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Lake Roosevelt Forum

NEWSletter

WINTER 2014

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Barnaby Creek recovers spawning ground

It's been over seventy years since Grand Coulee Dam forever altered native fish migrations. With the completion of the new Barnaby Creek Culvert, the Colville Tribe, with funding from the Bonneville Power Administration, has taken another step towards returning kokanee and rainbow trout to their historic spawning grounds.

Kokanee and rainbow trout make annual adfluvial migrations, meaning they travel from lakes up through rivers and streams in order to lay and seed eggs. Barnaby Creek was once such a tributary, but an inadequate culvert, created during the Grand Coulee Dam construction, made fish passage impossible.

The old culvert tunneled the creek under Inchelium Kettle Falls Road, where the water would then drop up to seventy feet before reaching the Columbia River. Needless to say, the jump proved too much for even the LeBron James of kokanee.

Replacing the drop with fish friendly access required complex engineering, skilled construction, and serious funding. The \$1.5 million budget came from the capital portion of the Chief Joseph Kokanee Enhancement Project, a settlement funded by the Bonneville Power Administration.

To accommodate the drastic water level fluctuations created by the dam, the engineering company, Tetra Tech, designed two culverts at different heights. The lower multiplate culvert is 22 feet in diameter with an 8% grade, and the surface culvert is 12 feet in diameter with a 0% grade. Boulders were placed



Construction of Barnaby Creek Culvert

Getting to Know: Dan Foster



“It is a unique crossroads where many species of plants and animals coexist unlike anywhere else.”

Sound familiar? The National Park Service (NPS) isn't describing Lake Roosevelt; it's describing the Niobrara (pronounced Ni-o-brear-ah) River. In 1991, Congress designated 76 miles of this 568 mile river stretching across Wyoming and Nebraska as a National Scenic River. Flowing through the Great Plains, the Niobrara is a marvel of culture, history and environment.

From this idyllic setting came Dan Foster, who was named superintendent for Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area and Ice Age Floods National Geologic Trail in January, 2013.

Niobrara and Lake Roosevelt share, as do all the nearly 400 national parks managed by NPS, a scenic beauty, rich history and cultural legacy so astounding that we choose as a nation to protect them for the enjoyment, education, and inspiration of this and future generations.

Dan Foster, like others, chose to devote his career to the NPS mission. “I started out in Utah, which is where I got my degree from BYU in wildlife biology and range management. After working for the state, I started with the park service.” Thus far, the call to service has resulted in a twenty-one year adventure. Said Dan, “The essential challenge remains the same, how do we protect and preserve natural resources while preserving visitor experiences.”

Same challenge, yes. But also a challenge, like the rivers he loves, that carve out new bends and paths over time. “The National Park Service protects some of this nation's most treasured resources documenting how our world and we as a people have changed. For example, Stephen Mather, the first director of National Park Service,” said Dan, “encouraged the building of hotels in parks and partnered with railroads to bring people to them. But with cars, campgrounds, and visitor expectations, the NPS has evolved, and will keep evolving.”

This sense of history and change gives Dan a sense of equanimity when he thinks about Lake Roosevelt National Recreation Area and vacation cabins that were permitted shortly after Grand Coulee Dam was constructed. “The NPS permitted the construction of vacation cabins to encourage people to come and recreate in the area.

Over time, our desire to best match visitor needs with

preservation goals took us in a different direction. That doesn't mean the NPS was wrong, but is an example of how the agency and we as a nation have changed over time.”

Speaking of the area, Dan's first impressions are that of most visitors. “Kind of amazing. Tribes have called this place home for over nine thousand years. Geologically, we're talking over 13,000 years to the ice age floods. Then think about the natural resources: water, fisheries, timber, minerals. Beautiful place, great history.”

Another part of the NPS value structure that continues to evolve is partnerships. Dan's practical approach begins with “I recognize all the goals of stakeholders aren't the same.” That said, “I think we agree on an awful lot, can be honest about what we can and can't do, and then set objectives together that we work toward.”

And working collaboratively begins with a team based management style Dan employs with staff. “The people working with me are good people; together we can make good things happen.”

So don't be surprised when Dan comes to meetings and settings with an eye toward achieving consensus. “You need to remember,” said Dan, “one of my formative experiences at NPS was working at the Nez Perce National Historical Park. That has thirty eight parks sites in four states.”

