surprise when at the Fly fishers' banquet I was presented with my Hare Trout mounted and stuck on a board. The buggers never took it to the University. I found out that they wondered what a critter like this tasted like. Was it rabbit or was it fish? They carefully skinned it and saved the hide which they later took to Norm Coughtry at Johnson's hardware who mounted it. They cooked the flesh and ate it for lunch. Jack said it tasted a bit like an Easter Bunny while Dave thought it tasted like a Carp.

And that's the true story about me catching the only Hare Trout in Panther Lake where all my dreams of fame vanished with one light lunch.



THE LETCHER LAMBUTH ANGLING CRAFTSMAN AWARD

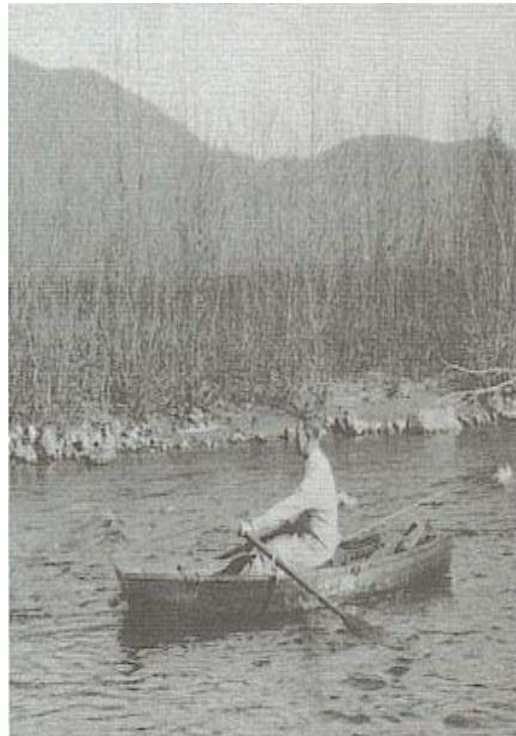
*to one whose outstanding contribution, through skill of hand
and mind, has raised the quality of fly fishing and enhanced
the enjoyment of our sport for fly anglers everywhere . . .*

presented to

ART LINGREN

*in the name of Letcher Lambuth, Master Angler - Craftsman
by the Washington Fly Fishing Club*

**TWENTY-FIRST PRESENTATION
JANUARY 16, 2007**





LETCHER LAMBUTH
1890-1974

Letcher Lambuth was one of nine Charter members of the Washington Fly Fishing Club when it was founded in Seattle in 1939. He was instrumental in the early growth and accomplishments of the club and was a guiding force in the campaign that led to the classification of the first fly-fishing-only waters in Washington State.

But Letcher was best known among anglers for his remarkable accomplishments as a craftsman. During the 1930s and early '40s, his basement workshop was a hive of activity and experimentation, and a place where knowledge and new ideas were generously shared.

From his experiments with split bamboo, Letcher developed a unique formula for construction of a six-strip, spiral rod. He made a number of these rods, characteristically giving them away to his friends.

Letcher also experimented with the cultivation of bamboo and performed pioneering research into the natural history and qualities of Tonkin and other types of rod-building bamboos.

Letcher was possibly the first to collect and identify insects from Northwest trout streams and lakes, and this research led him to design and tie many new trout fly patterns. He performed similar research with saltwater patterns, placing live baitfish in an

aquarium under artificial lighting designed to simulate seawater conditions. The result was a series of coho fly patterns that proved themselves in use.

Letcher learned to tie landing nets and shaped wooden handles and frames to build his own. He learned to crochet so that he could make a "breathing" creel crocheted from sail twine. He designed and made countless small devices to assist the fly fisherman, including wooden swifts for spooling lines off reels, a chest-of-drawers for line storage, a device to keep tension on rod-winding silk and a small platform designed to slip onto his camera lens so that he could quickly mount insect specimens for photographs.

In all these activities, Letcher was characteristically self-effacing, seeking to avoid the limelight. But fortunately for us and for future generations, he set down the results of his observations and work in a manuscript entitled ANGLER'S WORKSHOP. An offer to publish the book was initially rejected by Letcher because the publisher wanted to produce a limited edition; Letcher wanted the book to be available to everyone. It was eventually published, but posthumously in 1979.

