

2021 Fall Quarter

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Camera trapping crew members Doug Mitchell and Thomas Peters installing camera

CAMERA TRAPPING PROJECT

Camera trapping throughout the lower St'at'imc Territory is well underway. SER crew leads and newly hired Xa'xtsa Field Technicians are braving the elements to collect trail camera images of mesocarnivores, including Wolverines, for wildlife corridor presence/absence data. This project is part of a multi-year study and will provide important information to decision makers in the area.



SETON-PORTAGE PROGRAM.



L to R Becky Riley, Karlana Lord, Christ Laitinen, and Jeremy Van Woerden in the back beach seining.

Portage Creek Chinook returns has been declining for approximately two decades, with only 8 to 12 adults estimated in 2016. The current adult Chinook returns are likely insufficient to maintain the population. Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) anticipates that this population will become extinct over the next two generations (ten years) without intervention, resulting in the loss of a genetically unique salmon run. DFO staff from Tenderfoot Creek Hatchery, and fisheries technicians from St'át'imc Eco-Resources conduct brood stock collection activities annually from October 12th through October 31st, 7 days per week, 10–12-hour days which resulted in the third consecutive year of successful spawning of Portage Creek Chinook. St'át'imc Eco-Resources and Tenderfoot staff have taken a more active approach and implement a modified beach seine tactic. This involves a three-person operated raft deploying the tangle net around fish holding near the outlet of the lake, followed by walking the net downstream for 20 - 40 m. The net is then brought to shore and fish are rapidly removed from the net. Once caught, the fish are spawned, and take to Tenderfoot hatchery where they will incubate and rear for over a year. These Seton Portage yearling smolts are then trucked and transported back to Portage creek

in the spring and released. These fish get much higher survivals than in the wild, and therefore will have more adult Chinook return. This year, 2021, St'át'imc Eco-Resources and DFO spawned five females and eleven males and have about 20,000 eggs in incubation!

I am honored as a St'át'imc woman, to have the education and experience to build and increase the Chinook run in Seton / Shalalth. These communities are my relatives, friends, and neighbors from the other end of Seton Lake. This unique run is dwindling. With our efforts of brood stock capture, release of fry and smolts in the next few years we should see a difference. My personal goal is to keep helping to save the salmon so this run will become as strong as it once was. I would like many generations to come to be able to enjoy and depend on this Chinook run. -Rebecca Riley



Becky Riley, and an image of eggs being collected

INTRODUCING SER NEW SAFETY MANGER

Desiree Mortensen joined SER team in August 2021. She brings a wealth of safety knowledge to our company, and we are excited to have her on board

Desiree has worked in the Safety field for over 8 years both on civil road construction, BC Hydro

Power stations, BCH Interior-Lower Mainland Transmission Line Project Burk Mountain to Merritt BC, Stave Falls Spillway Gate Rehabilitation Project, and BCH Ruskin Dam Rehabilitation Mission BC.

Desiree has been working on our SAFE certification maintenance audit along with updating Safety documentation for our SER Safety program.

We welcome Desiree to our SER team.

SETON BEACH PROJECT



Doug Mitchell working alongside Skookum Yacht.

The Seton Beach Buoy line repair has been completed. The float line had previously taken a beating from the weather which had dislodged some buoys and broken the line. SER and the Skookum Yacht Repairs dive team worked together to re-position and stabilize buoy anchors and tie new lines while salvaging floats from the old line. If you like the cold, you can appreciate the new line when you jump in Seton Lake for a polar bear swim this Winter.



AS WHEN ENVIRONMENTAL SUPPORT FOR CAPITAL WORKS



SER Kyle Krahn, Field Biologist on site for the GM0399 BR1 Penstocks 1-4 Wildlife Assessment.

An environmental assessment was conducted on the BRG1 penstocks in Seton Portage to determine area use by target at-risk species and invasive plant material that could be impacted by the proposed brushing. The report write up will be complete in the next couple weeks.