Also, don't be surprised if Dan looks to create new partnerships as part of finding new ways to bring resources to bear. He was, for instance, very impressed with the partnership between the Colville Tribes and state to build the new Keller Ferry, the Sanpoil, that began service in August 2013. He also points to Stevens County working with NPS to preserve fueling at Daisy Station. “I feel like I'm coming into a good situation. These partnerships are outstanding.”

So what's the most important thing to know about Dan? That's easy, he said, “I value honesty and integrity above all else.”

And to get Dan's eyes to light up, that's easy too. Just ask about his family. Traveling from one location to another in service of NPS values was not a solo adventure. His wife of thirty-one years made sure to make it a family affair. They are proud parents of three kids, all married, and six grandchildren. Throw in some fly fishing, kayaking and old movies, and Dan's ready to keep rolling right along in service of the NPS mission. 🌐

2014 Lake Level Forecast

Drought concerns are increasingly creeping into public consciousness. California has sounded the alarm on epic drought conditions, with California State government turning off water supplies for agriculture and imposing reduced consumption of up to thirty percent.

And our friends in the Spokane watershed were grimacing at water conditions feeding into Lake Coeur d'Alene and the Spokane River. For the October-December period in Spokane, for instance, this is the 3rd driest (tied with 1929) year dating back to 1881.

So what does all this mean for the upper Columbia and forecasting 2014 Lake Roosevelt lake levels? The forecast is currently very uncertain. If you look at the Bureau of Reclamation's most recent forecast, which is based on the Northwest River Forecast Center's January data, it gives the impression that dry conditions are on the way. Water coming into Lake Roosevelt (in-flow) was 82% of average through January. Given these conditions, the lake level in April is estimated to be 1282 feet above sea level (see graph). This would mean that the lake would only need to be 8 feet lower than the full pool elevation of 1290 feet

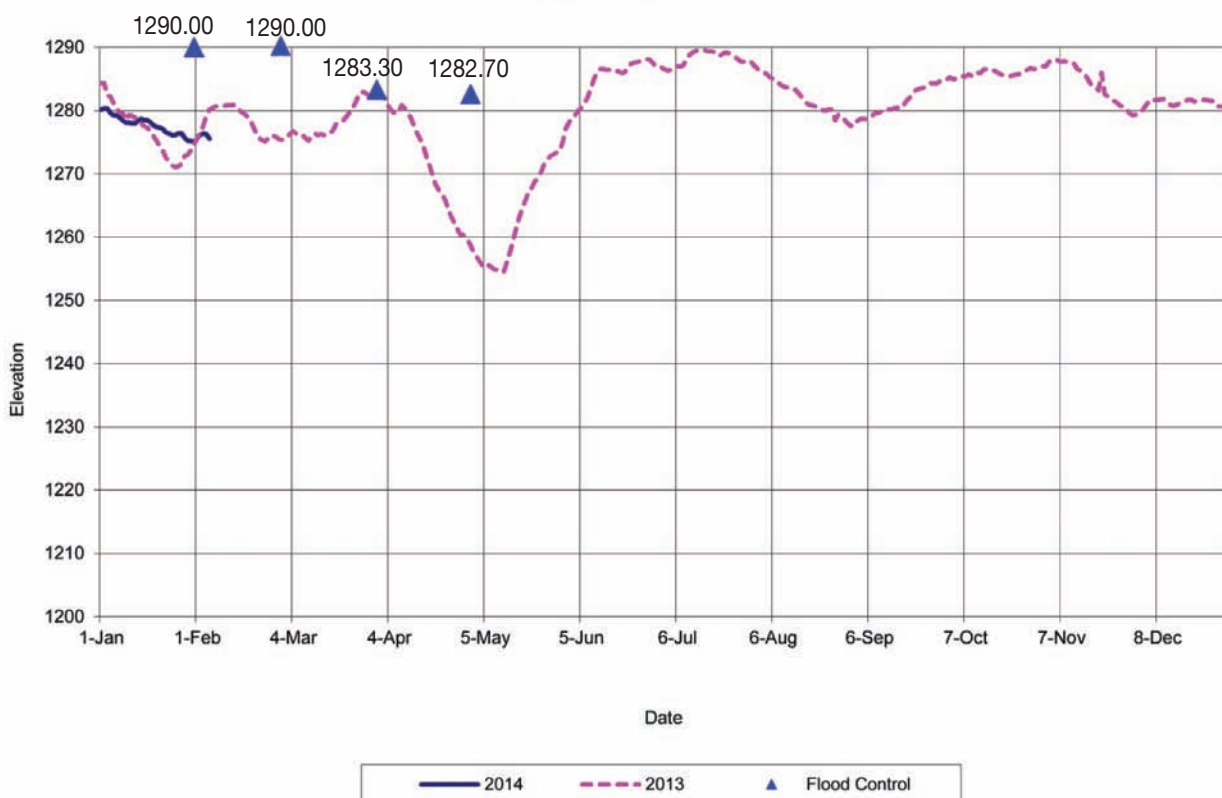
above sea level to accommodate the spring runoff. Typically this type of lake level is seen in August.

