

Yukon River Panel Restoration and Enhancement Fund

2015 Near-Term Priorities

The Yukon River Panel has developed priorities for effective use of its Restoration and Enhancement (R&E) Fund. These are described in detail in the *Yukon River Panel Restoration and Enhancement Fund for Yukon River Salmon - Budget Priorities Framework 2007*, which identifies seven categories of projects (sometimes referred to as “envelopes”) required to advance the R&E objectives involving Yukon River salmon stocks of Canadian origin.

The seven categories are:

1. Conservation
2. Restoration
3. Enhancement
4. Stewardship
5. Viable Fisheries
6. Communications
7. Administration

In the Budget Priorities Framework 2007 the categories are identified as “Level One” and are further broken down into two other levels (or topics) resulting in a list of associated “Management Needs”. In March 2014 the Yukon River Panel renewed its key Near-Term priorities to focus on the following areas of interest.

Applicants with proposals for projects that address purposes outside the Near-Term Priorities are welcome to submit Project Concepts, but are cautioned to carefully weigh their costs of proposal preparation against the stiff competition they will face.

CONSERVATION

Harvest

1. **Management Need:** Expedite strategies that will facilitate the timely collection and distribution of the most reliable harvest data.
 - The timely collection and distribution of stock specific harvest estimates is one of the highest priority needs under harvest of stocks in the Conservation envelope. It is important to know what has been harvested in-season, to be able to manage harvests so that the total drainage-wide harvest of Canadian-origin salmon does not exceed the Total Allowable Catch (TAC) and that each party’s harvest remains within the agreed upon harvest share of the TAC.

Escapement Studies

2. **Management Need:** Monitor escapements to key salmon spawning streams.
 - Implement Chinook and chum salmon stock escapement monitoring projects on selected Canadian tributaries for use in reconstructing Canadian origin runs.

Note: Those interested in advancing proposals under this priority should do so in consultation with Fisheries and Oceans Canada (Yukon Transboundary Rivers (Whitehorse)) staff.

Habitat

3. **Management Need:** Locate and document salmon spawning locations throughout the Yukon River drainage.
 - Collect and assess baseline data on physical parameters such as temperature, discharge, spawning reach, lat/longs and conditions, as well as other spawning and rearing habitat characteristics.

Note: Chinook salmon and Porcupine River Chum salmon habitat being the priority.

RESTORATION

Stocks

The Budget Priorities Framework 2007 includes a four-step process for accomplishing restoration of depleted stocks:

- (i) identifying stocks that are depleted or are facing a known limit to their production;
- (ii) assessing the feasibility of restoring the stock;
- (iii) conducting the restoration; and,
- (iv) evaluating the effectiveness of the restoration project. This Near-Term priority addresses the first of the four steps.

Implementation

4. **Management Need:** Identify depleted stocks or limits to production and identify candidate stocks or systems for stock restoration.
 - Compile information (historical data, traditional ecological knowledge, conservation concerns or habitat impacts) supporting the development of a restoration plan. (Areas of interest: Porcupine chum, and Klondike, Southern Lakes and upper Stewart Chinook)

Note: Information would include numbers of fish, impacts, and investigations as to whether or not the circumstances that lead to the degradation of the stock still exist.

Habitat

To restore impaired spawning and rearing habitat, the Budget Priorities Framework 2007 includes a four-step process:

- (i) identifying potential spawning and rearing habitat restoration sites;
- (ii) assessing the feasibility of and planning for habitat improvement/restoration;
- (iii) conducting the habitat improvement/restoration; and,
- (iv) evaluating the effectiveness of the restoration project. This Near-Term priority addresses the first of those four steps.

Implementation

5. **Management Need:** Identify potential spawning and rearing habitat restoration sites.
 - Assess, evaluate, and document current conditions of salmon spawning and rearing habitat within their historical range to determine areas where salmon access should be restored.

Note: Chinook salmon habitat being the priority.

COMMUNICATIONS

Outreach and Information Sharing

6. **Management Need:** Conduct public outreach and education projects to involve people who fish on the river, their communities, and their youth, to increase their desire to maintain and protect salmon stocks and habitat.
 - Increase the use of public outreach and education projects to build support for maintaining and protecting salmon stocks and habitats. These types of projects are companions to stewardship projects, which are conducted primarily in Canadian Yukon River communities.

NOTE
***PRIORITY CONSIDERATION WILL BE PROVIDED FOR
2015 PROJECT PROPOSALS THAT DEMONSTRATE
LOCAL COMMUNITY INVOLVEMENT OR LOCAL PARTNERSHIPS
(IN PARTICULAR FIRST NATIONS).***