

2009 Fish Rescue:



THE ISSUE:

- Numerous irrigation diversion structures exist on many river systems and on-stream reservoirs in southern Alberta (e.g., Bow, Highwood, Oldman, Belly, Waterton and St. Mary rivers). However, most of these structures do not have operable fish exclusion devices to keep both sportfish and non-sport species from entering diversion canals.
- Wild sportfish that enter irrigation canals are generally lost to the fishery because existing canal structures prevent fish from returning to the river system. Until Trout Unlimited Canada's (TUC) Fish Rescues began in 1996, the extent of the problem in Alberta was very poorly documented and received little attention.

PAST FISH RESCUE EFFORTS BY TROUT UNLIMITED CANADA:

- In 1996 and 1997 TUC conducted pilot Fish Rescues on an irrigation diversion canal near Carseland, which is fed by the lower Bow River. These efforts resulted in rescuing and returning almost 20,000 stranded fish to the Bow River to complete their life cycle.
- In 1998, Fish Rescue efforts were expanded to several additional sites along the Carseland Canal, and one site along the main diversion canal for the Western Irrigation District. In 1999 and 2000, the Fish Rescue was expanded to also include preliminary surveys at several sites along the main diversion canal for the Lethbridge Northern Irrigation District, along with canals that are fed by southern tributaries of the Oldman River.
- Last year the Fish Rescue concentrated on six different canals in southern Alberta fed by the Bow, Highwood, Belly, Waterton, and Oldman rivers. The data collected helped to confirm that *large numbers of sportfish are being stranded in all diversion canals that do not have fish screens to prevent fish from entering the canals.*
- To date TUC and its volunteers has rescued nearly 625,000 fish from certain death. Rescued fish include rainbow trout, brown trout, mountain whitefish, bull trout, northern pike, burbot, lake whitefish and yellow perch as well as many non-sport fish species.

WHY GET INVOLVED?

- While we would prefer that TUC members did not have to fix a problem they did not cause, without good data and more public awareness of the magnitude of the problem of losses down the canals, corrective actions will not happen. This issue is indicative of many of the problems that have plagued Alberta's fisheries where too often there is little attention and resources given to problems until crises occur! The data and profile from this and past Fish Rescues should help Alberta's fisheries managers secure the resources they need to properly manage our valuable fisheries.
- Our actions help demonstrate that TUC, our members, and our partners, do not just sit back and wait for things to change. Instead, when leadership is needed, we mobilize our members to ensure coldwater resources are wisely managed and protected.
- Volunteers of all ages are needed. This project provides an excellent 'hands-on' activity for individuals, families and youth groups.

HOW CAN YOU HELP?

- If you want to volunteer for the Fish Rescue, we can use you! *Dates of the Fish Rescue will be posted online at: <http://www.tucanada.org/FishRescue.shtml>*
- If you can help, please e-mail or call Lesley Peterson at LPeterson@tucanada.org (403-209-5184 or 1-800-909-6040). We can be reached in the field at 403-875-3264 if you have any questions.
- It is important that you RSVP with the number of people and dates so we can properly plan for the Fish Rescue.
- Everyone contributing to the success of the project will be sent a thank-you card and a project summary.

REPLY QUESTIONNAIRE

Please fill in the following information:

Name(s):
Address:
City/Town:
Province:
Postal Code:
Telephone:
E-mail:

If you can help, please fill out this questionnaire and e-mail to:
lpeterson@tucanada.org
Or mail it back to TUC at:
**160, 6712 Fisher St SE,
Calgary AB T2H 2A7.**
*You can also fax the details to us (403-221-8368).
Contact Lesley Peterson, for additional information (403-209-5184).*

YES!!! I WANT TO CONTRIBUTE FINANCIALLY TO THE SUCCESS OF THE '2009 FISH RESCUE'!

All financial donations are tax deductible and will be directed strictly to the *Fish Rescue*. My tax-deductible donation (a Charitable Receipt will be produced for all donations) of:

\$ 50

\$100

\$500

\$ _____ to help make the **2009 Fish Rescue** one of TUC's most successful projects

ever.

My method of payment is:

Cheque (please make cheques payable to "*Trout Unlimited Canada - Fish Rescue*");

VISA

MasterCard

American Express

You may also call us (403-221-8360 or 1-800-909-6040) with your generous donation, or donate online at

http://www.tucanada.org/TUC_donationform.shtml

Please specify the donation is for the "Fish Rescue".

Card No.: _____ ; Expiry date: ____ / ____

Signature for credit card authorization: _____ .

Fish Rescue Dates for 2009:

Please check dates you are available and fill in the number of volunteers that will be participating:

- | | | |
|-------------------------------------------------------------------------|-----------------------------------------------------------------------------|----------------------------------------------------------------------------------|
| <input type="checkbox"/> WHC – Max Bell Arena | Wednesday, Sept 30 | # of Volunteers = |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WCD – High River | Saturday, Oct 3 | # of Volunteers = |
| <input type="checkbox"/> CBRHC – Carseland | Saturday, Oct 10
Sunday, Oct 11 | # of Volunteers =
of Volunteers = |
| <input type="checkbox"/> LNHC – Granum-Fort Macleod area | Wednesday, