Horsefly River Watershed Secwepemcúl’ecw Connectivity Restoration 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 **?@tbl-planteam**).

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 restoration 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 Secwepemctsín names used in this plan.

# Project Overview

## Plan Purpose, Approach, and Scope

The following Watershed Connectivity Restoration 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 **?@tbl-planteam** for a list of team members) will undertake between 2021-2040 to conserve and restore fish passage in the watershed, through crossing rehabilitation, lateral barrier rehabilitation, dam rehabilitation, 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 restoration efforts will have the greatest benefit for anadromous salmon. The planning process is inspired by the [Conservation Standards](https://cmp-openstandards.org/wp-content/uploads/2020/07/CMP-Open-Standards-for-the-Practice-of-Conservation-v4.0.pdf) (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 restoration 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 structure 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 restoration efforts will take place.Additionally, the team selected focal fish species, assess the current key habitat connectivity status of the watershed, defined concrete goals for gains in connectivity, and undertook an iterative structure ranking process to identify a list of priority barriers for rehabilitation to achieve those goals. While the current version of this plan is based on the best-available information at the time of publishing, WCRPs are intended to be “living plans” that are updated regularly as new information becomes available, or if local priorities and contexts change. As such, this document should be interpreted as a current snap-shot in time, and future iterations of this WCRP will build upon the material presented in this plan to continuously improve barrier rehabilitation for migratory fish in the Horsefly River watershed. For more information on how WCRPs are developed, see Mazany-Wright, Noseworthy, et al. (2021).

## Vision Statement

Healthy, well-connected streams and rivers within the Horsefly River watershed support thriving populations of migratory fish, improving the overall ecosystem health of the watershed. In turn, these fish provide the continued sustenance, cultural, and ceremonial needs of the Northern Secwépemc people, as they have since time immemorial. Both residents and visitors to the watershed work together to mitigate the negative effects of human-made aquatic barriers, improving the resiliency of streams and rivers for the benefit and appreciation of all.

## Project Scope

Connectivity is a critical component of freshwater ecosystems that encompasses a variety of factors related to ecosystem structure and function, such as the ability of aquatic species to disperse and/or migrate, the transportation of energy and matter (e.g., nutrient cycling and sediment flows), and temperature regulation Seliger and Zeiringer (2018). Though each of these factors are important when considering the health of a watershed, for the purposes of this WCRP the term “connectivity” is defined as the degree to which aquatic organisms can disperse and/or migrate freely through freshwater systems. Within this context, connectivity is primarily constrained by physical barriers, including human-made infrastructure such as dams, weirs, and stream crossings, and natural features such as waterfalls and debris flows. This plan is intended to focus on the direct rehabilitation and prevention of localized, physical barriers instead of the broad land-use patterns that are causing chronic connectivity issues in the watershed. The planning team decided that the primary focus of this WCRP is addressing barriers to both longitudinal connectivity (i.e., along the upstream-downstream plane) and lateral connectivity (i.e., connectivity between the mainstem and adjacent riparian wetlands and floodplains) due to the importance of maintaining fish passage to spawning, rearing, and overwintering habitat in the watershed.

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| Figure 1: The primary geographic scope — the Horsefly River watershed — located in the Fraser River system. |

The primary geographic scope of this WCRP is the Horsefly River watershed, located in the upper Fraser River drainage basin in central British Columbia ([Figure 1](#fig-geoscope)). The scope constitutes the Horsefly River “watershed group” as defined by the [British Columbia Freshwater Atlas](https://catalogue.data.gov.bc.ca/dataset/freshwater-atlas-watershed-groups) (FWA). A consistent spatial framework was necessary to undertake a watershed selection process at the provincial scale to identify target watersheds to improve connectivity for salmon. The Horsefly River watershed was identified by the BC Fish Passage Restoration Initiative as one of four target watersheds for WCRP development Mazany-Wright, Norris, et al. (2021b). The Horsefly River watershed has a drainage area of 276,603 ha, spanning from the Quesnel Highlands in the southeast to the confluence with Quesnel Lake in the northwest. Culturally and economically important populations of Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, and Sockeye Salmon are all found in the watershed, which historically supported Indigenous sustenance and trading economies (W. L. F. Nation. (2021), X. F. Nation. (2021)).

| Secwepemctsín Name | Common Name | Scientific Name |
| --- | --- | --- |
| Kekèsu | Chinook Salmon | Oncorhynchus tshawytscha |
| Sxeyqs | Coho Salmon | Oncorhynchus kisutch |
| Sqlelten7ùwi | Sockeye Salmon | Oncorhynchus nerka |

**?(caption)**

The Horsefly River watershed comprises parts of Secwepemcúl’ecw, the traditional territory of the Northern Secwepemc te Qelmucw (NStQ), represented by the Northern Shuswap Tribal Council and four member communities or autonomous nations:

* Xatśūll Cmetem’ (Soda Creek First Nations)
* Stswēceḿc Xgāt’tem (Canoe Creek/Dog Creek First Nations)
* T’ēxelc (Williams Lake First Nation)
* Tsq’ēsceń (Canim Lake First Nation)

The geographic scope of this WCRP was further refined by identifying naturally accessible waterbodies, which are defined as streams that focal species should be able to access in the absence of human-made barriers ([Figure 2](#fig-strseg)). Naturally accessible waterbodies were spatially delineated using fish species observation and distribution data, as well as data on “exclusionary points”. These include waterfalls greater than 5 m in height, gradient barriers based on species-specific swimming abilities, and areas of subsurface flow. These maps were explored by the planning team to incorporate additional local knowledge, ensure accuracy, and finalize the constraints on naturally accessible waterbodies. The planning team identified certain tributaries to the mainstem Horsefly River as “watershed exclusion areas”, which were excluded from further consideration under this plan, due to intermittent or insufficient flows to support restoring connectivity for the focal species. The geographic scope was further refined based on several confirmed impassable waterfalls and modelled gradient barriers. Specifically, there are two impassable waterfalls that severely limit natural accessibility: one on the mainstem Horsefly River approximately 4 km upstream of the confluence with McKinley Creek, and the second on Moffat Creek approximately 5 km upstream from where it flows into the Horsefly River. All waterbodies not identified as naturally accessible were removed from the scope for further consideration. The naturally accessible waterbodies formed the foundation for all subsequent analyses and planning steps, including mapping and modelling useable habitat types, quantifying the current connectivity status, goal setting, and action planning Mazany-Wright, Norris, et al. (2021a).

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 2: Naturally accessible waterbodies within the Horsefly River watershed. These do not represent useable habitat types, but rather identifies the stream segments within which habitat modelling and structure mapping and prioritization was undertaken. |

## Focal species

Focal species represent the ecologically and culturally important species for which habitat connectivity is being conserved and/or restored in the watershed. In the Horsefly River watershed, the planning team selected Anadromous Salmon as the focal species group, which comprises Chinook Salmon, Coho Salmon, and Sockeye Salmon. The selection of these focal species was driven primarily by the focal species of the primary fund supporting this planning work.

