

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
August 4, 2016

Working Together to Grow the Fishing Tourism in BC

(Kamloops, BC) - A new fishing tourism sector marketing initiative has been launched under a partnership between the BC Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association (BCFROA), Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC (FFSBC), and Sport Fishing Institute of BC (SFI), supported by Destination BC's Co-operative Marketing Partnership Program.

The initiative will join together all of the fishing sector tourism-related stakeholders in one collaborative effort to market BC as a world-class fishing destination. BC's tourism industry is experiencing a resurgence. Revenues have grown by more than 37 per cent in the last decade. In 2014, tourism generated \$14.6 billion in revenue, a 5.1 per cent increase over 2013.

Fishing tourism is one of BC's pioneering tourism sectors and continues to be a key economic driver for rural and coastal communities. Recent studies indicate that more than 400,000 annual fishing licence holders produce \$936 million in annual sales and contribute \$144 million to the province's gross domestic product. The sport fishery is now the single largest economic driver of all BC fisheries.

The new initiative is intended to bring together BC's fishing tourism sector stakeholders, both freshwater and tidal water to generate greater marketing impact, raise the profile of the sector and increase the number of anglers in BC.

Better alignment of marketing messages and improved effectiveness of investments has attracted participation from a wide array of partners, including freshwater and saltwater fishing resorts, angling guides, charter operators and community and sub-regional destination marketing organizations from across the province.

This project will also align the fishing tourism marketing strategies with provincial and regional tourism strategies, including BC's refreshed *Super, Natural British Columbia*® brand.

The past few years have seen positive growth in tourism throughout most regions of BC. Fishing tourism stakeholders are well positioned to invest in a promotional initiative that will highlight BC as a world-class fishing destination.

Quotes:

"Through the Co-operative Marketing Partnerships Program we are able to expand the reach of BC's dynamic tourism brand and support the delivery of remarkable experiences for travellers, which will ultimately encourage repeat visitation. This unique partnership with the BC Fishing Resorts and Outfitters Association, the Sport Fishing Institute and the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC is truly what our Program is all about and will encourage collaboration and innovation at the community and business level." – *Marsha Walden, CEO, Destination BC*

"BC has some fantastic fishing opportunities and it's great to see our industry partners working together to maximize the impact of marketing our beautiful province as a world-class fishing destination. This kind of collaboration encourages more visitors to come to BC, which in turn supports our businesses and keeps our economy diverse, strong and growing." - *Shirley Bond, Minister of Jobs, Tourism and Skills Training and Minister Responsible for Labour*

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

July 25, 2016

Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC Celebrates 200,000 Learn to Fish Participant

The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC has been introducing anglers to freshwater fishing through the Learn to Fish Program since 2006. As the program celebrates 10 years of introducing people to their passion for angling, they also welcomed their 200,000th participant to the program. On Friday, July 22, the 200,000th Learn to Fish participant joined the program at Maple Bay Amphitheatre in Cultus Lake Provincial Park.

Chilliwack resident Alex Rezka, 9, was excited to learn he was the 200,000th participant in the program. A Learn to Fish veteran, Alex first encountered the program two years ago when his Grade 3 class from Promontory Heights Elementary School visited the Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery for a Learn to Fish field trip. He was at Cultus Lake to participate in the Learn to Fish program with his whole family, including his younger sister Artiqah Rezka, 6.

“We have seen Learn to Fish participants from 2006 and subsequent years become angling adults and it’s great to see Alex could be on that path. Success is when the learners of today become the anglers and stewards of the future,” says Tanya Laird, Outreach Coordinator, Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC. “It is so fitting we reached this milestone in a BC Park. The Learn to Fish program and BC Parks both emphasize stewardship, environmental appreciation and enjoyment of the outdoors. And BC Parks has been a great supporter of the program.”

Learn to Fish was developed in 2006 in response to the documented decline in freshwater angler participation, following a peak in recreational fishing popularity in the mid 1990’s. Learn to Fish events are hosted on a drop-in basis for youth age five to 15 and their families. Participants learn about fish habitat, how to identify their catch and how to fish responsibly. They also get hands on experience while learning about casting and retrieving and tips for catching fish. All equipment is provided and programs run rain or shine.

Since 2006 the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC has delivered 6,761 programs in BC parks, regional and municipal parks, and at Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC hatchery visitor centres. This year the Learn to Fish program will deliver more than 100 programs in over 30 provincial parks across BC. Programs were expanded in several regions of the province in 2015 in response to a growing interest in freshwater fishing.