In the mid-1940's, Letcher began to suffer increasing loss of vision, which soon forced curtailment of his work. This blow might have broken the spirit of a lesser man, but Letcher retained his keen wit and good nature and the air of courtliness which was his mark. He kept a lively interest in the club and seldom missed the weekly luncheons at the Flycaster Room, even in his last years.

On January 14, 1974, Letcher passed quietly after a good and full life. His work significantly expanded the boundaries of fly fishing knowledge, and we shall remember him for that. His direction and leadership in the early days of the W.F.F.C. helped the club to survive and grow, and we shall remember him for that, too.

But most of all we shall remember Letcher Lambuth for the kind of man he was: A man of good spirit, of kind thoughts and ways, of good humor and unfailing generosity. He was a true gentleman.

Tonight the Washington Fly Fishing Club honors his memory by honoring another who has followed in his path.

PAST RECIPIENTS

1975	Roderick Haig-Brown
1976	Enos Bradner
1977	Al Knudson
1978	Ralph Wahl
1980	Syd Glasso
1982	Walt Johnson
1984	E.H. "Polly" Rosborough
1985	Dawn Holbrook
1986	Ken McLeod
1987	Wes Drain
1988	Steve Raymond
1990	Alan Pratt
1991	John Bockstrom
1995	Andy Hall
1997	Del Coppock
1998	Gil Nyerges
2000	Steve Moran
2003	John Propp
2004	Norm Norlander
2005	Ray Gould

ART LINGREN RECEIVES THE LETCHER LAMBUTH AWARD

On January 26, 2007, Art Lingren received yet another honor. This time it was the Letcher Lambuth Angling Craftsman Award from the Washington Fly Fishing Club.

The Letcher Lambuth Angling Craftsman Award was established in 1974 to recognize "...original, significant, and lasting contributions to the art of fly fishing..." by fly fishermen in Washington, Oregon and British Columbia. Its first recipient was Canadian author and conservationist Roderick Haig-Brown. A recent honoree was Norm Norlander, developer of the Nor-vise fly-tying system. Historian Jack Berryman

said Letcher Award recipients are a “virtual who’s who of Northwest Fly Fishing.” Art Lingren certainly fits that description and should be very comfortable in that company.

Letcher Lambuth was born in 1890 in Washington, D.C. and moved to Seattle as a child. His career was in real estate but his passion was in fly fishing. A gifted craftsman, he spent many hours researching and designing ways to improve fly fishing equipment. In the ‘30s, he developed his own cane rod building techniques including variations on a spiral rod design in which the cane blank was twisted 60 degrees between each guide. A rod with eleven guides would twist nearly 720 degrees from butt to tip. An interesting coincidence between Ray Gould and Letcher Lambuth is that Ray also designed his own version of a spiral cane rod and then built the forms and other equipment to construct it. He has finished two rods, and a partially completed blank still sits in his “twister”. Lambuth also designed landing nets, a breathable creel, fishing vests and two of the most effective salt water patterns ever: the Lambuth Candlefish and Lambuth Herring. As an amateur entomologist he compiled comprehensive collections of Northwest lake and stream hatches with matching fly patterns. In 1940, he organized the campaign to designate Pass Lake and the North Fork of the Stillaguamish as Washington’s first fly-fishing only waters. Lambuth died in 1974. For most of his later years he was blind from the effects of diabetes. *(from the Washington Fly Fishing Club-Creel Notes)*

An entire issue of Flylines would barely cover Art’s contributions to our sport. He’s a fly fisher, a fly tyer, an author, a member of the Totem Fly Fisher’s, an active member on their committees, a member of the BCFFF, an active member on their committees, and active on Government consultation committees (Dean River Advisory Committee and the Quality Waters and others).

Art has personally contributed to our fly fishing heritage through his books about fly fishing in British Columbia and the descriptions of the various locales, the equipment and its history and his introduction to all of us to the personalities of other dedicated fly fishers and conservationists.