### Anadromous Salmonids

Anadromous salmon are cultural and ecological keystone species that contribute to productive ecosystems by contributing marine-derived nutrients to the watershed and forming an important food source for other species. Salmon species are sacred to the NStQ, having sustained life, trading economies, and culture since time immemorial (W. L. F. Nation. (2021), X. F. Nation. (2021), N. Singi pers. comm.). The stewardship of the resources and fisheries in their traditional territories are imbued in the spirit of the NStQ through a symbiotic relationship based on respect – the NStQ never take more salmon than is needed and there is no waste. The entirety of the salmon is used - smoked and dried to sustain the NStQ through the winter months, the roe harvested for consumption, salmon oil rendered to be stored and traded, and the skin used to store the oil (Wilson, Twohig, and Dahlstrom (1998), X. F. Nation. (2021), N. Singi pers. comm.). The salmon runs begin to return to the Horsefly River watershed in early August, and the NStQ traditionally celebrate and feast at this time. The harvest of the salmon strengthens the cultural connection to the land and the waters, providing an important food source for communities and the opportunity to pass knowledge and ceremony to future generations through fishing and fish processing (W. L. F. Nation. (2021)`, X. F. Nation. (2021)).

Anadromous salmon populations in the Horsefly River watershed have declined significantly in the past few decades, with the populations of all three focal species being listed as Threatened or Endangered by the Committee On the Status of Endangered Wildlife In Canada (COSEWIC). This has been exacerbated by the Big Bar landslide on the Fraser River in 2019, leading the four NStQ communities to voluntarily close the salmon fishery from 2019-2022. The stewardship of their waters continues through the work of the NStQ member communities and the Northern Shuswap Tribal Council.

### Chinook Salmon | Kekèsu | Oncorhynchus tshawytscha

| Conservation Unit | Biological Status | Run timing | Trend in spawner abundance (all available data) | Trend in spawner abundance (last 3 generations) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Middle Fraser River (Spring 5-2, 1.3) | Data Deficient/Poor | Data Deficient | Data Deficient | Data Deficient |

**?(caption)**

| COSEWIC Designated Unit | Status | Trend | Median percent change (last 3 generations) | Median percent change (historic) | Generation length |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 9- Middle Fraser, Stream, Spring (MFR+GStr) population | Threatened | Declining | -28% | -49% | 4.5 years |

Chinook Salmon are the first to return each year, usually in early August DFO (1991), and have the most limited distribution within the watershed. Known spawning occurs in parts of the Horsefly River mainstem above the confluence with the Little Horsefly River and throughout McKinley Creek as far as Elbow Lake (DFO (1991), S. Hocquard, pers. comm.). Important rearing systems include Patenaude Creek, Kroener Creek, Black Creek, Woodjam Creek, Deerhorn Creek, and Wilmot Creek (S. Hocquard, pers. comm.).

### Coho Salmon | Sxeyqs | Oncorhynchus kisutch

| Conservation Unit | Biological Status | Run timing | Trend in spawner abundance (all available data) | Trend in spawner abundance (last 3 generations) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Interior Fraser | Data Deficient/Fair | Data Deficient | Data Deficient | Data Deficient |

**?(caption)**

| COSEWIC Designated Unit | Status | Trend | Median percent change (last 3 generations) | Median percent change (historic) | Generation length |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Interior Fraser – Mid/Upper Fraser population | Threatened | Declining | Not estimated | +119% estimated based on last 10 years of escapement data-21% estimated based on entire escapement time series | 3 years |

Coho Salmon are the most widely distributed of the three focal species in the watershed, with the ability to migrate into smaller, upper tributary systems DFO (1991). Spawning occurs in the Little Horsefly River between Gruhs Lake and Horsefly Lake, McKinley Creek below McKinley Lake, Woodjam Creek, Patenaude Creek, Tisdall Creek, and Black Creek. Rearing fry and juveniles have been observed in the Little Horsefly River, Patenaude Creek, and McKinley Creek up to Bosk Lake (DFO (1991), S. Hocquard pers. comm.).

### Sockeye Salmon | Sqlelten7ùwi | Oncorhynchus nerka

| Conservation Unit | Biological Status | Run timing | Trend in spawner abundance (all generations) | Trend in spawner abundance (last 3 generations) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Quesnel-Summer (cyclic) | Data Deficient/Fair-Poor | July-September | Data Deficient | Data Deficient |

**?(caption)**

| COSEWIC Designated Unit | Status | Trend | Median percent change (last 3 generations) | Median percent change (historic) | Generation length |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 16 -Quesnel-S population | Endangered | Declining | 260,974 | -97% | 272% |

Sockeye Salmon have historically been the most abundant of the three focal species in the watershed, though the population has seen significant declines in recent years (DFO (1991), S. Hocquard pers. comm.). Sockeye Salmon spawning is known to occur throughout the Horsefly River (up to the impassable falls), in the Little Horsefly River between Gruhs Lake and Horsefly Lake, Moffat Creek (up to the impassible falls), and McKinley Creek up to Elbow Lake (Pacific-Salmon-Foundation (2020), DFO (1991), S. Hocquard pers. comm.). Additionally, a spawning channel aimed at enhancing the Sockeye Salmon population was constructed by Fisheries and Oceans Canada in 1989 DFO (1991). Currently, there are no Sockeye Salmon rearing in the Horsefly River watershed – all emergent fry migrate down to Quesnel Lake.

## Structure Types

The following table highlights which barrier types pose the greatest threat to anadromous salmon in the watershed. The results of this assessment were used to inform the subsequent planning steps, as well as to identify knowledge gaps where there is little spatial data to inform the assessment for a specific barrier type.

Table 1: Structure Types in the Horsefly River watershed and structure rating assessment results. For each structure type listed, Extent refers to the proportion of anadromous salmonid habitat that is being blocked by that structure type, Severity is the proportion of structures for each structure type that are known to block passage for focal species based on field assessments, and Irreversibility is the degree to which the effects of a structure type can be reversed and connectivity restored. The amount of habitat blocked used in this exercise is a representation of total amount of combined spawning and rearing habitat.

| Structure Types | Extent | Severity | Irreversibility | Overall Threat Rating: |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Road-Stream Crossings | Low | Low | Medium | Very High |
| Lateral Barriers | High | Very High | High | High |
| Small Dams(<3m height) | Low | Low | High | Medium |
| Trail-stream Crossings | Low | Low | Medium | Low |
| Natural Barriers | Medium | High | Low | Low |

### Road-stream Crossings

Road-stream crossings are the most abundant structure type in the watershed, with 12 assessed and modelled crossings located on stream segments with modelled habitat. Demographic road crossings (highways, municipal, and paved roads) block 1.42 km of habitat (~0% of the total blocked habitat), with 0% of assessed crossings having been identified as barriers to fish passage. Resource roads block 1.42 km of habitat (~0%), with 0% of assessed crossings having been identified as barriers. The planning team felt that the data was underestimating the severity of road-stream crossing structures in the watershed, and therefore decided to update the rating from High to Very High. The planning team also felt that an irreversibility rating of Medium was appropriate due to the technical complexity and resources required to rehabilitate road-stream crossings.

### Lateral Barriers

There are numerous types of lateral barriers that potentially occur in the watershed, including dykes, berms, and linear development (i.e., road and rail lines), all of which can restrict the ability of anadromous salmon to move into floodplains, riparian wetlands, and other off-channel habitats. No comprehensive lateral barrier data exists within the watershed, so pressure ratings were based on qualitative local knowledge. Lateral barriers are not thought to be as prevalent as road- or rail-stream crossings but are likely very severe where they do exist. Significant lateral barriers are known to occur along the mainstem of the Horsefly River, which disconnect the mainstem river from historic floodplain and off-channel habitat. Overall, the planning team decided that a High pressure rating adequately captured the effect that lateral barriers are having on connectivity in the watershed. Work to begin quantifying and mapping lateral habitat will begin in 2022-23, as described in the Operational Plan under Strategy 2: Lateral barrier rehabilitation.

