

# **Horsefly River Watershed Secwepemcúl'ecw Connectivity Remediation Plan: 2021 - 2040**

Canadian Wildlife Federation

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# Acknowledgements

This plan represents the culmination of a collaborative planning process undertaken in the Horsefly River watershed over many months of work with a multi-partner planning team of individuals and groups passionate about the conservation and restoration of freshwater ecosystems and the species they support. Plan development was funded by the BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, Canada Nature Fund for Aquatic Species at Risk, and the RBC Bluewater Project. We were fortunate to benefit from the feedback, guidance, and wisdom of many groups and individuals who volunteered their time throughout this process — this publication would not have been possible without the engagement of our partners and the planning team (see Table ??).

We recognize the incredible fish passage and connectivity work that has occurred in the Horsefly River watershed to date, and we are excited to continue partnering with local groups and organizations to build upon existing initiatives and provide a road map to push connectivity remediation forward over the next 20 years and beyond.

The Canadian Wildlife Federation recognizes that the lands and waters that form the basis of this plan are the traditional unceded territory of the Northern Secwepemc people. We are grateful for the opportunity to learn from the stewards of this land and work together to benefit Pacific Salmon. A special thank you to Nishitha Singi for sharing the traditional Secwepemctsin names used in this plan.

# Plan Purpose, Approach and Scope

The following Watershed Connectivity Remediation Plan (WCRP) represents the culmination of a one-year collaborative planning effort, including field assessments, the overall aim of which is to build collaborative partnerships within the Horsefly River watershed to improve connectivity for anadromous salmon and the livelihoods that they support, including the continued sustenance, cultural, and ceremonial needs of the Northern Secwépemc people. This 20-year plan was developed to identify priority actions that the Horsefly River WCRP planning team (see Table ?? for a list of team members) will undertake between 2021-2040 to conserve and restore fish passage in the watershed, through crossing remediation, lateral barrier remediation, dam remediation, and barrier prevention strategies.

WCRPs are long-term, actionable plans that blend local stakeholder and rightsholder knowledge with innovative GIS analyses to gain a shared understanding of where remediation efforts will have the greatest benefit for anadromous salmon. The planning process is inspired by the [Conservation Standards](#) (v.4.0), which is a conservation planning framework that allows planning teams to systematically identify, implement, and monitor strategies to apply the most effective solutions to high priority conservation problems. There is a rich history of connectivity and fish habitat planning and remediation work in the Horsefly River watershed that this WCRP builds upon, including work undertaken by the BC Fish Passage Technical Working Group, the Northern Secwepemc te Qelmucw (NStQ) and member communities, the Horsefly River Roundtable, and other local organizations (Ltd. (2018); S. Hocquard, Steve Hocquard Consulting, pers. comm.).

The planning team compiled existing barrier location and assessment data, habitat data, and previously identified priorities, and combined this with local and Indigenous knowledge to create a strategic watershed-scale plan to improve connectivity. To expand on this work the Horsefly River WCRP planning team applied the WCRP planning framework to define the “thematic” scope of freshwater connectivity and refine the “geographic” scope to identify only those portions of the watershed where barrier prioritization will be conducted, and subsequent remediation efforts will take place. Additionally, the team selected target fish species, assessed their current connectivity status in the watershed, defined concrete goals for gains in connectivity, and developed a priority list of barriers for remediation to achieve those goals. Field assessments were completed for 20 longitudinal barriers on the preliminary barrier list during the summer of 2021, followed by a series of WCRP Update Workshops in winter 2021. The aim of these workshops was for the team to receive updates on progress made during the field season, review assessment results and identify priority barriers, revise the connectivity status assessment and goals, and update the Operational Plan for 2022. While the current version