

UFFCA Proposed Endako Weir Engagement Plan

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This document gives a top-level summary of the community engagement planned as part of the Endako Weir permit application submitted by the Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance (UFFCA).

Background

Salmon in BC are facing declining runs. A contributor to this decline is lower flows in streams and rivers during spawning season due to climate change. There is a subpopulation of chinook that spawns in the gravel beds where Shovel Creek empties into the Endako River. As with so many other streams and rivers in BC, fluctuations in the Endako River's flow sometimes leave no water for these chinook to swim through on their way to these gravel beds.

Since the 1990s the Upper Fraser Fisheries Conservation Alliance has been developing a plan to reduce fluctuations in the Endako river's flow by partially constricting the outflow from Burns Lake with a passive weir constructed of rip rap.

Hydrological models show that the weir will stabilize water flow in the Endako River allowing these chinook to return to their ancestral spawning channels and keep fertilized eggs submerged during incubation. Combined with the genetic conservation work done by the UFFCA through their hatchery program, the weir will contribute to giving these fish a chance to rebound from the brink of extinction.

Engagement Process and Outcomes

The following table indicates the three groups to be engaged in order of priority, process for the engagement, and the anticipated outcomes.

Group	Engagement Process	Engagement Outcomes	Timeframe
First Nations in the Region	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meetings with each Chief and Council via video conference.Continued communication re. construction process and completion.	<ul style="list-style-type: none">First Nations in the region support the construction of the weir.Band Council Resolution supporting the Endako Weir.	May 2021
The Village of	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Meeting with the Village	<ul style="list-style-type: none">Burns Lake Mayor and	May 2021

Burns Lake	<p>Mayor and Council via video conference.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Continued communication re. construction process and completion via email. 	<p>Council are aware of the benefits of the weir, potential impacts, and likelihood of risks in the case of weir failure.</p> <ul style="list-style-type: none"> Feedback about the weir is collected and where necessary incorporated into risk mitigation of the weir's operation. 	
Burns Lake Residents (including Regional District lakeshore residents)	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Information about the weir and a survey for local residents are posted to the UFFCA website. Brochures are distributed in local community hubs (libraries, churches, cafes, municipal offices) that outline the project and include a link to the survey. Buoy and sign placed at Radley Beach Park. 4 scheduled meetings with residents via video conference. Collection of feedback on the weir, and distribution of amalgamated feedback to participants Continued communication re. construction process and completion via email. Results from engagement and the survey are publicized via social media and local media outlets. 	<ul style="list-style-type: none"> Residents are aware of the benefits of the weir, potential impacts on their properties, and likelihood of risks in the case of weir failure. Feedback about the weir is collected and where necessary incorporated into risk mitigation of the weir's operation. 	June 2021

Rights-holding First Nations in the Region

Engagement with regional First Nations will focus on the restoration of chinook habitat, which contributes to their ability to meaningfully exercise their S. 35 Aboriginal Rights. Meetings are being planned with the Leadership of:

- Lake Babine Nation
- Office of the Wet'suwet'en Hereditary Chiefs
- Nee Tahi Buhn Indian Band
- Stellat'en First Nation
- Ts'il Kaz Koh First Nation (Burns Lake Band)
- Wet'suwet'en First Nation

Concerns of these First Nations will be noted and incorporated where applicable into the weir permit, construction, and management plans. First Nations will also receive regular updates on weir permitting, construction, and management via email.

Each of these meetings will present Chiefs and Councils with a draft Band Council Resolution supporting the project. Hereditary Chiefs will receive a draft letter of support. Given that most of the First Nations being engaged are also members of the UFFCA, we anticipate timely signing of these BCRs.

Village of Burns Lake

Engagement with Burns Lake Mayor and Council will focus on providing information about the project, focusing on:

- The importance of conserving chinook, and how the weir will contribute to this goal
- Any potential impacts of the weir on shoreline in the village
- Likelihood of risks in the case of weir failure

Depending on the timing of this engagement, results of previous engagements will be shared. Mayor and Council will receive a short pamphlet on the weir, and be directed to the UFFCA website for more information. Feedback from this meeting will be incorporated where possible into the weir permit, construction, and management plans. Mayor and Council will receive regular updates on weir permitting, construction, and management via email.

Burns Lake Residents (including Regional District lakeshore residents)

Residents of Burns Lake and Regional District lakeshore residents will be made aware of the Endako Weir project through:

- Pamphlet distribution in high-traffic areas of Burns Lake linking to UFFCA website
- A buoy and sign placed at Radley Beach Park indicating changes to water levels
- Facebook advertising targeted to the area linking to UFFCA website
- Postcards distributed to lakeshore residents
- An informational webinar for the general community

- A dedicated section on the UFFCA website
- Media relations in the area

Links on print and digital materials will point to a short survey collecting information on perspectives, values, and priorities of the general public. The website will also include links to register for the webinars.

4 online video conference meetings (webinars) will be scheduled for residents to attend. Engagement with this group is focusing on providing information about the project.

These meetings will focus on:

- The importance of conserving chinook, and how the weir will contribute to this goal
- Any potential impacts of the weir on their properties
- Likelihood of risks in the case of weir failure

Feedback from meetings with residents will be incorporated where possible into the weir permit, construction, and management plans. Participants in the webinars will receive regular updates on weir permitting, construction, and management via email.

Proposed Public Engagement Scheduling

The 4 webinars will be broken into 2 topics:

1. Weir design and engineering
2. Chinook conservation on the Endako

We propose to hold the webinars on the following schedule:

Sunday	Monday	Tuesday	Wednesday	Thursday	Friday	Saturday
May 30	May 31	June 1	June 2 5:30-6:30pm Weir Design	June 3 5:30-6:30pm Weir Design	June 4	June 5
June 6	June 7	June 8	June 9 5:30-6:30pm Chinook on the Endako	June 10 5:30-6:30pm Chinook on the Endako	June 11	June 12

This should allow residents to attend the webinar they are most interested in, and the duplication should allow for those who are unavailable one night to attend the other.