### Small Dams (<3 m height)

There are 6 mapped small dams on naturally accessible waterbodies in the watershed, blocking a total of 1.42 km (~0.4% of the total habitat) of modelled spawning and rearing habitat for anadromous salmon, resulting in a medium extent. The extent rating of these structures was confirmed by the planning team. There are two known fish-passage structures in the watershed, including on the dam at the outlet of McKinley Lake. The remaining dams likely block passage for anadromous salmon and would require significant resources to rehabilitate. However, due to the limited extent of dams in the watershed, a final pressure rating of Medium was assigned.

### Trail-stream crossings

There is very little spatial data available on trail-stream crossings in the watershed, so the planning team was unable to quantify the true Extent and Severity of this structure type. However, the planning team felt that trail-stream crossings are not prevalent within the watershed and that, where they do exist, they do not significantly impact passage for anadromous salmon. As most crossings will be fords or similar structures, rehabilitation may not be required, or rehabilitation costs associated with these structures would be quite low. Overall, the planning team felt that the pressure rating for trail-stream crossings was likely Low; however, the lack of ground-truthed evidence to support this rating was identified as a knowledge gap within this plan.

### Natural Barriers

Natural barriers to fish passage can include debris flows, log jams, sediment deposits, etc., but natural features that have always restricted fish passage (e.g., waterfalls) are not considered under this barrier type. Natural barriers are difficult to include in a spatial prioritization framework due to their transient nature. The planning team identified known natural barriers that occur throughout the watershed, such as beaver dams and log jams. Generally, these natural barriers are only severe impediments to fish passage during low-flow years, but reduced baseflows have become more common in recent years. Based on this, the planning team felt that natural barriers will be severe most years where they exist, but are mostly reversible, resulting in an overall pressure rating of Low.

# Connectivity Status Assessment and Goals

## Connectivity Status Assessment

The planning team identified two Key Ecological Attributes (KEAs) to assess the current connectivity status of the watershed for each focal species – Accessible Habitat and Accessible Overwintering Habitat ([Table 2](#tbl-connectivity)). KEAs are the key aspects of anadromous salmon habitat that are being targeted by this WCRP. For each KEA, an associated indicator was assigned to measure the status of that KEA. The connectivity status indicators were used to establish goals to improve key habitat connectivity over time and is the baseline against which progress is tracked over time.

The current connectivity status was estimated using three spatial models:

1. Accessibility model: Naturally accessible waterbodies are those that are considered likely accessible to focal species if no human-made barriers existed on the landscape. These were spatially delineated for each focal species using natural barriers (i.e., waterfalls, gradient barriers, or subsurface flows) that would naturally limit upstream movement (**?@tbl-param**).
2. Habitat model: A subset of the naturally accessible waterbody layer was defined as key habitat, i.e., habitat likely to support spawning or rearing, rather than simply movement corridors. The habitat model identifies areas within waterbodies that have a higher potential to support key habitat based on stream channel gradient and discharge. The habitat model criteria can be found in Appendix C (**?@tbl-param**).
3. Connectivity model: A layer of known or modelled structures was overlaid on the key habitat results. Structures with unknown passability were treated as a full barrier until confirmed passable by either local knowledge, desktop review, or field assessment. Watershed connectivity was estimated by calculating the amount of key habitat that is connected to the ocean (i.e., not fragmented by human-made barriers). Key habitat with no structures or only passable structures downstream was considered connected. Key habitat upstream of full, partial, or potential barriers was considered disconnected. All connected habitat was summed and divided by the total amount of key habitat in the watershed to arrive at the KEA indicators. Detailed methods for the connectivity model can be found in Appendix C.

Table 2: Connectivity status assessment for spawning (a) and rearing (b) habitat in the Bulkley River watershed. The two KEAs - Accessible Spawning Habitat and Accessible Rearing Habitat - are evaluated by dividing the length of linear habitat (of each type) that is currently connected to focal species by the total length of all linear habitat (of each type) in the watershed.

| Focal Species | KEA | Indicator | Poor | Fair | Good | Very Good |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Andromous Salmon | Available Habitat | % of total linear habitat | <80% | - | 81-90% | >90% |
|  |  | Current Status: |  |  |  | 92 |

**Comments:** Indicator rating definitions are based on the consensus decisions of the planning team, including the decision not to define Fair. The current status is based on the CWF Barrier Prioritization Model output, which is current as of December 2024.

| Focal Species | KEA | Indicator | Poor | Fair | Good | Very Good |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Andromous Salmon | Available Overwintering Habitat | Total Area (m2) of overwintering habitat accessible | ? | ? | ? | ? |
|  |  | Current Status: |  |  |  |  |

**Comments:** No baseline data exists on the extent of overwintering habitat in the watershed. A priority action is included in the Operational Plan (strategy 2.3) to develop a habitat layer, and this will be used to inform this connectivity status assessment in the future.

## Goals

Table 3: Goals to improve (1) spawning and rearing and (2) overwintering habitat connectivity for focal species in the Horsefly River watershed over the lifespan of the WCRP (2021-2040). The goals were established through discussions with the planning team and represent the resulting desired state of connectivity in the watershed. The goals are subject to change as more information and data are collected over the course of the plan timeline (e.g., the current connectivity status is updated based on barrier field assessments).

| Goal # | Goal |
| --- | --- |
| 1 | By 2040, the percent (%) of total linear habitat connected to anadromous salmon will increase from 92% to 96% within the Horsefly River watershed (i.e., reconnect at least 14.77 km of habitat). |
| 2 | By 2024, the total area of overwintering habitat connected to Anadromous Salmon will increase by 1,500 m2 within the Horsefly River watershed. |

# Structure Prioritization

## Horsefly River Watershed Structure Prioritization Summary

A primary outcome of the WCRP will be the rehabilitation of barriers to connectivity in the Horsefly River watershed. To achieve the goals in this plan, it is necessary to identify a suite of barriers that, if rehabilitated, will provide access to a minimum of 14.77 key habitat ([Table 4](#tbl-table16)).

Table 4: Spawning and rearing habitat connectivity gain requirements to meet WCRP goals in the Horsefly River watershed. The measures of currently connected and total habitat values are derived from the Intrinsic Potential habitat model described in Appendix B.

| Habitat Type | Currently connected (km) | Total (km) | Current Connectivity Status | Goal | Gain required (km) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Spawning and Rearing | 326.28 | 355.26 | 92% | 96% | 14.77 |

After all existing data and knowledge are collated for known and modelled crossings, an iterative ranking process is conducted to help confirm barriers to target for rehabilitation to meet the goals. The ranking process is primarily used to guide field assessments and maximize efficiency in ground truthing data inputs and model outputs, while providing a secondary purpose to evaluate the relative key habitat gains of confirmed barriers in the watershed. This process, combined with input from local knowledge holders and experts, is used to develop field plans for assessing barriers that have the potential to block the most key habitat in the watershed. Field assessments are based on the BC Fish Passage Strategic Approach Envrionment (2014) and can include a barrier assessment (i.e., evaluating passability of the structure), a habitat confirmation (i.e., evaluation of whether the upstream habitat is suitable for the focal species and whether there are other undocumented man-made or natural barriers upstream or downstream), or a detailed habitat investigation (e.g., a fish passage study or further in-depth analysis of habitat features in a waterbody).

