

58 km. TALCHAKO FISH ACCESS PROJECT

Objective: The objective was to restore access for salmonids into and out of a 4.5 ha. pond impounded by a relic beaver dam.

FRBC / MELP Region: Pacific Region / Region 5

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Proponent: International Forest Products Ltd.

FIA Project Number: 6304 002, Mid Coast TSA 19

Watershed / Stream: Bella Coola River Watershed / 58 km. Talchako Creek (not gazetted)

Location: The Talchako River flows northward in the Coast Mountains to join with the Atnarko River which flows westward from the Fraser Plateau. The two rivers join to form the Bella Coola River which drains into North Bentinck Arm. The construction site is 52 km. upstream of the Bella Coola River estuary.

Introduction: The relic beaver dam which impounds the 58 km. Talchako Creek was significantly damaged during a Nov. / 04 rain event. A site visit by WLAP and the author determined that seasonal flow would not flow through the exit channel but would seep through the dam precluding fish access and exit. Before the flood the impoundment was approximately 7 ha. After the flood the water level had dropped by 40 cm., decreasing the pond area by at least 2.5 ha. The pond has a resident population of Cutthroat trout and Dolly Varden Char and is valuable rearing habitat for juvenile coho.

Assessments and Prescriptions: "Sediment Source Inventory, Stream Channel Assessment, and Fish Habitat Assessment : Lower Bella Coola River Watershed", Summit Environmental Consultants Ltd., 1997.
"Talchako River Offchannel Fish Habitat Assessment", Mid Coast Aquatics, 1998.

Rehabilitation Work: Four 10 m. sections of the beaver dam were identified to be the most porous and suitable to be repaired. A site for a fish ladder was identified and a water level which would be achievable was determined. A 5.5 m fish ladder was prefabricated using 4" X 8" cedar planks and was transported near to the construction site via an old skidder road on an ATV trailer. The four sections of the dam to be repaired were cleared of debris and black plastic sheeting was laid against the dam and 2 m. out from the base of the dam. The plastic was secured to the dam using vegetative staking (willow and Red Osier Dogwood) and river rock was used to secure the plastic to the bottom of the pond. All supplies were transported near to the work site using an ATV and trailer and then carried by hand to each site. The rock was available adjacent to the Talchako FSR 500 m. from the work site. The fish ladder was assembled on site, situated such that the water level would raise 15 cm. before water flowed into it as melt water flow increases. High water spill-ways were constructed at two locations to protect the fish ladder from high water events. To prevent erosion the spill-ways were lined with geotextile.

Cost Summary:	Prescriptions and Stakeholder Consultation_____	\$ 400.00
	Fish Ladder Construction Materials_____	\$ 730.00
	Truck and ATV with Trailer and Saw_____	\$ 1,410.00
	Labour and Supervision_____	\$ 4,776.00

Total _____ \$ 7,316.00

Outputs: A total of 5.5 ha of pond has been made accessible to salmonids.

Production Estimates: Using a production biostandard of .6 coho smolts / m² there is potential that 27,000 coho smolts may inhabit the pond. The pond also supports a spawning cut throat trout population.

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