But, reports the Bureau of Reclamation, hold the phone; February has been a wet month. In particular, snow is accumulating in the Canadian Rockies, which is where most of the inflow to Lake Roosevelt comes from. Said Lynne Brougher, the public affairs officer at Grand Coulee Dam, "February has seen much more moisture and we anticipate the flood control elevations will drop with the March Water Forecast." Could it end up looking more like 2013? "We just don't know. The next forecast will be released the week of March 10th."

To track the Bureau's monthly forecast, go to www.lrf.org/lakeforecast.

To better understand the dynamics at play in the region, check out the new Inland Northwest Weather Blog by the National Weather Service. Pictures and graphs combined with easy to understand language make this a great resource for people of all ages. Go to <http://inlandnorthwestweather.blogspot.com>. 🌐

Lake Roosevelt Water Levels
2013-2014

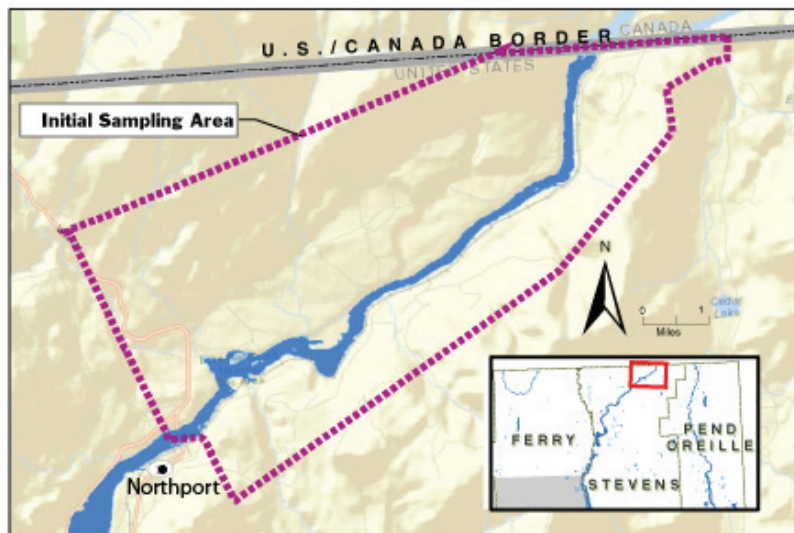


EPA sampling soil at homes near U.S. Canadian border

A fall, 2012 study by the Washington Department of Ecology found undisturbed soil samples with elevated levels of lead, arsenic and cadmium within two miles of the U.S./Canada border. As some of the contaminant concentrations found would be a human health concern if located near a residence, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) determined further investigation was needed. The map shows the area where additional EPA sampling will occur this spring and summer.

In January, EPA sent letters to owners of 513 properties in the sampling area inviting those with a residence on their property to have their soil sampled. For those interested, EPA will meet with them this spring to determine the best locations to take soil samples. EPA describes likely sampling locations as "... places close to your home, children's play areas, or produce gardens. We are especially interested in locations where children are most likely exposed to soil. "

Thus far, fifty one property owners have signed "access agreements" to have their soil tested. If contamination is found to be at or above a level of concern, EPA will work with the owner to remediate the problem. This includes the



possibility of removing the contaminated soil and replacing it with clean soil.