The ranking process accounts for the long-term and immediate potential habitat gains potentially offered by each structure to identify structures that maximize long-term and immediate potential to improve key habitat connectivity in the watershed. All structures in the watershed (excluding those confirmed as passable) are ranked in each iteration of the ranking process. Details of the ranking process used to guide field assessments can be found in [Appendix B](supplimentary-information.qmd).

## Structure Prioritzation Results

Following field assessments, structures are placed on one of five possible lists:

1. Priority barriers list – the structure is confirmed as a full or partial barrier, has key habitat confirmed to exist upstream, and is considered actionable by the planning team (i.e., action items will be identified to advance rehabilitation of the structure). Depending on the barrier, owner, financial constraints, and quality of upstream habitat, the action may be to leave to end of life cycle before reviewing again, remove and decommission the road, replace with a new passable structure, or modify to temporarily restore connectivity (e.g., fish ladder or baffles installed; (**?@tbl-priority**)).
2. Assessed structures that remain data deficient list – some form of field assessment has been completed on the structure, but further investigation is required to confirm either the passability status or presence/suitability of upstream habitat (**?@tbl-deficient**).
3. Rehabilitated barriers list – priority barriers that have been addressed (either through removal, replacement, or temporary fish passage improvement projects; (**?@tbl-rehab**)).
4. Non-actionable barriers list – the structure is confirmed to be a barrier to fish passage and have some amount/quality of habitat upstream, but the planning team will not identify actions to advance rehabilitation of the structure because of logistic considerations (e.g., financial costs), short habitat gain, or the upstream habitat is of poor quality or unsuitable in its present condition to support key life stages of the focal species [Appendix C](#data-download-and-methods).
5. Excluded structures list – the structure is excluded from further consideration in subsequent ranking and work planning because the structure is confirmed passable (e.g., bridge), not present, or there is no key habitat upstream [Appendix C](#data-download-and-methods).

| barrier\_id | modelled\_crossing\_id | watercourse\_name | road\_name | structure\_type | partial\_passability | structure\_owner | num\_barriers\_set | total\_hab\_gain\_set | upstream\_habitat\_quality | estimated\_cost\_$ | next\_steps | reason | notes | supporting\_links |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 124150 | 6800503 | Trib to Deerhorn | unnamed | Stream crossing - CBS | Unknown | Private | 1 | 1.89 | High | 150000 | Engage with barrier owner | Undersized culvert, fish present | Landowner says fish present | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=124330 |
| 124249 | 6800023 | Wawn Lake Creek | Millar Road | Stream crossing - CBS | Unknown | MOTI | 1 | 0.70 | Medium | 400000 | Engage with barrier owner | Deferred until Vedder and Wilmot complete | Currently backwatered by impassable beaver dam. Undersized | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=1882 |
| 124256 | 6800022 | Harpers Creek | Horsefly Road | Stream crossing - CBS | No | MOTI | 2 | 0.69 | Medium | 400000 | Commission engineering designs | Decent rearing habitat in Harpers Lake | Designs on hold while Vedder and Wilmot addressed | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=1883 |
| 124268 | 6800048 | Vedder Creek | Horsefly-Quesnel Lake Road | Stream crossing - CBS | Yes | MOTI | 2 | 0.87 | High | 400000 | Commission engineering designs | Salmonid juveniles observed indicating high quality habitat | Designs in progress | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=124448 |
| 124272 |  | Trib to Woodjam Creek | Unnamed | Stream crossing - CBS | Yes | Private | 1 | 1.15 | High | 150000 | Engage with barrier owner | Undersized culvert, fish present | abundant fish downstream during 2017 assessment. May be passable to adults | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=197823 |
| 126471 |  | Trib to Woodjam Creek | unnamed | Stream crossing - CBS | Yes | FLNRO | 1 | 0.10 | Medium | 20000 | Engage with barrier owner | Potentially easy fix | Cattle trail, may be able to decommission or replace with small 3 m bridge. Discuss with barrier owner. Short habitat gain, parr able to pass at some flows, dewatering/ stranding potential. | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=685 |
| 197762 | 6800487 | Divan Creek | unnamed | Stream crossing - Ford | No | Forest tenure | 1 | 1.44 | Low | 2000 | Engage with barrier owner | Industry barrier | No permitted roads to site. Talk to Tolko about potential hand removal | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=198782 |
| 198300 | 6800483 | Molybdenite Creek | West Fraser/Tolko | Stream crossing - Ford | Unknown | Forest tenure | 1 | 0.88 | High | 10000 | Engage with barrier owner | Industry barrier | Remove debris from collapsed bridge from stream channel. Currently a barrier at low flows | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=199520 |
| 198876 |  | Vedder Creek | Private | Stream crossing - CBS | Yes | Private | 2 | 0.87 | High | 2000 | Engage with barrier owner | Easy fix, high quality habitat | Small flexi culvert, likely could be removed by hand | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=200136 |
| 57158 | 6800596 | Trib to McKinley Creek | R02156-887 | Stream crossing - CBS | No | Forest tenure | 2 | 0.36 | High | 150000 | Rehabilitation | Industry barrier | Short habitat gain (wetland upstream). Poorly defined channel beyond wetland. | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=197835 |
| 57298 | 24708568 | Trib to Bosk Lake | Black Creek-Cruiser Lake | Stream crossing - CBS | Yes | Forest tenure | 1 | 0.08 | Medium | 250000 | Rehabilitation | Industry barrier | Tolko aiming to replace with clearspan bridge summer 2024 | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=197832 |
| 57507 | 6800089 | Wilmot Creek | MOTI | Stream crossing - CBS | No | MOTI | 1 | 2.93 | Medium | 400000 | Commission engineering designs | High potential for use by salmon, direct connection to Horsefly mainstem | Designs in progress | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?assessmentId=197825 |
| 57556 | 6800076 | Sucker Creek | Black Creek FSR | Stream crossing - CBS | Yes | MOTI | 1 | 5.07 | Medium | 20000 | Engage with barrier owner | Culvert passes fish but is not fully backwatered. Higher density of juveniles downstream | May just need to adjust backwater, consider replacement at end of life. Work with barrier owner to determine timeline for rehabilitation | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=1885 |

**?(caption)**

| barrier\_id | modelled\_crossing\_id | watercourse\_name | road\_name | structure\_type | structure\_owner | barrier\_status | partial\_passability | assessment\_type\_completed | total\_hab\_gain\_set | num\_barriers\_set | next\_steps | notes | supporting\_links |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1006800220 | 6800220 | Trib to Harpers Lake | unnamed | Other | Private | POTENTIAL |  | Other | 0.69 | 2 | Non-actionable |  |  |
| 1200000002 |  | Patenaude Creek | Private | Stream crossing - OBS | Private | BARRIER |  | Informal assessment | 3.62 | 1 | Barrier assessment (data deficient structures only) | Complete barrier assessment to verify status |  |
| 124271 |  | MacLean Creek | Private | Stream crossing - CBS | Private | BARRIER |  | Habitat confirmation |  |  | Engage with barrier owner | Last assessed 2017. Can't access. Brian checking with local consultant on status of crossing. Bring in regulator if no resolution | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=681 |
| 126438 | 6800525 | Trib to Horsefly River | Private | Stream crossing - CBS | Private | POTENTIAL |  | Barrier assessment | 0.85 | 1 | Engage with barrier owner | Can't access site (landowner refusal). Brian checking with local consultant if he knows anything about the crossing. Bring to regulator if no resolution. | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=1882 |
| 57430 | 6801719 | Gifford Creek | Hendrix-McKinley | Stream crossing - CBS | FLNRO | BARRIER |  | Habitat confirmation | 0.02 | 1 | In-depth habitat investigation (data deficient structures only) | Coho present downstream, some steep sections to falls, salmonids throughout to falls | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=703 |

