

Peninsula Streams Society
9860 West Saanich Road
North Saanich BC, V8L 4B2

Charitable Status # 865001457RR0001

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Peninsula Streams Moves Ahead with the \$800,000 Millstream Fish Ladder Project. Coho Salmon and Cutthroat Trout will soon have access to an additional seven km of habitat in Millstream Creek.

This summer, Peninsula Streams Society (PSS) is working with the Goldstream Volunteer Salmonid Enhancement Society volunteers and others to create a “fishway” that will allow fish to move up to and through a large culvert under Atkins Road near Mill Hill Regional park. This fishway will consist of 14 step-pools up to the culvert and 12 steel baffles within it. The baffles will aid fish passage through the culvert, and concrete will improve the culvert’s longevity.

In early March, several trees were removed and native plants were salvaged to create site access for equipment. A minimum of four trees will be replanted for each one removed and the site will be replanted with native species in the fall. Fishway construction is scheduled to begin in mid-June, but the timing is weather-dependent to mitigate any ecological risk downstream. During construction, there may be some traffic disruptions along Atkins Road at Mill Hill Regional Park, and public access to this area of the park may be restricted.

This project was originally set to proceed in 2018 but fell short of construction funds due to other development pressures. More than 80% of the funds have now been secured, and the Society continues to fundraise for engineering, biological and other support costs. Despite these increased costs and the Covid-19 pandemic, PSS moves ahead with this project and is committed to meet their fundraising target in order to help recover a keystone species on our coast. PSS expects that on a strong return year, upwards of 3000 more coho will return to spawn as a result of this project.

Coho Salmon stocks have been impacted by a long history of fishing pressure, changes in prey availability and oceanic conditions, and the degradation and pollution of freshwater habitats. Expanding and enhancing spawning and juvenile rearing habitat for salmon will help recover populations of some of B.C.’s most iconic species, and highlights their resilience in response to restoration and conservation initiatives. By working with local volunteers, PSS helps to foster community-based stewardship and spread public awareness of salmon conservation and threats to their recovery. Opening up habitat that was previously inaccessible is significantly more effective than restoring degraded

habitat. PSS Executive Coordinator Ian Bruce notes that "...major funding support from BCSRIF and the Pacific Salmon Foundation has made this project possible this year".

This project is funded and supported by the B.C. Salmon Restoration & Innovation Fund (DFO/BC), B.C. Gaming-Capital Project Grant, Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF), Town of View Royal, Goldstream Volunteer Salmon Enhancement Association, Ralmax Group Holdings Ltd., Victoria Fish & Game Protective Association, Esquimalt Anglers, Market on Millstream, Rotary Club of Westshore, and Victoria Golden Rods and Reels.

For more information on the project or to donate, visit <https://peninsulastreams.ca/millstream-fishway-project> or contact the Society at PeninsulaStreams@gmail.com; tax receipts issued for donations.

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