



The **SSBC AGM** is January 23<sup>rd</sup> at the BCEGU office in Langley, (8555 198 A Street, Langley, BC, V2Y 0A9) at 10:00am. Guest Speakers will be discussing planned work on Squamish River, as well as BCIT students talking about work being done in the Seymour River Estuary.

**AGENDA**

- 10:00 a.m. - Opening & Welcome (President B. Braidwood)
  - Introductions
- 10:15 a.m. - 1st Speaker
- 11:00 a.m. - Break
- 11:15 a.m. - 2nd Speaker
- 12:00 - Break
- 12:30 p.m. - Business of Society:
  - President's Report
  - Treasurer's Report
  - Membership Report
  - Nomination Committee-elections
- 1:00 p.m. - Adjournment

Hello All,

Happy New Year

It's been a busy six months since our last update, and we are excited to bring you this partial and brief update of our recent activities.

Once again this past November, the Steelhead Society of BC hosted its annual fundraising event. Every year the popularity of this event has grown, with the financial success of this year being the best on record. The SSBC would like to thank everyone for attending and supporting this event. Our donors stepped up huge again this year with some unbelievable prizes being donated. We are greatly appreciative of everyone's efforts and support that continues to make this event such a success. Lastly, we would like to thank our auctioneer Brian Babcock for entertaining us in the live auction.

Rain events this past summer have created a mess on a massive scale in the upper reaches of the Squamish River. The spawning complex at Shovelnose Creek was originally constructed over 20 years ago by the SSBC and other partners to help replace the lost spawning and rearing habitat due to a

massive flood event that happened in the 1980's. Studies show that Shovelnose Creek complex accounts for a high percentage of upper Squamish steelhead and losing this habitat would be disastrous for the fish. Several trips were made by SSBC directors as well as Provincial and DFO employees to evaluate the site and to develop a plan of action to rebuild this critical steelhead spawning tributary. A plan has now been laid and to stretch our dollars with "in kind work" being offered. The SSBC is prepared to front the cost of the project initially, simply to allow for faster action of this project. We will be seeking other funding partners. This project will be a multi-year, multi-phase and the SSBC will continue to play a lead role. Dave Harper, a Director with the SSBC, will be presenting some of the details of this project at the SSBC AGM on the 23<sup>rd</sup> of January.

Some other things that the SSBC has been involved with over the last six months:

- The SSBC donated \$2500.00 to Skeena Wild to aid them in their activities that are important to the preservation of wild Skeena Steelhead and Salmon stocks.
- The SSBC wrote letters to DFO expressing concerns regarding the commercial Pink Salmon fishery in Howe Sound this past summer. This fishery commenced with the managers having no real idea of the run size as there was no comprehensive stock evaluation being done other than estimating the run based on extrapolating numbers from out migrating fry from the fry traps on the Cheakamus and considering catch per unit effort of the commercial fleet during the fishery. That's a bit like driving down a busy street backwards and after arriving at your destination, doing a body count. The fishery was shut down after only a few days due to several issues including non-compliance of stipulations regarding the fishery.
- SSBC attended a meeting in Spences Bridge regarding the state of Thompson River Steelhead.
- We had representation at the Dean River Advisory Board meetings.
- Directors have been involved with meetings regarding the Seymour River rock slide that has completely blocked Salmon and Steelhead migration.
- The SSBC has continued to attend Sport Fish Advisory Board meetings.
- We donated money to the purchase of land on the Salmon River (Vancouver Island) estuary by the Nature Trust of BC. This land purchase was successful in securing land keeping it safe from any kind of development.

Below is an update from our Northern Branch Chair Troy Peters

The Northern Branch has been busy this Summer and Fall. Starting with this Summer, we conducted minnow trapping on stranded fry and smolts on the Copper River as part of an evaluation program. Minnow trapping was also conducted on a slough by the Exstew boat launch. It was decided to try to resolve the issue of stranding at the slough at Exstew to prevent it from stranding fry and smolts in the

future. We have been working with DFO to come up with a plan for this. Monitoring equipment has been installed and more will be done in the Spring.

BC Hydro listened to us and other stakeholders and decided not to cut any old growth timber in the construction of the Kitimat-Terrace transmission project where it will cross the Lakelse River. Instead, they chose an almost 500 meter span. We continue to work with them in regards to fish habitat along the line.

We held an information session in Smithers and it was well attended with some great ideas that came out of it. The Smithers committee continues to meet and work on these ideas. Some of which include signage to educate anglers. We are working to get a catch and release study done with world renowned Dr. Andy Danylchuk.

We worked with Skeena Wild in their support of Lelu Island and their opposition to Petronas LNG.

We continue to participate in DFO's SFAC/SFAB consultation progress. Meetings were attended in Smithers, Terrace and Prince Rupert. We submitted a proposal to increase fines for violations and it passed local and regional committees and will go to main board in Richmond in February.

Membership has continued to grow on a steady basis. We had some Northern Branch branded swag made up and it sold well. Another order has been made.

We continued to pursue education of anglers. We made a poster up with fish ID and fish handling ethics. We printed 10000 copies and distributed them to tackle vendors in the north to print fishing licenses on the back of. A digital copy that was posted on the SSBC Facebook page had over 12000 views and was shared many times. We will do this again this year.

We look forward to another year of working with all friends and fishers of steelhead in the north.

Cheers,

Troy Peters NB SSBC Chair

The Comox branch continues to be active as well. The following are the minutes of a recent meeting outlining some recent branch activities.

Chair Larry Peterson

Treasurer: Nick Strussi

Third signer: Otto Winnig

Puntledge - a. need FLNRO involvement in side channel upgrades to include steelhead

b. need to maintain closure for 75m below Powerhouse but open rest of river down to hatchery fence

c. have asked Mike McCulloch to attend either Jan.28 or Feb.25 meeting

Oyster a. need to protect Woodhus Creek

b. need to guarantee summer rearing water in the upper mainstem

Salmon a. logging near river is within compliance guidelines

b. need to check logging next to river bank on the Memecky

a. need to monitor BCHydro progress on Salmon River diversion

Quinsam -- need for a pilot project to produce some science of our own

a. downstream smolt counts have begun

b. adult spawner counts need to begin

c. smolt augmentation program needs to begin (numbers to be determined )

d. fed fry program needs to begin

Next meetings -- Jan. 28 ( pay \$30 dues ) and Feb.25

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We hope to see you all at the AGM on January 23. Swag and memberships will be available for purchase at the door. Our next membership newsletter is due out in June 2016.

Follow us on Facebook and our website: <http://www.steelheadsociety.org/>

Thank you for the continued support that allows us to do the work in support of wild steelhead and salmon in BC