This work is being done as part of the Upper Columbia Remedial Investigation Feasibility Study (RIFS). For more information contact Kay Morrison. Morrison.kay@epa.gov, 1-800-424-4372 ext. 8321. 🌐

Research in Action, Sediment Sampling

In the fall of 2013, 1500 gallons of sediment were collected from 136 sites around the lake. This study will help determine if metals and other chemicals in sediments pose a risk to sediment dwelling bugs. 🌐



RI/FS 2014 Sampling and Report Status

Surface Water: After three rounds of sampling (completed in fall 2009, and spring- and summer- 2010) the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency (EPA) show Lake Roosevelt and the Upper Columbia water quality safe for swimming. Further, surface water concentrations for all metals (e.g., arsenic, cadmium, copper, lead, mercury, selenium, and zinc); and organics (e.g., PCBs, dioxins/furans and pesticides) are within limits protective of aquatic life. The RI/FS only looked at contaminants, not at bacteria; therefore, it is good practice not to drink water from the Columbia River without treating it first, as it may contain *Giardia* (which causes beaver fever).

Beach Sampling: Of the 43 beaches sampled since 2005, all but three are considered safe for recreational use. The exceptions are Bossburg Flat beach due to high lead levels; Evans Campground because of lead levels; and the “Swimming Hole” near Sheep Creek because of arsenic levels. As reported in EPA’s April, 2012 Beach Fact Sheet, “Because the screening levels for lead and arsenic are set very low, even the ‘Swimming Hole’ near Sheep Creek and the beach at Evans Campground are not likely to present significant risks to visitors who swim and play in these areas.” Copies of EPA’s fact sheet can be accessed online (http://www.epa.gov/region10/pdf/sites/ucr/beach_study_fact_sheet_april2012.pdf).

Lead concentrations at Bossburg Flat beach, however, have resulted in beach closure and the need for additional information.

Fish Tissue Sampling: The Washington Department of Health issued an updated fish advisory. Go to www.lrf.org/fishadvisory to view the advisory and public information materials.

Recreational Use Survey: A survey to assess where, when, what, how, and how long visitors utilize Lake Roosevelt and the Upper Columbia River began in October 2010 and completed in 2012. Over 2300 surveys were completed, with results being used to inform key sections of the human health risk assessment. Go to <http://www.ucr-rifs.com/assets/Docs/05-10-13FINAL-UCR-Rec-Survey-Summary-Report.pdf> to view report.

Sturgeon Toxicity Testing: Two different laboratory toxicity studies have been completed to assess how

exposure to contaminants in surface water and sediment may affect early life-stages of sturgeon. Reports continue to be under review and revision by EPA.

Sediment Sampling: Building on sampling done in 2005, additional toxicity sampling was conducted in the fall of 2013. Approximately 1500 gallons of sediment were collected from 136 sites for chemistry analysis; 69 of these samples were selected for toxicity testing and porewater chemistry. The scientific focus is to determine if there are unacceptable risks to benthic invertebrates (sediment dwelling bugs) associated with exposure to metals and other chemicals in sediments. A draft data summary report may be available in the fall of 2014.

Residential Soil Sampling: A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is under final review to conduct soil sampling at residences north of Northport and in the Columbia River Valley to the Canadian border (see article in this newsletter). The objective of this study is to generate data to help determine if there is unacceptable risk to people associated with exposure to metals in soils. EPA is in the process of receiving homeowner permission for sampling. EPA will be conducting site visits with interested participants this spring, and may begin sampling this summer.

Upland Soil Sampling: EPA is reviewing a Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) to gather information to help evaluate potential human health and ecological risks from exposure to metals from smelter emissions, windblown sediments and former flood plains on upland areas around the Upper Columbia River. Sampling work may begin in the summer of 2014.

Young America Mine/Bossburg Flats: A Quality Assurance Project Plan (QAPP) is under final review to determine if historic mining activities in this area are contributing contamination to nearby beaches. The current plan is to conduct sampling at sixteen locations between Young American Mine and Evans Campground Beach. Sampling is planned for this spring when the lake level is drawn down. 🌐

2013 LRF Conference has record turnout

The Lake Roosevelt Forum 2013 Conference, held November 19th and 20th, at the Davenport Hotel had record attendance. 268 people attended one or both days of the conference, a 12% increase from the previous conference.

Said Andy Dunau, the Forum's Executive Director, "One of the things we're most pleased about is continued increases in the number of community members from home owners, conservation, and recreational groups attending."

Another stat that captured Dunau's attention was that 60% of attendees were new when compared to the previous conference. "Part of why the conference is so important," added Dunau, "is that the faces of who's working or interested in issues are always evolving"

During the two day conference there were two general (plenary) sessions, fourteen concurrent (breakout) sessions and two lunch keynote speakers. Topics covered a diverse set of operational, water quality, fishery and community issues. Said Dunau, "We took the climate change conversation to the next level by asking 'so how are we managing for it;' and we had sessions with strong dialog around both Canadian and U.S. perspectives regarding Columbia River Treaty recommendations being sent to



the U.S. State Department." PowerPoint presentations and other conference information can be found on the Forum's web site at www.lrf.org/conf.

