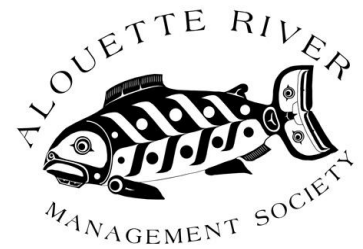


What's up at ARMS?



Alouette River Management Society

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Tel: 604-467-6401 Fax: 604-467-6478

Website: www.alouetteriver.org Email: arms@telus.net

Summer 2010

Upcoming Events

July 13

ARMS open house – Tour of native plants in Allco Park

Rivers Heritage Centre
1:00 to 4:00 pm

July 19 to 23

Wildlife Week

Children's Eco-camp
Rivers Heritage Centre
9:30 am to 3:30 pm

July 24 & 25

ARMS at Country Fest

Maple Ridge Fair
Grounds
10:00 to 8:00 pm & 10:00
to 6:00 pm

July 27

ARMS open house – Scavenger hunt

Rivers Heritage Centre
1:00 to 4:00 pm

August 3 to 6

Bugs and Slugs Camp

Rivers Heritage Centre
9:30 am to 3:30 pm

August 7

ARMS open house – Camp fire, stories and more

Rivers Heritage Centre
7:00 to 9:00 pm

September 26

Ridge Meadows Rivers Day

Rivers Heritage Centre

ARMS is active in investigation on the North Alouette By Elisabeth Chin

It has been more than a year since the Golden Eagle Group excavated and placed a pump on the bank of the North Alouette River and Maple Ridge resident, Jack Emberly, found over 100,000 dead fish in the vicinity. The Golden Eagle Group admitted to installing the pump and withdrawing 100,000 litres of water without a permit. They claim this was necessary to save their cranberry fields and they do not think they are responsible for the dead fish. Geoff Clayton, on the other hand, believes that the death of the fish was caused by a combination of silt in the river and lack of oxygen for the fish as a result of the pump. Emberly also alludes to the closeness of the excavation by the Golden Eagle group and the fish kills. He further postulated that this link might have been made if the Department of Fisheries

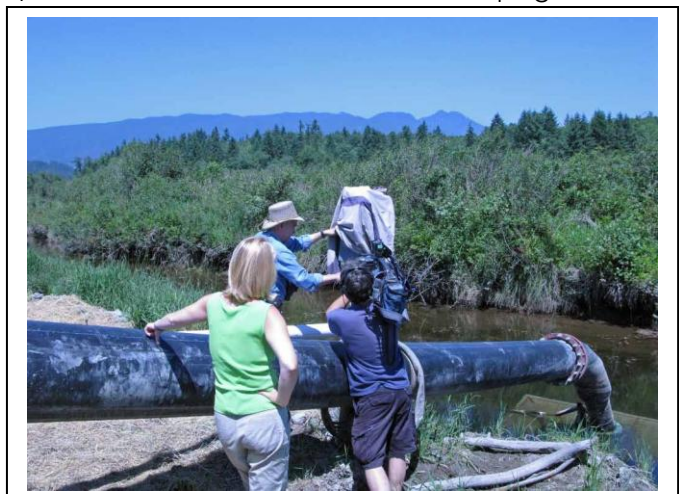
and Oceans (DFO) had acted in a more timely manner.

It took the Ministry of the Environment (MOE) over a month to visit the site and take the fish that Emberly collected; unfortunately, they were not able to make any conclusions about the samples. Conservation officers who took over the investigation eventually submitted a report to Crown Council in December 2009 and to date there has been no response.

Since the incident was reported, ARMS has

played a vital role in the protection of the North Alouette River. Through a grant from West Coast Environmental Law's Environmental Dispute Resolution Fund, ARMS hired environmental lawyer Mark Haddock. Haddock wrote to the MOE on January 27, 2010 on behalf of ARMS. In his report, he addressed concerns about enforcement of the Water Act, water management, and licensing issues. He asked for a review of water planning and enforcement of the Water Act before approving any further water licenses.

Cont'd on page 2



Geoff Clayton, ARMS Board co-chair with CBC news crew reporting of illegal water withdrawal and dead fish, Summer 2009.

ARMS is active in investigation on the North Alouette cont'd

Last month ARMS heard news that we had been approved for an extended grant from West Coast Environmental Law. Haddock believes this additional grant will help further investigation to "get the details to assess whether ARMS is satisfied with how the water licensing applications are being processed." He says it is necessary to "get to the bottom of how the Water Stewardship Division is treating these water licensing applications."

Emberly believes that "we have to make sure that no more licenses for water use are allowed to proceed. We have to recognize that we have made too many mistakes and don't have enough water to allow the current licenses to continue and must come to a compromise quickly." Clayton adds that they would like to "see Crown Council proceed with charges in order to clearly indicate that nobody is above the law. We want to see water use planning such as what they have developed in the

Okanagan – they have taken a blanket amount of the water and allocated a certain amount for residences, agriculture, the wine industry, the cattle industry, the forest industry, and cities and municipalities."

Clayton adds that "ARMS advocates that water be seen as a valuable resource and be treated as such. Water is the stuff of life for the environment we are trying to protect. It is a keystone issue."