Art is a true historian. He recognizes the contribution of so many others to our sport by taking the time to preserve the significant contribution of the pioneers of Northwest fly fishing in his text and photographs. He has captured places and introduced many to his rivers. He has the ability to remind us that the present is also important by recognizing those who are contributing today – their efforts in conservation, fly tying and fishing techniques and to the betterment of the fly fishing community.

In his writing about other’s contribution to our heritage, we gain some insight of his character. He has a vast and in-depth knowledge of fly fishing in BC yet is generous with his knowledge. He is respectful of his peers. He recognizes the contribution of others; not just those pioneers who went before but also of his contemporaries. He takes the time to place this sport in context with its rich history and frames the current fishing opportunities in the most positive terms.

Through Art’s efforts, a good part of our fly fishing heritage is preserved.

I know him to be a quiet, intelligent, well-spoken individual who is willing to share his knowledge and insight with our community. When he speaks we all listen.

I am sure I speak for the rest of the BCFFF community in congratulating Art Lingren on being chosen the recipient of the prestigious Letcher Lambuth Award.

Dan Cahill



Art Lingren (left) with his
Letcher Lambuth Award.



A GIANT STEP BACKWARD

By Robert Brown

It's 2007 and we are no closer to a satisfactory management plan for Skeena salmon than we were in 1975," says Jim Culp. Jim has been a combatant in the Skeena Fish Wars for over three decades now. If the Guinness Book had a record for the most meetings attended by one man, Jim would hold it. If you don't believe me, just ask his wife, Shirley. Jim has belonged to more conservation organisations (many of which he started himself) than you can wave a fly rod at. In between meetings he managed to serve as Sportfishing Ombudsman for the North Coast, work as a tackle retailer, contractor on fishing related projects, a hatchery manager, and as a fishing guide. In short, when it comes to fish and fishing in Skeena, Jim Culp knows whereof he speaks.

“We still don’t have a fishing strategy that recognises the conservation requirements of Skeena Salmon and provides a fair allocation of the resource,” says Jim, and he wants the most recent fisheries minister, Loyola Hearn, to do something about it.

What really ruffles Jim’s feathers is that for a few years progress was being made on weak stock interception but now that initiative has apparently come unraveled. Jim remembers sitting as the lone sport fishing representative on DFO’s Skeena River Salmon Advisory Board back in last century. “That was in the early seventies,” he says, “I was surrounded by more than a dozen representatives from the commercial fishing industry. To say that our concerns were underrepresented is an understatement.” That unbalanced committee continued to sit unchanged and to influence DFO’s fishing plans for another frustrating ten years. Understandably, no substantive changes were made to the management regime. Frustrated at the lack of sensitivity to conservation concerns, and alarmed by diminishing steelhead and coho stocks, the Recreational Fishing community demanded that changes be made so that coho, chinook, and steelhead could pass the commercial fishery.

By the 1990s, political pressure exerted by groups such as the Skeena Watershed Sport Fishermen's Coalition and the Steelhead Society of British Columbia, convinced the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to hold a symposium in Smithers. There, Al Lill, Director of the Fisheries Branch Pacific Region, committed the DFO to a fishing plan that would reduce the harvest rate of steelhead by 50%. It was a stunning announcement signaling a dramatic shift in DFO management practice.

A year later, DFO organised a “Skeena Summit” in Terrace. The purpose of this meeting was to convene key representatives from 1st Nations, Recreational and Commercial Fisheries, DFO and the Ministry of Environment Lands and Parks to discuss the management of Skeena salmon. A body with a similar structure, called The Skeena Watershed Committee grew out of that meeting. A regular meeting timetable was formulated and an action plan undertaken. This process was a catalyst for change. After much debate, the committee reached consensus, agreeing that, in the future, the commercial fishery would not exceed a harvest rate of 37% of early returning summer steelhead, and the seasonal aggregate harvest rate would not exceed 24%.

The Committee met for three years. During that time significant gains were made in the area of conservation, most notably in measures instituted to address the needs of the less abundant salmon stocks that had suffered because of the mixed stock net fisheries at the mouth of Skeena and in Chatham Sound for a century.