Learn to Fish is delivered every Friday until Aug 26th at Maple Bay Amphitheatre at Cultus Lake Provincial Park from 10am-Noon. No registration is required. To find other programs offered near you, visit the Events calendar at gofishbc.com.

The Learn to Fish program is offered throughout the province thanks to the generous support of the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust, Rapala, BC Ram Dealers, Teck Highland Valley Copper, the Province of BC, and BC Parks. Yamaha Motor Canada is the

newest program sponsor and will be awarding one lucky Learn to Fish participant with a 6HP 4-stroke outboard motor this summer.

The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC was created in 2003 as a private, not-for-profit organization, funded mainly through freshwater fishing licence revenues. In partnership with the Province, the Society annually stocks eight million trout, char and kokanee salmon in 800 B.C. lakes. It also manages special hatchery programs for endangered species including white sturgeon, conducts fisheries research, education and conservation programs and works to make angling more accessible for all. As of April 1, 2015, under a new agreement with the provincial government, the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC receives 100% of fishing licence revenue to invest in infrastructure and services to support freshwater fishing in BC. With the increased revenue, the Society is investing in additional research and infrastructure projects across the province. To find out more, visit gofishbc.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
July 7, 2016

Learn to Fish and Enter to Win from Yamaha

(Abbotsford, BC) - Yamaha Motor Canada has signed on as the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC's newest [Learn to Fish](#) sponsor. Each year, the Society teaches 25,000 youth and their families across B.C. when, where, and how to fish responsibly. Thanks to the generous support of our Learn to Fish partners (including the Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Columbia Basin Trust, B.C. Ram dealers, Rapala, Teck Highland Valley Copper, and now Yamaha), we're helping to grow a new generation of anglers.

To celebrate the partnership, Yamaha will award one lucky angler a 6-hp, 4-stroke outboard. Until the end of September, everyone who participates in a Learn to Fish program can enter to win. Full contest rules can be found [here](#).

The Freshwater Fisheries Society is also very thankful to Yamaha Motor Canada for supporting our fisheries research program. Yamaha has generously provided two new motors, free of charge, to replace motors stolen from our research boats this spring.

Learn to Fish programs are held at provincial, regional, and municipal parks throughout B.C. We also host programs at our on-site ponds at the Kootenay and Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery Visitor Centres. To find a program near you, visit the [Events](#) page at gofishbc.com

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE
June 14, 2016

Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery Hosting Family Fishing Weekend Event

(Abbotsford, BC) - Freshwater fishing offers a great way for families to spend time together as it is an activity enjoyed by all ages, is something the whole family can experience at the same time and often there is a reward at the end of the fun. During Father's Day weekend families will have even more opportunities to enjoy fishing together during the 17th annual Family Fishing Weekend June 17 to 19. To make Family Fishing Weekend events accessible to everyone the events are free and participants do not have to buy a fishing licence.

On Saturday, June 18th from 8:00 a.m. to 1:00 p.m., the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC is celebrating Family Fishing Day at its Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery pond in Abbotsford. The event offers activities for freshwater fishers of all experience levels. For beginners, Freshwater Fisheries staff at the Learn to Fish booth will assist with casting techniques, proper fish handling and getting the fishing rod ready. Rapala fishing gear may be borrowed for free from the hatchery.

Due to the popularity of this event guests who wish to take a turn at the fish pond are asked to register for a time on arrival. Fishing sessions last 20 minutes and fill quickly. Those who plan to keep their catch are reminded to bring a cooler.

In addition to fishing there are arts and crafts stations, tours of the fish hatchery, a concession stand, door prizes and a live fish release at 12:50 pm. Prizes will be awarded throughout the day.

Thanks to the Province of B.C., Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, and federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, Canadian residents can try fishing B.C.'s lakes, rivers, streams, and tidal waters without purchasing a licence.

Family Fishing Weekend events will be held across the province over the Father's Day weekend. The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC will present a Learn to Fish booth and offer Rapala fishing rods to borrow for free at events around the province.

- June 18 – Victoria - Malahat Outdoor Sport Centre - 10am-3pm
- June 18 – Trail - Champion Lakes – 1pm-4pm
- June 19 – Coquitlam - Lafarge lake – 9am-1pm
- June 19 – Kamloops - Walloper Lake 10am–2pm
- June 19 – Nanaimo - Colliery Dam Park – 10am-2pm
- June 19 - North Vancouver - Rice Lake – 10am-3pm

A complete list of participating communities, locations, and event descriptions, along with step-by-step fishing instructions, can be found at www.bcfamilyfishing.com. Freshwater and tidal fishing regulations, including daily catch quotas, always apply; details are posted at www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca or www.fishing.gov.bc.ca.

