

Collaborative Recovery of Bull Trout and Rainbow Trout in the Salmo River Watershed

J.S. Baxter¹ and G. Nellestijn²

¹BC Hydro. 601 18th Street, Castlegar, B.C., V1N 4G7, < james.baxter@bchydro.com >, (250) 365-4551

²Salmo Watershed Streamkeepers Society, Box 718, Salmo, B.C., V0G 1Z0. < gerry@streamkeepers.bc.ca >

The Salmo River is the largest Canadian tributary to the Pend d'Orielle River, and the watershed supports small populations of bull trout (*Salvelinus confluentus*) and rainbow trout (*Oncorhynchus mykiss*) that are at conservation minimums. Since 1997, BC Hydro has collaborated with other regulatory agencies, compensation programs, industry, a regionally based fisheries partnership, a local stewardship group, and the US Forest Service to ensure the effective monitoring and persistence of these populations. The projects that have been undertaken include population monitoring, habitat restoration, and education. The advantages of this widely based partnership include increased leverage for funding of projects, a larger pool of individuals to ensure projects could be completed, the involvement of professionals to ensure projects are technically sound and scientifically defensible, and the promotion of fisheries values within the community. A summary of the projects that have been completed, and a discussion of the advantages and challenges of this collaborative effort, will be outlined.