Since the commercial fishery was largely responsible for the conservation problems, they were forced to bear the brunt of the changes. Fishing time and pressure had to be reduced. New fishing methods had to be implemented. After dominating the fishery and the advisory process for so long, the industry representatives found it uncomfortable to negotiate on an equal footing with the other representatives of the committee and were unwilling to initiate necessary changes. As a result they quit the process.

The Skeena Watershed Committee was working well. It came about in response to a groundswell of public opinion in response to an environmental crisis. It was a sound democratic entity. Faced with the departure of the commercial fishermen, DFO had the obligation to continue using the process to establish fishing plans in their absence. To their discredit, they chose to yield to lobby from industry and disband the committee.

The market fishery in the approach waters of the Skeena has been problematic since the first net was set. It's not to understand why. The traditional netting technology is fatally flawed. When you set a net for one species of salmon, you catch other species too. These accidental catches are called by-catch. When there are larger populations of target fish than there are of by-caught species, the smaller stocks will eventually be reduced to the point where their survival is threatened. This mechanism was at work in the Skeena fishery for over fifty years when the spawning channels were built on the Babine tributaries of Fulton River and Pinkut Creek. The express purpose of these enhancement facilities was to increase the overall total of Skeena sockeye. Since these sockeye were already the target stock, the interception problem was compounded. Blinkered by the technofix attitude of the 1950's and 60's, well-meaning fisheries staff unwittingly created an ecological time bomb.

Since that time, the Skeena Chum salmon population has crashed. So have Nanika and Kitwanga sockeye runs, and so have the discrete races of sockeye bound for Skeena tributaries other than Pinkut Creek and Fulton River. Summer coho populations have plummeted. So have every strain of Skeena summer run steelhead.

There is a new biological paradigm today. Scientists have reached a consensus that, stated simply, decrees that the whole is healthiest when all of its parts are healthy. The big word for this brilliant break through in biological understanding is *biodiversity*. Within the context of this contemporary scientific understanding, it's patently absurd to look at aggregate fish populations and flimsy escapement target data that has no solid historic foundation and declare that there is no conservation problem when it comes to Skeena salmon. Yet, this is exactly what the shills and apologists for the commercial industry say.

There has been an ecological crisis on Skeena for many years and that crisis was caused and continues to be driven by the fact that the entire salmon fishery is managed according to the abundance of Babine sockeye. It was an appreciation of this that led to the political ferment that then led to the creation of the Skeena Watershed Committee. Despite the fact that the committee was working meaningfully toward a rational Skeena fishery, DFO disbanded it when the representatives of the fishing industry took their ball and went home. The thing is, it wasn't their ball. It was a ball that belonged to everyone in Skeena and ultimately everyone in Canada.

In the run-up to the formation of the Skeena Watershed Committee, the parties had signed-off on a clause that stated if one the participants withdrew from the process it would stop. This forced DFO's decision to disband the committee. In retrospect, the more appropriate reaction on the part of DFO, which is the institution charged by the government of Canada to take care of the country's fish on behalf of the people of

Canada, should have been to set up another committee with a similar mandate with the remaining stakeholders. They could have continued formulating fishing plans for the Skeena as the industry sulked. True, this would have required guts, determination, and the admission on the part of the department that they were the boss. There was a good chance that this action would have gone a long way toward dragging Skeena fisheries management out of the 19th Century.

Despite that setback of not having a committee reconstituted, the energy from the watershed committee continued long after it folded. Pressure from this remnant group resulted in reduced fishing openings and closures during peak migration times for non-target salmonids and conservation measures like the use of shorter sets and shorter nets, mandatory holding boxes, brailing by seine boats, and other measures intended to reduce the kill rate on non-target species. Anyone who had participated in the process, or knew something of the problems that attend the management of the Skeena salmon fishery, knew that despite these measures, the right combination of external factors could lead to a management disaster. A large return of sockeye combined with a low return of steelhead would spell misfortune for the latter fish, even under the harvest rates agreed to within the Skeena Watershed Committee.

That scenario came about this season (2006). Amazingly, DFO dropped almost all its selective harvest measures, had no meaningful enforcement presence during the entire fishery, and allowed 27 and half days fishing, including 11 days straight, during the time when the steelhead migration was at its peak.