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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

April 14, 2016

Kootenay Trout Hatchery Celebrating 50 Years of Raising Fish in BC

(Cranbrook, BC) - For 50 years the Kootenay Trout Hatchery has been raising fish, stocking lakes and introducing people to the pleasures of freshwater fishing. Over the five decades the hatchery has expanded its mandate, taking on conservation initiatives and community outreach to encourage a love of fishing and an appreciation for our lakes and rivers. To celebrate this milestone the hatchery is hosting a family fun day on April 23, showcasing the hatchery's history and offering family-friendly fishing activities.

"While the Kootenay Trout Hatchery has always been first and foremost a fish hatchery, we are very proud of how it has evolved to become a focal point for conservation and freshwater fishing in the community," says hatchery manager Owen Schoenberger. "We welcome more visitors to the hatchery every year and it is exciting to help develop a new generation of responsible anglers and to educate people about conservation initiatives, such as our work with white sturgeon."

The Kootenay Trout Hatchery was opened in 1966 as a Provincial trout hatchery with a seven person staff consisting of a hatchery manager, assistant manager, three fish culturists, an office manager, and maintenance supervisor. A state of the art facility at the time, fish were reared in open raceways that would freeze over in the winter. Water was sourced from nearby Norbury Creek.

In 1983, the water source was switched to two wells, ensuring a more consistent water supply. Because it was a groundwater source, fish were not exposed to disease or pathogens sometimes present in the river water. In 1987 the raceways were covered and wells supplying water to the hatchery were increased to four. The raceways no longer froze over and winter working conditions became much more pleasant for staff.

In 1998, the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho finalized an agreement with the Province to establish a sturgeon facility at the Kootenay Trout Hatchery and the following year the facility began raising Kootenai sturgeon. The Freshwater Fisheries Society released their last Kootenai white sturgeon in 2015 as the Kootenai Tribe of Idaho are now administering this successful recovery program at their new hatchery in Bonner's Ferry, Idaho.

Ownership of the hatchery was transferred to the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC in 2003, shortly after the Society was created. In the spring of that year the Upper Columbia White Sturgeon rearing program was transferred to the Kootenay Trout Hatchery where it is operated in conjunction with the Kootenay River Sturgeon Conservation Hatchery. These programs have supported habitat research, restocking and re-introduction efforts from the USA border to the Kinbasket Reservoir.

In 2007, hatchery opened their onsite fishing pond. The pond was built in a large part from community donations and it continues to be a focal point in the community. In that first year just over 1,000 youth fished the pond in the Learn to Fish program. Last year more than 6,000 youth and their parents participated in a Learn to Fish program at the hatchery pond.

In 2015 a number of upgrades were undertaken to reduce energy usage and improve the hatchery's operating efficiency. Circular ponds replaced the fish rearing raceways. Water usage is anticipated to drop from 2.5 billion litres to 0.5 billion litres per year, drawn from five groundwater wells.

The improved tank design constantly moves waste out of the system, reducing the time required to clean the tanks. With better access to feed throughout the tank, fish are better able to convert food to body mass, reducing variance in fish size. The result is more consistent, better conditioned, healthier fish released into rivers and lakes throughout the region.

The hatchery also expects to reduce electricity consumption by about 264,000 kilowatt hours per year, about 22% of overall usage, as a result of less water pumping and warming.

The Kootenay Hatchery annually raises 1.3 million kokanee, cutthroat trout, brook char and rainbow trout for the recreational fishery in addition to sturgeon. The fish are stocked in 150 lakes in the East and West Kootenays. Some fish are provided to the Clearwater and Summerland Trout Hatcheries for stocking interior and northern regions of the province. The Kootenay and Clearwater Trout Hatcheries are the only facilities that stock kokanee salmon in BC.

The hatchery now employs an office manager, assistant manager, maintenance supervisor, hatchery manager, a sturgeon manager, three fish culturists, two seasonal fish culturists and six seasonal tour guides.

The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC's Kootenay Trout Hatchery will be celebrating the hatchery's 50th Anniversary with an Open House on April 23, 2016 from 10 am to 3 pm. Everyone is invited to get to know the hatchery better with tours through the recently renovated hatchery, fish rearing and lake stocking discussions with a fish culturist and fish culture demonstrations.

Family activities include fishing, face painting and activities at the pond as well as birthday cake and goodie bags for the kids. The Bull River Rancher's BBQ Association will have a food concession available.

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