

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE  
June 15, 2018

### **Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery Grand Reopening on Family Fishing Weekend**

**[Abbotsford, B.C.]** The Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery is holding a grand reopening in conjunction with the unofficial start of summer – Family Fishing Weekend. Running 8 AM to 1 PM on Saturday, June 16, the event offers the full range of Family Fishing Weekend activities as well as tours of the updated visitor centre and the new pavilion. The visitor centre has been spruced up to make it more family-friendly and create a more welcoming space for the more than 10,000 people who make a trip to the hatchery each summer.

The visitor centre reopening is focused on fun hands-on fishing experiences. Registration for a fishing time slot at the hatchery pond begins at 8 AM. Rapala fishing rods are available at no charge for anyone who wants to fish but doesn't have gear. Learn to Fish sessions will be offered, covering basic fishing skills as well as tips on using the gear. As well participants can enjoy themed arts and crafts, a concession and door prizes through the day.

At 12:50 kids are invited to be part of a live fish release. Hatchery staff will transfer fish into buckets, allowing every child the opportunity to release their own bucket of fish into the Learn to Fish pond.

Prizes will be awarded through the day, including door prizes and derby prizes such as first fish, tagged fish or hidden weights. Participants are welcome to keep their catch and are encouraged to have a cooler on hand.

A pavilion at the pond has been added to provide more flexibility to enjoy a fishing experience in the sun or the rain, offering a covered area to convene or have lunch while at the hatchery. The refurbished visitor centre features updated information and more user-friendly signage, making it easier for families to enjoy a visit together.

Family Fishing Weekend began with a dozen events focused in the Lower Mainland, Vancouver Island and the Okanagan and has grown to offer events in nearly every corner of the Province. Fishing licence requirements are waived for the weekend, meaning Canadian residents can fish licence-free over the three days, although some requirements remain in effect. Details are posted on the BC Family Fishing website and the Fisheries and Oceans website.

“Coordinating events over the Father’s Day weekend is an opportunity to remind people fishing is often a social activity. It’s not only the solitary angler casting on a lake. It’s a way to spend quality time with other people in the outdoors,” says Family Fishing Society of BC President Wayne Saito. “We see all generations at Family Fishing Weekend events from the very young who will be holding a rod for the

first time to parents and grandparents proudly sharing their own fishing tips and techniques with the next generation.”

Family Fishing Weekend events to be held on the Lower Mainland:

Abbotsford	Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery	June 16
Coquitlam	Lafarge Lake	June 17
Chilliwack	Cultus lake	June 16
New Westminster	Port Royal Beach	June 17
North Vancouver	Rice Lake	June 17
Richmond	Berry’s Bait & Tackle	June 16/June 17
Whistler	Alta Lake	June 17
Squamish	Alice Lake	June 15

Events are supported by the Family Fishing Society and organized by Fish and Game clubs, the Conservation Officer Service, municipalities, community groups, and local businesses. A complete list of participating communities, locations, and event descriptions, along with step-by-step fishing instructions, can be found at [www.bcfamilyfishing.com](http://www.bcfamilyfishing.com). Freshwater and tidal fishing regulations, including daily catch quotas, always apply; details are posted at [www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca](http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca) or [www.fishing.gov.bc.ca](http://www.fishing.gov.bc.ca).

“Family Fishing Weekend is an ideal time to get set for the fishing season ahead,” says Provincial Coordinator of the Family Fishing Society of BC, Jessica Yarwood. “If a lack of experience or a lack of gear has been making someone hesitant we invite them to come to one of our events and give it a try. They may discover their new favorite sport!”

The Family Fishing Society of BC was established in 2001 to encourage new anglers as well as promote and coordinate Family Fishing Weekend and other angling initiatives targeted toward families and young people. 2018 marks the 19<sup>th</sup> year of the licence-free fishing weekend.

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### **Summerland Hatchery Celebrating 100 Years of Fish Culturing in the Okanagan**

**[Summerland, B.C.]** A centennial year is a cause for celebration – and it's no different for a fish hatchery. While the Summerland hatchery is turning 90 in 2018, it is actually the 100<sup>th</sup> anniversary of fish culturing in the region. The Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC's Summerland Trout Hatchery will be celebrating with an Open House on May 12, 2018 from 11 am to 3 pm and everyone is invited to discover more about the hatchery and the hatchery's history.