There is one word that characterizes the history of fishing in Skeena and it is “exploitation”. The indigenous peoples exploited the abundant runs of salmon. The fish were central to their culture and their economy. For many thousands of years the Salmon Nations trapped and netted fish without compromising the overall abundance of fish. European settlers, who were actually “conquerors”, used a less bloody, more insidious, equally devastating, institutionalised form of conquest on the salmon Nations. This had, at its core, the ruthless banning of the traditional native fishing technology and the forced resettlement of its practitioners. The “modern” highly wasteful, overcapitalised, heavily subsidised, inefficient market fishery that has evolved out of this conquest is rife with exploitation.

Fishermen, are forced to sell sockeye salmon, some of the world’s finest fish, at 90 cents a pound and to hawk pink salmon for a nickel (or feed them to the crabs) are killing non target species at the same time. They are being exploited by the processors and buyers. When the average gill net fisher is netting 12 grand a year, working for the big fish companies like a share cropper, and exploiting the EI system to top up his income, we have exploitation on a grand scale.

The Skeena market fishery, mismanaged in the manner it was last year, achieved over-exploitation. This created the intolerable situation where companies continued to generate profits at the expense of commercial fishermen who are allowed to fish in defiance of the principles of biodiversity. This undermines the very resource upon which they, and many

other users, depend. Reduced to its fundamental terms, this amounts to paying people to wreck a fishery. Paying fishers not to fish is preferable.

To prevent this kind of debacle in the future *The North Coast Steelhead Alliance (NCSA)* which has recently formed out of concern for the future of Skeena steelhead, has called upon the Minister of Fisheries to institute the following changes:

1) A Skeena River salmon fishing plan that would be struck between the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) and DFO that spells out clear rules on how, where and when commercial gill and seine netting can take place and, additionally, where and how selective harvest measures will be undertaken. As part of this plan the MOE must have the right to veto any amendments to that plan if it appears that during the course of the seasonal fishery that these are jeopardizing steelhead.

2) Selective harvesting in the Area 4 during peak migration times for summer steelhead. Outside that critical area, they insist that short nets and short sets, revival/survival boxes and weed lines be mandatory.

3) Seiners to braille their catch from pursed nets using special dip nets with twine that does not remove scales and slime from the fish. Also, the boats should use revival boxes, careful sorting, and surveillance cameras to ensure compliance on all seine boats.

4) The use of selective harvesting with tangle tooth nets (a proven environmentally sensitive, selective method of harvesting that is affordable and has the proven potential to double a fisher's profit) in the River Gap slough area, where more steelhead are intercepted, .

5) Seines must not be substituted for gill nets, unless there is an absolute, clear, defensible, alternative that meets the selective harvesting requirements of the fishing plan and has the agreement of the two fishing sectors, First Nations, MOE and DFO.

Shocked to learn that there was almost no enforcement presence in the commercial fishery last season, Greg Knox, chairman of the NCSA, stated that the organisation's directors were adamant that this should not happen again. To that end, he has called for an adequate number of officers on the fishing grounds during the entire season augmented by a roving observer core.

Knox indicated that the directorship has unanimously agreed that the net fishery be regulated on the basis of a zero catch of steelhead. To that end, they want the minister to ensure that commercial net fishermen report all catches of steelhead and non-target species and find ways to enforce compliance with this.

The 2006 fishing season in Skeena was a reversion to an early status quo, something Knox is quick to point out is no longer acceptable under the supervision of an agency (DFO) that has recently brought out a proactive Wild Salmon Policy.

For the sake of Skeena salmon there can be no more seasons like the last or we will soon see the last salmon season.



Campbell River Wordsmith Wins Haig-Brown Award



British Columbia's oldest fly-fishing club, The Totem Fly Fishers, has presented their much prized award—the Roderick Haig-Brown Conservation Award—to the publisher and editor of the Campbell River *Courier* and *North Islander*. This presentation was made at a dinner meeting of the club in Burnaby, BC, on March 20, 2007.