**?(caption)**

| barrier\_id | modelled\_crossing\_id | watercourse\_name | road\_name | type\_of\_rehabilitation | rehabilitated\_by | rehabilitated\_date | total\_hab\_gain\_set | actual\_project\_cost\_$ | next\_steps | notes | supporting\_links |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 126511 | 6800263 | Trib to Horsefly River | unnamed | Replacement - OBS | Tolko | 2023-01-01 | 2.21 |  | N/A - project complete (rehabilitated structures only) | Culvert removed from under bridge |  |
| 126594 | 6801993 | Niquidet Creek | R17330-730 | Replacement - OBS | Tolko | 2023-01-01 | 0.35 |  | N/A - project complete (rehabilitated structures only) | Crossing replaced with clearspan bridge |  |
| 57168 | 24708567 | Boscar Lake Creek | Black Creek-Cruiser Lake | Removal/decommissioned | CWF | 2022-01-01 |  | 94613 | N/A - project complete (rehabilitated structures only) | Originally priced for a bridge, was decommissioned instead, hence major difference between estimated rehab and actual rehab costs. | https://cwf-fcf.org/en/resources/downloads/pdf/2021-2022-Projects-Technical-Briefing.pdf |

**?(caption)**

# Work Planning

## Annual Work Plan

| Action | Lead | Support | Estimated Cost | Timeline |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Work with MOTI to advance Vedder 124268, Wilmot 57507, Harpers Lk 124256, Wawn Lk Ck 124249- complete designs | CWF | MOTI |  |  |
| Approach MOTI about improving backwater on Sucker Cr culvert 57556 | CWF | MOTI |  |  |
| Reach out to private landowners for Vedder, Trib to Deerhorn, Trib to Woodjam crossings | CWF | HRR |  |  |
| Determine next steps for Woodjam Ranch - FHPPP visit? |  |  |  |  |
| Work with FLNRO on removing cattle crossing 126471 Trib to Woodjam | CWF | FLNRO |  |  |
| Drone surveys for temperature refugia? | CWF | HRR |  |  |
| Complete barrier assessments on remaining modeled watershed crossings? |  |  |  |  |
| Check with Tolko on plans for modeled crossing 1024738332 - directly upstream from 57158 | CWF | Tolko |  |  |
| Update model with all current relvant information for Horsefly watershed | CWF |  |  |  |
| Review PSCIS assessments with good habitat upstream with group to determine if there is more work to be done there. | CWF | WG |  |  |
| re-run connectivity models | CWF |  |  |  |
| Develop 2025-2026 work plan | CWF | WG |  |  |
| Update WCRP based on 2024 field results and partner feedback, and edit mining section of report | CWF | WG |  |  |

**?(caption)**

## Annual Progress Updates

CWF continues to work with barrier owners to advance rehabilitation of priority barriers. Tolko Industries Ltd. has completed barrier rehabilitation on 126511 Tributary to Horsefly River and 126594 Niquidet Creek, with further plans to rehabilitate crossings on 57298 Boscar Creek and 57158 McKinley Creek in the near future. CWF continues to work with the BC Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure to try to advance rehabilitation designs for Vedder and Wilmot creeks. CWF attended the 2023 Horsefly Salmon Festival, where they shared an interactive art display to communicate the fish passage efforts in the watershed. Other program partners were also in attendance to educate the public about various aspects of salmon and conservation taking place in the watershed. The Williams Lake First Nation worked with the BC Ministry of Forests to review and identify potential barriers for rehabilitation in the upper portions of the Horsefly River watershed, with some tentative sites for rehabilitation identified that are currently being explored.

## Operational Plan

The operational plan represents a preliminary exercise undertaken by the planning team to identify the potential leads, potential participants, and estimated cost for the implementation of each action in the Horsefly River watershed. The table below summarizes individuals, groups, or organizations that the planning team felt could lead or participate in the implementation of the plan and should be interpreted as the first step in on-going planning and engagement to develop more detailed and sophisticated action plans for each entry in the table. The individuals, groups, and organizations listed under the “Lead(s)” or “Potential Participants” columns are those that provisionally expressed interest in participating in one of those roles or were suggested by the planning team for further engagement (denoted in bold), for those that are not members of the planning team. The leads, participants, and estimated costs in the operational plan are not binding nor an official commitment of resources, but rather provide a roadmap for future coordination and engagement to work towards implementation of the WCRP.

Table 5: Operational plan to support the implementation of strategies and actions to improve connectivity for focal species in the Horsefly River watershed.

| Strategy / Actions | Lead(s) [1] | Participants3 | Total Budget |
| --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Strategy 1: Crossing Rehabilitation |  |  | $3,666,300.00 |
| 1.1 – Rehabilitate crossings that are acting as barriers | CWF | Horsefly River Roundtable, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) | $3,500,000.00 |
| 1.2 – Lobby that the government enforce their regulations | TBD | CWF, Horsefly River Roundtable, Williams Lake First Nation (WLFN) | $10,000.00 |
| 1.3 – Initiate a barrier owner outreach program for locations on the barrier rehabilitation shortlist | HRR, CWF, DFO |  | TBD |
| 1.4 – Knowledge Gap: Continue updating the barrier prioritization model | CWF | TBD | $100,000.00 |
| 1.5 – Knowledge Gap: conduct field assessments on updated preliminary barrier list using the provincial fish passage framework and update connectivity goal if additional barriers are added to the barrier rehabilitation shortlist | CWF | Horsefly River Roundtable, DFO | $50,300.00 |
| 1.6 - Update longitudinal connectivity goal if additional barriers are added to the barrier rehabilitation shortlist |  |  |  |
| 1.7 – Knowledge Gap: Identify and map crossing ownership for barriers on the barrier rehabilitation shortlist | TBD | CWF, DFO (Anthonie) | $1,500.00 |
| 1.8 – Knowledge Gap: Compile road maintenance schedules | DFO | CWF, WLFN, DFO, FLNRORD | $2,000.00 |
| 1.9 – Knowledge Gap: Survey trail-stream crossings to confirm low pressure rating values | WLFN | CWF, DFO | $2,500.00 |
| Strategy 2: Lateral Barrier Rehabilitation |  |  | $80,000.00 |
| 2.1 – Rehabilitate dikes / berms / other structures that are acting as barriers | CWF | DFO, Horsefly River Roundtable | TBD |
| 2.2 – Initiate a barrier owner outreach program | TBD | CWF, DFO | TBD |
| 2.3 – Knowledge Gap: Identify and map year-round lateral habitat, as well as overwintering habitat | Horsefly River Roundtable, DFO | CWF, Northern Shuswap Tribal Council (NSTC), WLFN | $65,000.00 |
| 2.4 – Knowledge Gap: Map lateral barriers and barrier ownership | CWF | DFO, Horsefly River Roundtable | $5,000.00 |
| 2.5 – Knowledge Gap: Develop a framework to assess and prioritize between different lateral barrier rehabilitation projects | CWF | DFO | $10,000.00 |
| Strategy 3: Dam Rehabilitation |  |  | $1,305,000.00 |
| 3.1 - Rehabilitation Dams | TBD | TBD | $1,305,000.00 |
| 3.2 - Install Fish Passage | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| 3.3 - Connect with Cattleman's Association to explore a partnership to rehabilitate dams | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| 3.4 - Knowledge Gap: Continue updating the barrier prioritization model | CWF | TBD | $0.00 |
| 3.5 - Knowledge Gap: Assess dams to determine whether they exist and are truly blocking salmon habitat | HRR(?) DFO(?) CWF(?) | TBD | TBD |
| 3.6 - Knowledge Gap: Identify and map dam ownership | TBD | TBD | TBD |
| Strategy 4: Barrier Prevention |  |  | $110,000.00 |
| 4.1 – Explore potential partnerships with industrial companies | TBD | CWF, DFO, Horsefly River Roundtable, WLFN | $10,000.00 |
| 4.2 – Stabilize sediment sources that are explicitly linked to sediment wedges or erosion that are acting as barriers | TBD | DFO | $100,000.00 |
| Strategy 5: Progress Tracking Plan |  |  | TBD |
| 5.1 - Implement the WCRP Progress Tracking Plan | CWF |  | TBD |
| 5.2 - Develop a communication action to raise awareness and support for this WCRP | CWF, HRR | TBD | TBD |
| Total: |  |  | $5,161,300.00 |
| Fundraising total: |  |  | $2,508,800 |
| Proponent/government contribution total: |  |  | $2,652,500 |