"The hatchery is a great source of pride in our community. As the oldest continuously running trout hatchery in B.C., we have deep roots in Summerland," says Kyle Girgan, hatchery manager. "We hope the community will come out to help us mark the occasion and we've created an anniversary sticker so people can show their Hatchery pride all year long."

The Summerland Hatchery annually raises one million brook char and rainbow trout for the recreational fishery, stocking them into 300 lakes in the Okanagan. The hatchery hosts around 3,000 visitors each year and will have outreach staff operating Learn to Fish programs in municipal, regional, and provincial parks throughout the Okanagan again this summer. The Summerland hatchery is also home to a Rod Loan program. Families and other groups can borrow fishing rods and gear at no cost and try fishing at a nearby lake.

The Summerland Hatchery Open House on May 12 is a family friendly event featuring tours through the hatchery, fish rearing and lake stocking discussions with a fish culturist, fish culture demonstrations and Learn to Fish activities. Cake will be served, and goodie bags have been prepared for the kids. Commemorative vinyl stickers, which will adhere to bumpers, boats or tackle boxes, will also be available for all visitors.

Fish culturing began unofficially in Summerland in 1918 when George Gartrell, a local Game Warden and the first commercial orchardist in the Okanagan Valley, began small scale fish culturing in Summerland's Lower Town.

The Federal Government purchased the existing site to use as a hatchery in 1927. Formerly a concrete powerhouse, the location offered consistent water flow and constant water temperature from the Shaughnessy spring, making it an ideal location for raising fish. In 1927 Granville Morgan was appointed Special Guardian of Fisheries for Okanagan District No. 1 under George Gartrell, now Inspector of Fisheries.

The hatchery was run on a part-time seasonal basis at the time and some of the first hatchery releases were into Darke and Garnet Lakes, local lakes which are stocked to this day.

The Provincial Government purchased the hatchery from the Federal Government in 1937, the year the Province took over all fish culture activities relating to inland species from the Federal government. In 1947 the old power house building was replaced with the current structure and the Summerland facility became a permanent trout hatchery for the province. A visitor centre was opened in 1990 and ownership was transferred to the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC in 2003.

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. The Freshwater Fisheries Society receives 100% of fishing licence revenue to invest in infrastructure and services to support freshwater fishing in BC and is also investing in additional research and infrastructure projects across the province. To find out more, visit [gofishbc.com](http://gofishbc.com).

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### **Clearwater Hatchery Celebrating Two Decades of Raising Fish**

**[Clearwater BC]** For 20 years the Clearwater Trout Hatchery has been raising fish, stocking lakes and introducing people to the pleasures of freshwater fishing. On August 26, 2017 from 10 am to 2 pm the public is invited to celebrate this milestone at the hatchery's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House. In addition to tours that highlight the hatchery's recent upgrades, the public is invited to try fishing for free and a slice of birthday cake at noon.

Staff will take visitors through the hatchery and showcase how the hatchery works and the most recently completed upgrades. Upgrades reduced energy usage and improved the hatchery's operating efficiency. The improved tank design constantly moves waste out of the system, reducing 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 to be released into rivers and lakes throughout the province.

"The hatchery looks quite different than it did twenty years ago. Two of us have been here since the early days and we are looking forward celebrating with the community and sharing stories about the hatchery's journey. We are hoping people will share their experiences with us," says Geoff Giesbrecht, Assistant Hatchery Manager. "As a long time part of the community we expect there are many great memories people have of the hatchery."

Visitors will also be able to fish at Dutch Lake Resort, across the road from the Clearwater Hatchery. Rapala rods and tackle will be available to borrow for free and Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC Learn to Fish staff will be set up to provide advice and tips to people at all levels of fishing experience. Children under 16 do not require a fishing licence.

The Clearwater Trout Hatchery's 20<sup>th</sup> Anniversary Open House will be held from 10 am to 2 pm on Saturday, August 26 and everyone is welcome. The hatchery is located at 40 Old North Thompson Highway Rd. E. in Clearwater. For more information call 250-674-2580.

The Clearwater Trout Hatchery, one of six hatcheries owned and operated by the Freshwater Fisheries Society of BC, raises rainbow trout, brook trout and kokanee. The Clearwater and Kootenay Trout Hatcheries are the only facilities that stock kokanee salmon in BC.

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](http://gofishbc.com).

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