Totem Fly Fisher president Peter Bell-Irving on left presenting Neil Cameron with the Haig-Brown keeper award. (Art Lingren photo)

In a March 5/07 letter, Totem Fly Fisher president Peter Bell-Irving alerted Neil Cameron to the Totem Fly Fishers' decision to honor him for working on "environmental causes in Campbell River and beyond" and his "contributions and courageous stands".

Cameron, is an admirer of Campbell River's late long-time resident and famous writer, judge and angler Roderick Haig-Brown. He is a supporter of ecologically-sound ideas and initiatives and was a foremost leader in preventing Wal-Mart from building on the right-hand bank of the world-famous and now ecologically damaged Campbell River. Cameron believes a healthy economy cannot exist in an unhealthy environment.

Cameron dedicates a full page of his weekly insert, the *North Islander*, to environmental issues. The "Our Planet" page features "Shades of Green," a column by respected environment writer Ray Grigg, an excerpt from Haig-Brown's considerable canon, and pieces by other eco-warriors including the respected and retired Campbell River biology teacher and long-time friend of Haig-Brown, Van Egan. Egan's praise of Cameron is unreserved. "Neil produces the best paper Campbell River has ever had, and that's because he has the guts to put readers ahead of advertisers."

Among Cameron's immediate "local" concerns, are these: the decline of benthic organisms in the Quinsam and the coalmine pollution now threatening that river and; the social and economic benefits that could accrue from the township's help in restoring the Campbell River's run of summer steelhead. Cameron has already alerted Campbell River council to a letter in which Port Alberni council credits Stamp River summer-runs for adding \$1.5 million annually to Alberni's coffers.

That Cameron and provincial fisheries biologist Craig Wightman spotted half a dozen adult summer-run steelhead while snorkeling the Campbell River's Canyon Pool last summer raises several questions: Were those fish the survivors of Tsitika River

introductions? Has natural (though limited) spawning been going on? Would a judicious placement of gravel increase spawning effectiveness?

The Totems' executive decides whether or not to present the Haig-Brown Award each year. As the March 5 letter by Totem president Peter Bell-Irving says, this year's decision to honor Neil Cameron was "unanimous".

Pete Broomhall
March 16, 2007



Notes from the BCFFF Fisheries Issues Committee Chair

During the past 6 months the BCFFF has been involved in a number of issues concerning our fisheries. Committee representatives have attended meetings and worked with government and non government agencies related to: the Coquihalla River opening; aquaculture; Vancouver Island Regulation changes; Cheakamus River; Fisheries Act Bill C-45; invasive species; Thompson Steelhead recovery; access issues on Vancouver Island and South Coast and North Coast Steelhead just to name a few.

The committee members, and the executive of the BCFFF, work hard to be on top of matters related to the fisheries of British Columbia. We continue monitor, comment on and meet with Ministry of Environment staff on fishery issues and policies. The number of important areas worth attention continues to grow, not shrink.

The BCFFF will continue to represent the interests and needs of members and clubs. If you have concerns or needs regarding fisheries in your region please let the committee know what they are and how we might help.

Attention Clubs: Please let the fisheries committee chair know if there has been a change in fisheries committee representation. We would like to keep the list of contacts up to date.

I can be contacted through the BCFFF e-mail address: info@bcfff.bc.ca

Regards,
Pat Micek
Vice President and Fisheries Committee Chair



B.C. Family Fishing Weekend.

All participants in the Family Fishing Weekend this year are eligible for the prize which is:

A trip for 2 to “Camp Langara” at Moosehead Lodge or to Langara Fishing Lodge in the Queen Charlotte Islands provided by Langara Fishing Adventures. Langara is a fishing/outdoor camp for 11 to 17 year olds. Both trips would start and finish in Vancouver.

Check out their web site at: www.bcfamilyfishing.com

Learn to Fish Program

In cooperation with the Ministry of Environment, BC Conservation Corps and Act Now BC, the Fresh Water Fisheries Society of BC (FFSBC) has implemented a Learn to Fish (L2F) Program for youth and their families.

Learn to Fish instructors will be giving basic angling skills to youth that have no or little angling experience. The daily sessions will include learn-to-fish tips, environmental awareness, angling ethics and just plain, old-fashioned fun.