Raymond Bob, SER field technician was on site, gaining valuable wildlife assessment processes and procedures with Triton specialist Dr. Margarete Dettlaff.



Doug Mitchell continues to visit the GM0248 Surge Tower project to conduct his environmental monitoring site visits and reports.

AS WHEN ENVIRONMENTAL FIELD OPERATIONS SUPPORT SERVICES

St'át'imc Eco-Resources Ltd. had provided Environmental Support for coastal Environmental Field Operations with multiple site visits during the busy season for Lajoie, and Terzaghi Dams. Working with BC Hydro, SER obtained required Lajoie local component which allows independent site visits under our current contract.

WATER USE PLAN AND MODIFIED OPERATION UPDATES

This year's WUP & MOD projects are currently transitioning from field work to data analysis and scale mounting in the office. More information and pictures to come in the next newsletter! In the meantime, the Lower Bridge River Water-Use-Plan (WUP) Workshop is scheduled for Wednesday, December 8 from 9 am – 2 pm. Make sure to mark the date!"

SER GALLERY



Skookum Yacht crew working together to anchor buoys at Seton beach



R to L Becky Riley, Chris Laitinen, Jeremy Van Woerden, Jordan Uittenbogaard, and Karlana Lord.



Douglass member Jake Pete prepping camera for installation.



Wes Payne in the field for BRGMON 4 project



Doug Mitchell, Seton Beach project



Ronald James, and Wesley Payne Angling and tagging salmon for BRGMON 3- Great Teamwork!



Douglas members Llyod McMartin and Cooper Linger installing scent box for the camera trapping project.



Raymond Bob and Kyle Krahn gather field equipment for Stock Assessment for BRGMON 1 project



Becky Riley enjoying her experience on the Seton-Portage program.



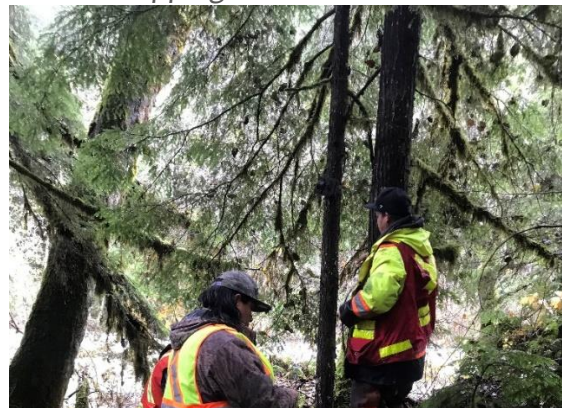
Doug Mitchell coordinating with Skookum to anchor Buoys at Seton beach



Douglas crew member Lloyd McMartin on site for camera trapping.



Skookum Yacht dive crew, installing the safety line at Seton Beach



Douglas camera crew members in the field deploying cameras.



Jeff Snee, BRGMON 7 & 8 Project Manager training Christina Shaw and Cliff Leslie on Data Entry



Caron White of InStream Fisheries Research sitting with Becky Riley for BRGMON4 Data training



SHARING VIDEOS

Highlighting the response efforts over the last several months are now live on the DFO's YouTube channel.

- **An Ever-Changing Landscape:**
https://youtu.be/1L8aPxhJD_o
- **Alternative Fish Passage Systems:**
https://youtu.be/u2_w4SqDe5M
- **The Science Behind Monitoring:**
https://youtu.be/2wcX_LeolQo
- **Emergency Salmon Conservation Enhancement:**
<https://youtu.be/l4IUtp4Fv7U>
- **2020 Fish Wheel Operations:**
<https://youtu.be/uPoKHOMlhZo>

Stock Assessment trail BRGMON 1

CONTACT US:

St'át'imc Eco-Resources Ltd.

PO Box 103 | # 10 Scotchman Road, Lower suite, Lillooet, B.C, VoK 1V0

(250) 256-2456 | info@statimceco.com | webpage: www.statimceco.ca

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