In addition, he asked that the thirteen existing water applications be halted until the Golden Eagle Group water withdrawal incident is investigated. On March 31, 2010, Minister of the

Environment, Barry Penner, replied to the two requests, outlining firstly that water allocation planning would take place before further licensing decisions on the North Alouette River are made and secondly that the delay of processing the thirteen remaining water licenses is at the judgment of the Regional Water Manager under the Water Stewardship Division of the MOE. Emberly finds the delay in response and lack of concrete answers from the MOE "mindboggling, and frightening for the river, the fish, and the people of Maple Ridge."

For more information regarding these events please visit www.savethealouette.ca



View of the North Alouette main stem almost completely dewatered, November 2006



Site of excavation on the North Alouette, Summer 2009

Help protect the North Alouette

Currently, there are 13 pending water licence application on the North Alouette.

Unfortunately, the river is already being impacted by the current water licence holders. In addition, there are no rules or regulations on the timing of withdrawal and no requirements of licence holders to maintain a minimum river flow for fish, aquatic species and to meet the needs of ecosystems such as the Blaney bog.

ARMS' self-guided tour of Allco Park



Be sure to come to the Rivers Heritage Centre this summer and try our new self-guided tour of Allco Park. ARMS staff created a map of the park to highlight the many natural and historic features this green space has to offer. Walkers, outdoor enthusiasts, naturalists, explorers, and more will appreciate the educational experience.



Ridge Meadows Rivers Day, September 2009

Fraser sockeye a sustainable source of seafood?

It is true that the Fraser and Alouette Sockeye run this year seems to have improved compared to last year's dismal returns but proclaiming the run as a "sustainable source of seafood" seems hasty to say the least.

In 2001 all four British Columbian sockeye fisheries (Fraser, Skeena, Barkley Sound, Nass) applied for the Marine Stewardship Council's eco-label. This label requires that the fishery prove they meet three overriding principles. Principle 1 states that the fish stocks must be sustainable. Last year, only 13% of the estimated 10.5 million sockeye returned to the Fraser. The collapse resulted in an official commission established to report on the decline of the Fraser Sockeye. In addition, according to the David Suzuki Foundation, between

1999 and 2009, 70% of pre-season estimates have exceeded the actual return and in the last 11 years, 6 years have required the closure of the Fraser fishery. Principle 2 requires that the fishery minimizes environmental impacts i.e. "fishing operations should be managed to maintain the structure, productivity, function and diversity of the ecosystem on which the fishery depends". Two Fraser sockeye populations (Cultus and Sakinaw) are listed as endangered by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada. Within the reasons given for the designation, overexploitation from Fraser fishery catches is listed as the primary. The International Union for the Conservation of Nature also stated that "the most critically endangered sockeye runs are in British Columbia". The final

principal is that the fishery must be effectively managed. What could the label mean to the Alouette sockeye? There are genetically distinct populations of sockeye travelling up the Fraser, these populations are all harvested within the Fraser "mixed-stock" fisheries. Some of the stronger runs are able to withstand being fished but the smaller more fragile runs are likely to be greatly impacted. The label also deters the much needed support to protect, conserve and re-establish these smaller, genetically distinct runs. The Alouette sockeye run is still re-establishing. Last year only 45 adult sockeye returned to the Alouette, 54 in 2008 and while numbers seem positive for 2010, with over 67 sockeye returning to the Alouette, the run is far from sustainable.

Ridge Meadows Rivers Day – Top ten reasons to attend the festival

1. British Columbia's amazing natural heritage deserves a day of **celebration**
2. Live **music** all day long
3. **Barbeque**...yummy
4. Learn to **fish** with BC Drift Fishers and ARMS rainbow trout pond
5. **Raffle Items** - you won't want to miss your chance at the handcrafted picnic table
6. **Environmental displays** - local community groups will have interactive and environmental displays.
7. **Activities** for children and the young at heart – wooden fish painting, balloon animals, face painting and more.
8. Take a trip around Allco park with our new **self-guided tour**
9. **Beautiful location** - located among the big cedars of Allco park and along the banks of the south Alouette River
10. Two new additions to check-out are the new **green building** equipped with a green roof and rain collection system funded by the PSF and Home Depot and the ARMS **raingarden**.

**2010-2011
Board of Directors**

Geoff Clayton
Co-Chair

Gerry Miller
Co-Chair

Doug Stanger
Treasurer

Mike Ilaender
Director

Elizabeth Hancock
Director

Zale Hammren
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Carleigh Smart
Education Coordinator

Elisabeth Chin
Summer Intern



***"Through partnerships and education,
empower the community to take ownership and
responsibility of the natural environment"***

Join and Support the

Alouette River Management Society

If you would like to become a member or supporter of ARMS, please complete the following registration and return it by mail or drop it off at 24595 Alouette Road, Allco Park, Maple Ridge.

Name: _____

Address: _____

Phone: _____

Email: _____

Donation:

Amount \$_____ Yes, I would like a charitable receipt
(receipt are provided for donations exceeding \$25)

Annual Membership Type:

Individual - \$10

Corporate - \$100

Area of Interest:

Rivers Heritage Centre

Environmental Education

Watershed Projects

Native Plant Nursery

Stewardship Issues

Habitat Protection

Nature and Wildlife

Fish and Hatchery Projects

Urbanization Issues

Other: _____

Signature: _____

Date: _____