On the Sunday following the AGM (Sunday May 27, 2007) , the BCFFF is invited to attend the Fraser Valley Fish Hatchery in Abbotsford and participate in the program.

This is a great opportunity for members and clubs interested in expanding their activities and attracting participants to angling.

Please make time to attend and find out what the program is about.

Check out their web site at: www.gofishbc.com



“Allies”

(Knowing about those who work on our behalf)

The Sportfishing Defence Alliance

In our complex world of fish and angling, it is useful and important to know who else is out there fighting for our common interests.

The “Sportfishing Defence Alliance” (SDA) is a BC based organization that has been around since 1998. It is made up of a number of well-known angler-based groups. SDA is all about anglers and their “right-to-fish”. These are increasingly complex times with declining fish stocks, junk science, the spread of cities and industry, climate change and emerging First Nations rights and treaties. As a result, our ability to take up rod and reel and head to the water has never been so threatened. SDA recognizes this and has had the guts to immerse itself into a very foggy world. The SDA assumes the role of ‘intervener’ in court cases involving loss of access to angling, it monitors and comments on treaty negotiations on behalf of anglers (when no one else really does) and generally watch-dogs fisheries management decisions to ensure that they are not just in the best interests of fish, but also of anglers.

This “right-to-fish” is a multifaceted concept that isn’t always easy for us to grasp. The loss of this right can be as black and white as someone standing in front of you with a gun on the trail to the river, or as complex as having more than 100 First Nations treaties along the Fraser River, each with fish allocations and the potential of none left over for anglers. It is about crown land and crown fish resources that belong to all of us, and the incredibly difficult task of sharing these resources with all.

I know that SDA has some detractors in our organization. Occasionally, frustration can bubble forth from individuals in the SDA who have spent the better part of a lifetime dealing with the bureaucratic process. Patience is tried and limited. Sometimes this shows, with occasional statements that could be interpreted as “redneck” or “anti-native” in nature. Doing anything associated with angler rights within the First Nations debate cannot help but elicit criticism from the native community and often the larger Canadian population.

Even the so-called “tackle box” arguments can get in the way and sour organizational relationships. There are folks in SDA, who are also part of other tackle-focused organizations. It is possible that they occasionally challenge the narrowness of “fly fishing only” restrictions. However, what I interpret about the role of SDA is a larger picture. They are not about petty squabbles over less important things such as gear. They are not “anti-native”. They are aimed at fostering and entrenching our rights, as

recreational anglers, to access and participate in recreational fisheries that we have used throughout our history.

Please spend a little time and visit the Sportfishing Defence Alliance's website www.defendsportfishing.com . On this site you will see considerably more detail on the conservation and legal projects with which the SDA has been involved.

Pete Caverhill
March 25 2007

BRITISH COLUMBIA FEDERATION of FLY FISHERS

PRESENTS:

A
2007
FREEWAY
RUNS
THROUGH
IT.



BCFFF

ANNUAL GENERAL MEETING

DINNER / AUCTION
Saturday, May 26th, 2007

EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL & CONF. CENTRE
405 North Road, Coquitlam BC

FUN DAY & BBQ at
The Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery
Sunday, May 27th, 2007

34345 Vye Road, Abbotsford

HOSTED BY



CONTACT:

Terry Robinson
11638 227th St, Maple Ridge, V2X 8G6
p. 604-463-5258 e. terry_r@telus.net

Registration Form

Name: _____

Address: _____

City: _____ Prov: _____

Telephone: _____ e-mail: _____

Fly Fishing Club (if applicable): _____

Dinner Tickets

No of Tickets: _____ @ \$40 per ticket TOTAL: \$ _____

Make cheque payable to **BC Federation of Fly Fishers.**

Dinner Tickets must be paid for in advance.

They will be held for pick-up at the Auction Registration Table.

Registration Table opens at 4:00 pm.

