

## Talchako River Groundwater Channels

### Objectives

To establish access to existing off-channel habitat along sections of the Talchako and Bella Coola Rivers.

**FRBC Region/ MELP Region/ MOF Region**  
Pacific/ Cariboo/ Vancouver

### Author

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### Proponent

International Forest Products, Mid-Coast Division, Hagensborg, B.C.

### Watershed

Bella Coola

### Location

The Talchako River partially defines Tweedsmuir Provincial Parks' southwest boundary. It is located approximately 380 kilometers west of the city of Williams Lake and 60 kilometers east of the community of Bella Coola. Along with the Atnarko it forms the Bella Coola River.

### Introduction

The Talchako system is limited to salmonid production by low nutrient levels and limited off-channel rearing. Several off-channel ponds and ground water channels exist between 72-84 km (Talchako FSR) but are inaccessible to fish. This is due in part to past logging activities and increased beaver activity enhanced by vegetation type change.

### Assessments and Prescriptions

In 1999 prescriptions were developed to access more off-channel ponds. Prescriptions were based on information collected in 1996 and 1998 Level 1 assessments. International Forest Products (Neil Osborne) completed the engineering design, for the fish ladders.

### Rehabilitation Work

Rehabilitation works focused on several areas of the Talchako and Bella Coola mainstem.

In the McCall flats area riparian planting and cattle fencing were undertaken to protect a groundwater channel developed in 1998. Plastic cones were used to protect juvenile cedar, in an attempt to reduce browse damage by deer.

Access was primarily developed through the construction of low-grade fish ladders around existing beaver impoundments. If suspect beaver dams were reinforced to make sure water flow was forced through the ladders.

### Cost Summary

Labour	\$79,100
Machine/Vehicle Expense	\$14,600
<u>Supplies</u>	<u>\$4,400</u>
Total	\$98,100

### Outputs

Groundwater channel construction or improvements occurred at 58, 72, 77 and 78 km of the Talchako FSR. This created access to approximately 13 hectares of off-channel habitat.

### Proposed Work

In 2000 then following works are proposed:

- monitoring and development of old and new channels along the Bella Coola and Talchako mainstems.

Project monitoring in 2000 will include:

- estimating juvenile salmonid use in the ground water channels
- evaluating the growth of cedar protected with plastic cones.

### For Further Information, Contact:

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**Figure 1: McCall Flats groundwater channel. Protective cones were placed over planted cedar to reduce impacts from free range cattle.**



**Figure 2: A series of fry accessible ladders were constructed around old, non-active, beaver impoundments, to access groundwater rearing habitat in the glacial fed Talchako river system.**



**Talchako  
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Watershed code 910-290700-99800**