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# Version History

[v.1.0 – March 2024](https://v1-0--horsefly-wcrp.netlify.app/)

# Project Partners

## Planning Team

| Name | Organization |
| --- | --- |
| Betty Rebellato | Canadian Wildlife Federation |
| Nick Mazany-Wright | Canadian Wildlife Federation |
| Nicolas Lapointe | Canadian Wildlife Federation |
| Sarah Sra | Canadian Wildlife Federation |
| Colin McGregor | Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada |
| Guy Scharf | Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada |
| Thomas Gristey | Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada |
| Simon Norris | Hillcrest Geographics |
| Brian Englund | Horsefly River Roundtable |
| Helen Englund | Horsefly River Roundtable |
| Judy Hillaby | Horsefly River Roundtable |
| Mike Ramsay | Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations |
| Kate Hewitt | Northern Shuswap Tribal Council |
| Edna Boston | Soda Creek Indian Band |
| Mike Stinson | Soda Creek Indian Band |
| John Walker | Williams Lake First Nation |
| Nishitha Singi | Williams Lake First Nation |
| Josh Noseworthy | Global Conservation Solutions |

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## Key Actors

| Individual or Organization Name | Role and Primary Interest |
| --- | --- |
| Cariboo Mining Association | A mining company that has been operating in central BC since the 1950’s and can help provide data and facilitate remediation work. |
| Consus Management Ltd. | Local wildlife consultants in the watershed to consider for future work. |
| Dawson Road Maintenance Ltd | A road design and maintenance company at the roadway-watershed interface. |
| DWB Consulting Services Ltd. | Local wildlife consultants in the watershed to consider for future work. |
| Freshwater Fisheries Society of British Columbia | This group can provide project assistance with non-anadromous species. |
| Larry Davis | A biologist and local wildlife consultant in the watershed. |
| Local ranchers | These individuals can facilitate construction as well as consent/facilitate complimentary works on private property to improve fish habitat upstream and downstream. |
| Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations (FLNRO) | FLNRO can assist with providing local knowledge, data, expertise and can facilitate remediation work. |
| Ministry of Transportation and Infrastructure (MOTI) | MOTI may own barriers and can play a role in improving and replacing barriers at highway crossings. |
| Property owners along river and tributaries | These individuals can facilitate construction as well as consent/facilitate complimentary works on private property to improve fish habitat upstream and downstream. |
| Quesnel River Research Centre | This group can help with field assessments and project implementation. |
| Steve Hocquard | A local consultant (Steve Hocquard Consulting) that provided valuable review of barrier and habitat data to inform the spatial models used in this plan, and can help with field assessments and project implementation. |
| Tolko Industries Ltd. | A privately owned Canadian forest products company that maintains forest service road-stream crossings in the Horsefly River watershed. |
| Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance | This group can be contacted for advice and assistance. |
| West Fraser | A integrated forestry and diversified wood products company that maintains forest service road-stream crossings in the Horsefly River watershed. |

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# Supplementary Information

## Situation Analysis

The following situation model was developed by the WCRP planning team to “map” the project context and brainstorm potential actions for implementation. Green text is used to identify actions that were selected for implementation (see Strategies & Actions), and red text is used to identify actions that the project team has decided to exclude from the current iteration of the plan, as they were either outside of the project scope, or were deemed to be ineffective by the planning team.

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 3: Situation analysis developed by the planning team to identify factors that contribute to fragmentation (orange boxes), biophysical results (brown boxes), and potential strategies/actions to improve connectivity (yellow hexagons) for focal species in the Horsefly River watershed. |

## Strategies & Actions

Effectiveness evaluation of identified conservation strategies and associated actions to improve connectivity for focal species in the Horsefly River watershed. The planning team identified five broad strategies to implement through this WCRP, 1) crossing rehabilitation, 2) lateral barrier rehabilitation, 3) dam Rehabilitation, 4) barrier prevention, and 5) communication and education. Individual actions were qualitatively evaluated based on the anticipated effect each action will have on realizing on-the-ground gains in connectivity. Effectiveness ratings are based on a combination of “Feasibility and”Impact”, Feasibility is defined as the degree to which the project team can implement the action within realistic constraints (financial, time, ethical, etc.) and Impact is the degree to which the action is likely to contribute to achieving one or more of the goals established in this plan.