Mail this form together with a cheque to:

Osprey Flyfishers of BC

Attn: Terry Robinson

11638 227th St

Maple Ridge, BC, V2X 8G6

Phone: 604-463-5258

email: terry_r@telus.net

Location Map for Dinner & Auction

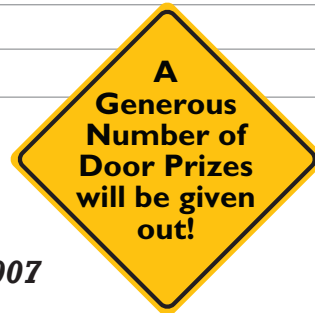
EXECUTIVE PLAZA HOTEL & CONF. CENTRE, 405 North Road, Coquitlam BC



ITINERARY for Saturday, May 26th, 2007

8am - 9am	Delegates - Registration for walk in traffic.
9am - 12pm	Cypress room BCFFF AGM
10am - 6pm	Exhibits and Trade show
12pm - 3pm	Executive meeting with lunch
1pm - 2:15pm	Todd Scharf - Fly tying and presentation
2:30pm - 3:15pm	Marvin Rosenau - Fish Ecology & Management, Environmental Monitoring
3:30pm - 4:45pm	Tom Johannesen - Fly tying and presentation
4pm	DINNER and AUCTION Registration
4pm - 6pm	Bucket and Silent auction viewing, Live auction viewing
6pm	Bar Opens
6:30 - 7:30pm	Buffet Dinner
7:30 - 8:30pm	Introductions of BCFFF Executives and Award Presentations
8:30 - 10pm	Live Auction, Silent Auctions and Bucket Draws
9:15 - 9:30pm	Break
9:30pm	Draw Raffle tickets
9:30pm	to end of Auction

(map for DINNER on next page >)



ITINERARY for Sunday, May 27th, 2007

11:00 am	Arrive FVTH, orientation from the FVTH staff
11 - 12:30pm	Hatchery tour
12:30 - 1:30pm	Barbeque Lunch (Choice of Seafood, Beef, Chicken, Hamburgers and Hotdogs.
1:30 - 4:00pm	Activities at the Trout ponds for Little Kids and Big Kids.

(map for FVTH on back page >)

This is a Family affair so the BCFFF folks are encouraged to bring their kids & grandchildren. There will be fun for all!

Activities for Spouses

Looking for something to do? Shopping, sightseeing, historyall available to you through the SkyTrain. No need to worry about directions or parking. Jump on the SkyTrain and you'll be there in a matter of minutes. (Click on the bold links for more information).

Lougheed Mall and the **SkyTrain** are a short walk from the **Executive Plaza**. For anyone not attending the meetings, the Skytrain can have them in downtown Vancouver in approximately half an hour. Each cash fare - \$2.25 on weekends - provides up to 90 minutes of travel. Attractions which that are within walking distance of a SkyTrain Station are listed below....

New Westminster - Westminster Quay - Public Market is just a block from the New Westminster SkyTrain Station. Set on the edge of the Fraser River, the market features numerous vendors selling everything from fresh seafood and veggies, one-of-a-kind jewellery, books, arts and crafts, clothing and novelty items. Take in the aromas of freshly baked pies, imported cheese or fresh strawberries. Enjoy lunch from the food fair while sitting at an outdoor table, or stroll along the Quay's boardwalk.

Royal City Star River Boat Casino - Located adjacent to Westminster Quay Market, with 30 gaming tables, 300 slot machines, Fraser's restaurant and two lounges.

Metrotown - Metropolis at Metrotown - 470 stores. Looking for a first-rate shopping experience? Head to Metropolis at Metrotown, where legions of individual shoppers find what they're looking for and have a great time doing it!

Main Street - Science World - Located a block west of the Main Street Station. A unique experience awaits visitors to Science World British Columbia. The centre, located in an Expo 86 legacy building at the eastern edge of False Creek, uses interactive exhibits and entertaining presentations to introduce people of all ages to the wonders of science and technology. This landmark silver geodesic dome building opened as Science World on May 6, 1989, but the centre's history is much older.

Stadium - BC Sports Hall of Fame (Gate A - BC Place Stadium) - The BC Sports Hall of Fame boasts twenty galleries in a 20,000 square foot facility featuring BC sports highlights, from the early 1800s to the present. Distinctive for its unique design and interactive displays featuring state of the art technology.

Location Map for The Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery

34345 Vye Rd, Abbotsford, BC

