

May 29, 2003

SALMON HABITAT SIGNS

Travelers on northern roads have been noticing new large reflective signs at stream crossings, identifying salmon habitat. Streams and rivers between Prince George and the Alberta border on Highway 16, and south to Blue River on Highway 5, are receiving the signs as a project organized by the Fraser Headwaters Alliance (FHA).

“The project is intended to raise public awareness that many of the streams in this region are major salmon spawning and rearing habitat”, says FHA spokesperson Roy Howard. “We hope that this will increase the care given to the streams by developers, ranchers, loggers, and recreationists, as well as adding to the tourism attraction of the area.”

According to Howard, the project is also about appreciation for, and pride in the rich salmon habitat in what FHA terms the ‘Fraser Headwaters BioRegion.’ The Fraser River system – said by many fish biologists to be the world’s most productive salmon river – has not yet followed the trend of many other systems in the Pacific Northwest that have experienced significant decreases in fish stocks due to habitat loss.

A total of 104 signs will eventually be placed, primarily on highways. The project will also include a brochure explaining the signs, the importance of wild salmon to the provincial economy and the ecosystem, and to acknowledge the project participants. These will be distributed through tourism centres throughout the region. Although fundraising for the project is not yet complete, a decision was made to start placing some of the signs to introduce the idea to the public and gain further support. There are several partners donating funds or in-kind labour to the project, including the Pacific Salmon Foundation, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Interior Roads, Yellowhead Road and Bridge, BC Hydro, Terasen (TransMountain) Pipelines, Spruce City Wildlife Association, Village of Valemount, Village of McBride, Dunster Community Association, and Rob & Rebecca Element.

Photos and further information are available.

Contact Roy Howard, at (250) 968-4490, or roy@fraserheadwaters.org