Another new feature that helped drive attendance was partnering with the Upper Columbia United Tribes (UCUT) to host a Non-native Invasive Fish Symposium held the day before the conference. Eighty three fish managers and policy makers engaged with national, regional and local experts to discuss the ecological, policy and economic challenges of non-native invasive fish. This segued

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Fish advisory signs a joint effort

The Washington State Department of Health partnered with community groups and federal, tribal, state and local agencies to develop fish advisory signs, flyers and brochures that are being distributed throughout the area.

Said Liz Carr, the DOH outreach coordinator, "Babies and children are most at-risk. Women who are or might become pregnant, nursing mothers, and children should carefully follow the state's meal recommendations to avoid or reduce exposure to chemical contaminants found in Upper Columbia fish."

According to guidance given by DOH, "Kokanee, rainbow trout, and lake whitefish are low in contaminants and

the best option from Grand Coulee Dam to the Canada border; they can be safely eaten 2-3 times a week.

Walleye, burbot, longnose sucker, mountain whitefish, and smallmouth bass are also good choices but should be limited to one meal a week. People who aren't in a high risk group can safely eat three times the amount recommended for all species of fish listed in this advisory."













You'll see the fish advisory signs at both tribal and National Park Service boat launches and campgrounds around the lake. In addition, flyers and brochures have been distributed at visitor centers, bait shops, gas stations, libraries and other locations in towns throughout the area. "The idea,"

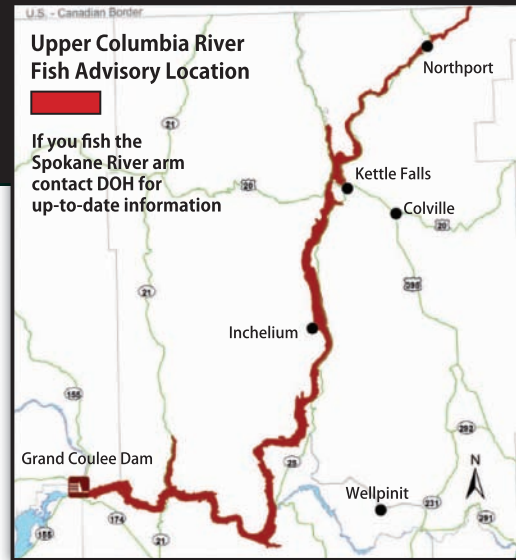
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Fish Advisory

Upper Columbia River/Lake Roosevelt

Fish are nutritious, but certain fish in the Upper Columbia River contain chemicals (mercury and PCBs) that can harm your health. **Babies and children are most at-risk. Women who are or might become pregnant, nursing mothers, and children should follow all of this advisory.** Everyone else should follow the largescale sucker advice, and also limit the amount they eat of other fish to no more than 3 times the amount recommended.

HEALTHY CHOICE		Meals per Week
Kokanee		3 meals per week
Lake Whitefish		2 meals per week
Rainbow Trout		
Canned (Light) Tuna added for comparison		For more healthy store-bought choices: www.doh.wa.gov/fish
Limit	OR	Meals per Month
Burbot		Eat only 4 meals per month of any combination of these 5 fish.
Longnose Sucker		
Mountain Whitefish		
Smallmouth Bass		
Walleye		
Caution	OR	Meals per Month
Largescale Sucker		Women of childbearing age and children: 2 meals per month Everybody else: 1 meal per week
Largemouth Bass		2 meals per month
DO NOT EAT		
Northern Pikeminnow		DO NOT EAT



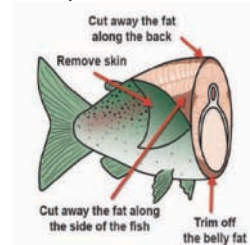
To reduce your risk, consider all the places you get fish from such as rivers, lakes, and grocery stores.

Example: If you eat 2 kokanee meals, it's safe to eat 1 serving of canned light tuna; no other fish should be eaten that week.

Preparing Fish the Healthy Way

Fish are part of a healthy diet. You can make it even healthier if you follow these tips. Some chemicals build up in the fat of fish and can be reduced if you prepare and cook fish correctly. Mercury cannot be reduced because it builds up in fish muscle (the fillet).