## Strategy 1: Crossing Rehabilitation

Table 6: Strategy 1

| ID | Actions | Details | Feasibility | Impact | Effectiveness |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1.1 | Rehabilitate crossings that are acting as barriers | This action represents some projects that would be led by the planning team with conservation funds (e.g., orphaned barriers or those owned by individuals), while other rehabilitation projects would be the responsibility of the barrier owner. Industry will have to be engaged to successfully implement this intervention. PSC Southern Boundary Restoration and Enhancement Fund proposal: - Complete rehabilitation of one priority barrier, including engineering designs HCTF proposal: - Complete rehabilitation of one priority barrier CNFASAR proposal (2022-26): - Complete rehabilitation of one priority barrier per year for four years HRR Can help with finding local people to implement rehabilitation projects. | High | Very high | Effective |
| 1.2 | Lobby that the government enforce their regulations | This can apply to both provincial and federal governments. For example, advocating for increased discretionary decisions to remove barriers to fish. One action could be to submit barrier assessment data to show proof that regulations are not being followed. | Very high | High | Effective |
| 1.3 | Initiate a barrier owner outreach program for locations on the barrier rehabilitation shortlist | Work with landowners / users (e.g., ATV groups) to identify and rehabilitate their aquatic barriers. Education component can help prevent barriers in the first place. HRR to reach out to owners of confirmed barriers to discuss rehabilitation options; CWF to reach out to provincial representatives. | Very high | Very high | Very effective |
| 1.4 | Knowledge Gap: Continue updating the barrier prioritization model | The model has been updated to reflect 2021 field assessments and intermediate barrier review. | Very high | High | Effective |
| 1.5 | Knowledge Gap: conduct field assessments on updated preliminary barrier list using the provincial fish passage framework and update connectivity goal if additional barriers are added to the barrier rehabilitation shortlist | Twenty-six field assessments performed in 2021. | Very high | Very high | Very effective |
| 1.6 | Update longitudinal connectivity goal if additional barriers are added to the barrier rehabilitation shortlist |  |  |  |  |
| 1.7 | Knowledge Gap: Identify and map crossing ownership | For barriers on the barrier rehabilitation shortlist. | Very high | Very high | Very effective |
| 1.8 | Knowledge Gap: Compile road maintenance schedules | Ground-truthing is important, as the schedules do not always reflect what happens in the field. | High | High | Effective |
| 1.9 | Knowledge Gap: Survey trail-stream crossings to confirm low pressure rating values | Need to access detailed trail maps in the watershed to prioritize our time and resources. This should be accomplished as people are out surveying for other reasons rather than spending time and resources specifically to fill this knowledge gap. CNFASAR proposal: Collaborate with WLFN to: - Develop field assessment protocols for whether ATV trail stream crossings pass fish, and for assessing other effects on fish habitat - Map potential trail-stream crossings on salmon habitat that could be assessed - Assess 30-50 trail stream crossings, record measurements, and take pictures | Very high | Medium | Need more information |

## Strategy 2: Lateral Barrier Rehabilitation

Table 7: Strategy 2

| ID | Actions | Details | Feasibility | Impact | Effectiveness |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 2.1 | Rehabilitate dikes / berms / other lateral barriers |  | High | Very high | Effective |
| 2.2 | Initiate a barrier owner outreach program |  | Very high | Very high | Very effective |
| 2.3 | Knowledge Gap: Identify and map year-round lateral habitat, as well as overwintering habitat | Explore the use of a drone to identify lateral habitat. - Volunteers from the HRR will conduct field habitat assessments following modules in the Pacific Streamkeepers Handbook to assess disconnected lateral and overwintering salmon habitats in the Horsefly watershed CNFASAR proposal: -Funding for equipment in 2022-2023, and for field transportation in 2022-2023, 2023-2024 | Very high | Very high | Very effective |
| 2.4 | Knowledge Gap: Map lateral barriers and barrier ownership | Focus on identifying ownership of priority lateral barriers that we want to rehabilitate in the short-term. | Very high | Very high | Very effective |
| 2.5 | Knowledge Gap: Develop a framework to assess and prioritize between different lateral barrier rehabilitation projects | CWF is leading a provincial-scale analysis of the effect of rail lines on connectivity for Anadromous Salmonids, as part of this project lateral habitat and barrier assessments and prioritization methods will be developed. | Very high | Very high | Very effective |

## Strategy 3: Dam Rehabilitation

Table 8: Strategy 3

| ID | Actions | Details | Feasibility | Impact | Effectiveness |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 3.1 | Rehabilitate Dams |  | Medium | Very high | Need more information |
| 3.2 | Install Fish Passage |  | Medium | High | Need more information |
| 3.3 | Connect with Cattleman's Association to explore a partnership to rehabilitate dams | This may involve exploring alternative water management actions that would allow for the rehabilitation of irrigation dams. | High | Medium | Need more information |
| 3.4 | Knowledge Gap: Continue updating the barrier prioritization model | The model has been updated to reflect 2021 field assessments and intermediate barrier review. | Very high | High | Effective |
| 3.5 | Knowledge Gap: Assess dams to determine whether they exist and are truly blocking fish habitat | Four dams were assessed during 2021 field season; additional field assessment needed. | Very high | High | Effective |
| 3.6 | Knowledge Gap: Identify and map dam ownership |  | Very high | Very high | Very effective |

## Strategy 4: Barrier Prevention

Table 9: Strategy 4

| ID | Actions | Details | Feasibility | Impact | Effectiveness |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 4.1 | Explore potential partnerships with industrial companies | Invite industrial players to a workshop on how to apply crossing / lateral barrier BMPs. BMPs could include those that minimize the need for road-stream crossings. | Very high | High | Effective |
| 4.2 | Stabilize sediment sources that are explicitly linked to sediment wedges or erosion that are acting as barriers | This could include numerous bank stabilization techniques, including restoring riparian vegetation. This applies to some tributaries that have altered confluence areas - the link needs to be made between confluence alterations and timing of movement for juvenile fish. Local ranchers and Cattleman's association could be engaged, as well as forestry licensees. | Very high | Medium | Need more information |

## Strategy 5: Communication and Education

Table 10: Strategy 5

| ID | Actions | Details |
| --- | --- | --- |
| 5.1 | Implement the WCRP Progress Tracking Plan | The WCRP Progress Tracking Plan will help the team determine if we are achieving our goals and objectives. |
| 5.2 | Develop a communication strategy to raise awareness and support for this WCRP | This intervention includes communicating both the WCRP and the collaborative process in developing it, as well as communicating outcomes (e.g., barrier rehabilitation). CNFASAR proposal: - HRR will work with CWF to develop outreach and communications materials, including press releases, social media content, a video, and content for their website - With HRR, CWF will present on fish passage issues and solutions at the annual Horsefly River Salmon Festival |

## Theories of Change & Objectives

Theories of Change are explicit assumptions around how the identified actions will achieve gains in connectivity and contribute towards reaching the goals of the plan. To develop Theories of Change, the planning team developed explicit assumptions for each strategy which helped to clarify the rationale used for undertaking actions and provided an opportunity for feedback on invalid assumptions or missing opportunities. The Theories of Change are results oriented and clearly define the expected outcome. The following theory of change models were developed by the WCRP planning team to “map” the causal (“if-then”) progression of assumptions of how the actions within a strategy work together to achieve project goals.

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 4: Theory of change developed by the planning team for the actions identified under Strategy 1: Crossing Rehabilitation in the Horsefly River watershed. |

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| --- |
| Figure 5: Theory of change developed by the planning team for the actions identified under Strategy 2: Lateral Barrier Rehabilitation in the Horsefly River watershed. |

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 6: Theory of change developed by the planning team for the actions identified under Strategy 3: Dam Rehabilitation in the Horsefly River watershed. |

|  |
| --- |
| Figure 7: Theory of change developed by the planning team for the actions identified under Strategy 4: Barrier Prevention in the Horsefly River watershed. |

# Data Download and Methods

## Data Download

Coming soon

## Connectivity Status Assessment Methods

The connectivity status assessment for anadromous salmonids in the Horsefly River watershed builds on existing connectivity modelling work undertaken by the BC Fish Passage Technical Working Group, resulting in a flexible, customizable open-source spatial model called “bcfishpass”. The model spatially locates known and modelled barriers to fish passage, identifies potential spawning and rearing habitat for focal species, and estimates the amount of habitat that is currently accessible to focal species. The model uses an adapted version of the Intrinsic Potential (IP) fish habitat modelling framework (see Sheer et al. (2009) for an overview of the IP framework). The habitat model uses two geomorphic characteristics of the stream network — channel gradient and mean annual discharge — to identify potential spawning habitat and rearing habitat for each focal species. The habitat model does not attempt to definitively map each habitat type nor estimate habitat quality, but rather identifies stream segments that have high potential to support spawning or rearing habitat for each species based on the geomorphic characteristics of the segment. For more details on the connectivity and habitat model structure and parameters, please see Mazany-Wright, Norris, et al. (2021a). The variables and thresholds used to model potential spawning and rearing habitat for each focal species are summarized in Table 15. The quantity of modelled habitat for each species was aggregated for each habitat type and represents a linear measure of potential habitat. To recognize the rearing value provided by features represented by polygons for certain species (e.g., wetlands for Coho Salmon and lakes for Sockeye Salmon) a multiplier of 1.5x the length of the stream segments flowing through the polygons was applied.

| Species | Channel Gradient (%) | Mean annual discharge (m3/s) | Channel gradient (%) | Mean Annual discharge (m3/s) | Minimum Lake area (ha) | Multiplier (1.5x) |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| Chinook Salmon | 0-3 [1] [2] | 0.46-322.5 [3][4][5][6][7] | 0-5 [5][8] | 0.28-100 [9] |  |  |
| Coho Salmon | 0-5 [6][10] | 0.164-59.15 [3][4][5][10][11] | 0-5 [8][12] | 0.03-40 [8][13] |  | Wetland |
| Sockeye Salmon | 0-2 [14][15] | 0.175-65 [3][4][5][6] |  |  | 200 [5] | Lake |

**?(caption)**

References: [1] Busch et al. (2011). [2] Cooney and Holzer (2006). [3] Bjornn and Reiser (1991). [4] Neuman and Newcombe (1977). [5] Woll, Albert, and Whited (2017). [6] Roberge et al. (2002). [7] Raleigh and Miller (1986). [8] Porter et al. (2008). [9] Agrawal et al. (2005). [10] Sloat, Reeves, and Christiansen (2017). [11] Mcmahon (1983). [12] Rosenfeld, Porter, and Parkinson (2000). [13] Burnett et al. (2007). [14] Lake (1999). [15] Hoopes (1972).

## Other Tables

| barrier\_id | modelled\_crossing\_id | watercourse\_name | road\_name | structure\_type | reason\_for\_exclusion | method\_of\_exclusion | reason | notes | supporting\_links |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 197761 | 6,800,240 | Trib to Horsefly River | unnamed | Stream crossing - Ford | Passable | Field assessment | Cattle trail/ford, location likely refers to historic crossing that has been decommissioned and abandoned at edge of channel |  |  |
| 198871 | 6,800,319 | Niquidet Creek | unnamed | Stream crossing - OBS | Passable | Field assessment | Pedestrian bridge across creek, not a barrier to fish passage |  |  |
| 57292 | 6,802,284 | Bassett Creek | 500 | Stream crossing - CBS | No key upstream habitat | Field assessment | Impassable natural barrier downstream |  |  |
| 57317 | 6,800,584 | Trib to McKinley Creek | R01350-524 | Stream crossing - CBS | No key upstream habitat | Field assessment | No suitable habitat: small defined channel but no water = poor spawning, rearing, overwintering potential. No modeled key habitat upstream. |  |  |
| 57596 | 6,800,587 | Bassett Creek | R14189-4C | None | No structure | Field assessment | No stream crossing identified but large woody debris jam present and passable to fish |  |  |
| 773d7d7c-11b7-4c8c-b761-ff1d4d60818a |  | Rat/Peter Creek | n/a | None | No structure | Field assessment | Dam confirmed to not exist (formerly structure 1100000814) |  |  |
| 1006800520 |  | Woodjam Creek | Private | None | No structure | Local knowledge | Access permission not granted. Landowners confirmed bridge/barrier no longer present |  |  |
| 1006801356 |  | Trib to Horsefly Lake | R01350 | None | No structure | Field assessment | Crossing does not exist |  |  |
| a423c60a-dfb1-4414-bba3-bd57c89c6357 |  | Gibbons Creek | n/a | Dam | Passable | Field assessment | Dam appears to be off channel with water flowing around the dam, no fish passage issues (formerly structure 1100001822) |  |  |
| 197763 |  | Niquidet Creek | unnamed | Stream crossing - Ford | Passable | Field assessment | Location is a cattle trail/ford, not a barrier to fish |  |  |
| 40fc35b1-a834-4821-9c09-e8c64a646252 |  | Niquidet Creek | n/a | None | No structure | Field assessment | Dam confirmed to not exist (formerly structure 1100000763) |  |  |
| 17e18f43-e699-4e2c-ae73-e3f3e48de11f |  | Gibbons Creek | n/a | None | No structure | Field assessment | Dam confirmed to not exist (formerly structure 1100000243) |  |  |
| 198875 |  | Gibbons Creek | unnamed | Stream crossing - OBS | Passable | Field assessment | Road carried by a 2200 mm diameter OBS arch culvert that is 12 m long, does not represent a barrier to fish passage |  |  |
| 1006801130 |  | Wilmot Creek | unnamed | None | No structure | Field assessment | Crossing does not exist |  |  |
| 1006800484 |  | Molybdenite Creek | unnamed | None | No structure | Field assessment | Crossing does not exist |  |  |
| 198161 |  | Trib to Elbow Lake | unnamed | Stream crossing - OBS | Passable | Field assessment | Open bottom arch culvert |  |  |
| 1006800298 |  | Patenaude Creek | unnamed | None | No structure | Field assessment | Crossing does not exist |  |  |

**?(caption)**

| barrier\_id | modelled\_crossing\_id | watercourse\_name | road\_name | structure\_type | structure\_owner | barrier\_status | partial\_passability | assessment\_type\_completed | total\_hab\_gain\_set | num\_barriers\_set | next\_steps | notes | supporting\_links |
| --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- | --- |
| 1,006,800,220 | 6,800,220 | Trib to Harpers Lake | unnamed | Other | Private | POTENTIAL |  | Other | 0.69 | 2 | Non-actionable |  |  |
| 1,200,000,002 |  | Patenaude Creek | Private | Stream crossing - OBS | Private | BARRIER |  | Informal assessment | 3.62 | 1 | Barrier assessment (data deficient structures only) | Complete barrier assessment to verify status |  |
| 124,271 |  | MacLean Creek | Private | Stream crossing - CBS | Private | BARRIER |  | Habitat confirmation |  |  | Engage with barrier owner | Last assessed 2017. Can't access. Brian checking with local consultant on status of crossing. Bring in regulator if no resolution | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=681 |
| 126,438 | 6,800,525 | Trib to Horsefly River | Private | Stream crossing - CBS | Private | POTENTIAL |  | Barrier assessment | 0.85 | 1 | Engage with barrier owner | Can't access site (landowner refusal). Brian checking with local consultant if he knows anything about the crossing. Bring to regulator if no resolution. | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=1882 |
| 57,430 | 6,801,719 | Gifford Creek | Hendrix-McKinley | Stream crossing - CBS | FLNRO | BARRIER |  | Habitat confirmation | 0.02 | 1 | In-depth habitat investigation (data deficient structures only) | Coho present downstream, some steep sections to falls, salmonids throughout to falls | http://a100.gov.bc.ca/pub/pscismap/imageViewer.do?habitatConfirmationId=703 |

**?(caption)**