- Before cooking fish remove the skin, fat, and internal organs.
- Eat younger and smaller fish (within legal limits).



Serving Size



Adult
160 lb. = 8 oz.
uncooked fish



Child
80 lb. = 4 oz.
uncooked fish

Contact Information

Department of Health
Toll Free: 1-877-485-7316
www.doh.wa.gov/fish



DOH 334-305 May 2013 Fish illustrations © Joseph R. Tomelleri
Available in other formats for people with disabilities
1-800-525-0127 (TDD/TTY call 711).



Educational opportunities for kids plentiful



If you're a K-12 student in a school in the Lake Roosevelt area, odds are you've participated in the Lake Roosevelt Water Festival, Student Discovery Week or The River Mile. In 2013, over 1,000 students participated in one or more of these outreach activities that are led by federal, state, tribal and local agencies.

The common thread is a desire for students to interact and learn more about natural resources and the many, many people who devote their lives to their protection and enhancement for future generations.

Said Mitch Combs, the Washington Department of Fish and Wildlife Manager for the Sherman Creek Hatchery, "With over 15 years of experience putting on the Lake Roosevelt Water Festival, it is something both us and the community look forward to each fall. Each year we try to tweak it to make it a little better than the last."

In 1998, the Lake Roosevelt Forum started Student Discovery Week. Said Andy Dunau, the Forum's Executive Director, "We wanted to build on and complement what the Water Festival did. So while they invite kids to come





to Kettle Falls and to go through a number of activity stations, for Student Discovery Week upper elementary teachers pick one of seven “zones” to visit. Here, an agency will go in depth about a natural resource project.”

The most recent addition to the mix is The River Mile, which Janice Elvidge started as part of her work with the National Park Service. Here, students from K-12 classrooms adopt a one mile section of the Columbia River or tributary and utilize it as their real world laboratory where they work with park staff and scientists to collect, analyze, interpret and share watershed health data. Said Elvidge, “Currently, 36 schools and 1,616 students are participating; and we’re working on a grant to continue expanding the program.”

A key element of these educational outreach programs is promoting career opportunities. “The backgrounds of the natural resource managers and technical people are amazingly diverse,” commented Dunau. It’s a good day if a kid thinks to his or herself “I’d like to do that some day, that could be me.” 🌊



County Commissioners speak out on Columbia River Treaty

In a letter addressed to the Bonneville Power Administration and U.S. Army Corps of Engineers (the US Entity), the Eastern Washington Council of Governments (COG) asked the lead entities "... to coordinate the process and content of your review [of the Columbia River Treaty] with our local government members." The COG includes commissioner representation from Adams, Columbia, Douglas, Ferry, Grant, Lincoln, Okanogan, Pend Oreille, Stevens, and Whitman counties.

Coordination, notes the commissioners, is defined "... as a process including the duty that all federal agencies to the maximum extent consistent with federal law reach consistency between federal policy and local policy (43 USC Section 1712)." The commissioners go on to point out economic and environmental impacts on their communities of the treaty if it remains status quo or is changed, e.g.-- power generation, flood control, and eco-system based management.

Said Wes McCart, "We respect the public process that unfolded over the last couple of years, that said, counties aren't just the public. The lead entities are directed by federal law to coordinate specifically with us. So we requested additional meetings with the lead entities to meet this requirement." As stated in the COG letter, "... offering local officials the opportunity to participate

in the public process by providing public comment does not satisfy your duty to coordinate meaningfully with the governing bodies of local government through the formal government-to-government coordination process."

In a response to the COG, BPA and the Corps noted that the final treaty recommendation was sent to the U.S. State Department on December 13th, 2013. This represents their best effort to develop a regional recommendation. The State Department is now the lead to begin the federal policy review process to determine the future of the Treaty. The lead entities assured the commissioners that if the Department of State wishes further interactions with regional stakeholders, the COG will be notified. However, the BPA and Corps did leave open the prospect of meeting with the commissioners to further explain the background and general thought process of the regional recommendation.

Said McCart, "We are moving forward to meet with BPA and the Corps to help them understand coordination means government to government, that it did not happen, and work towards a relationship with the US Entity in yearly and future treaty concerns." McCart went on to explain that the COG is currently undertaking actions to contact the State Department and establish coordination with them regarding impacts of the Treaty and possible future Treaty negotiations. 🌐

Barnaby Creek Recovers spawning ground

CONTINUED FROM PAGE 1

inside and around the culverts to provide fish a place to rest behind as they push their way against the current. Material was also filled in the bottom of the culverts to simulate a natural riverbed. Extensive cut-off walls were built around the creek to protect the banks from erosion. Ferry County Public Works Department removed 20,000 cubic feet of fill to make way for the new fish passage.

Construction proved difficult, as heavy rainfall turned the banks into a muddy, unstable, and potentially treacherous worksite for tractors. Furthermore, rising water levels from dam operations meant workers had about two months to finish the project before they would be underwater.

Said, Bret Nine, the Colville Tribe Resident Fish Program Manager, "The project was very stressful, but very rewarding." Nine participated as the new culvert went

from an idea in 2004, to a funding request in 2008, to a precarious construction site in April 2011. In June 2011, he saw its successful completion. The finished product came just in the nick of time, as rising waters threatened to submerge the work in progress. In hindsight Nine was able to smile about the close call, recounting how workers won the race against time.

Although it's still too early for official data regarding the project's success, early indications are positive. Before construction was even complete, Nine saw rainbow trout beginning to make their way upstream. To jump-start the kokanee migration the spawning ground was recently stocked with 15,000 eyed kokanee eggs. Future egg plants will be based off performance of this group. As the project moves forward, optimism is high. 🌐

Spokane Tribe seeking compensation for effects of Grand Coulee Dam

Senator Maria Cantwell, who is Chairwoman of the U.S. Senate Indian Affairs Committee, authored and introduced legislation to bring the Spokane Tribe long-sought compensation for use of tribal land used to support hydropower generation at Grand Coulee Dam.

The committee approved S. 1448, which would establish a \$53 million trust fund for the tribe. Funds would be paid out over a number of years to support economic development, infrastructure and various types of educational, health, recreational and social welfare projects. In 1994, Congress approved similar legislation to settle litigation brought by the Colville Confederated Tribes.

An 1881 Executive Order gave the Spokane Tribe ownership of the bed and banks of the lower Spokane

River. When the reservoir behind Grand Coulee was created, lands above the original Spokane River banks up to elevation 1310 feet above sea level were brought under the management of the Bureau of Reclamation. As the new norm of reservoir (lake) conditions took hold, 4,000 acres of the tribe's land along the Columbia and Spokane rivers was flooded.

Said Senator Cantwell, "I'm hopeful that in this Congress this issue can finally be put to rest."

To become law, this legislation still needs to be approved by the full Senate and House of Representatives. In 2004 and 2006, legislation passed one but not both chambers of Congress. 🌐

Fish advisory signs a joint effort

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said Andy Dunau, Executive Director of the Forum, "is to underscore for visitors and residents alike that playing is good for you, but playing it safe is even better."

Said Carr, "The advisory group worked over a period of months to translate the scientific results of over 2,300 fish sampled in 2009 to plain talk language. DOH is really impressed with how diverse interests and expertise came together to work on messaging for the community. It's been a great partnership that serves people enjoying the lake very well."

Workgroup members include Citizens for a Clean Columbia, the Confederated Tribes of the Colville Reservation, the Spokane Tribe of Indians, the Lake Roosevelt Forum, the Lincoln County Health Department, the NE Tri County Health Department, the National Park Service, the U.S. Environmental Protection Agency, WA Department of Ecology, and WA Department of Health.

For more DOH information, including copies of signs, flyers and brochures, go to: www.lrf.org/fishadvisory 🌐

2013 LRF Conference has record turnout

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harmoniously with the major themes of the Lake Roosevelt Forum conference (climate change and Columbia River Treaty). Said Keith Kutchins, UCUT policy analyst, "The UCUT Resident Fish Committee identified the need to elevate this discussion because, frankly, non-native predators are making it harder and harder to protect and strengthen native fish populations. The Forum had the venue and experience to help us make it happen. Together, we synergistically wove together a diverse group that hope to make the fish symposium a regular conference feature."

Hosting the conference was made possible by grants and contributions from the Bonneville Power Administration, Washington Department of Ecology, Teck, and the Upper Columbia United Tribes. With their assistance, registration costs were kept to a minimum and scholarships were provided to assure all community and tribal members could attend.

Mark your calendars!! The next conference will be in April, 2015. Said Dunau, "Yes, we've already started planning." 🌐

Lake Roosevelt Forum

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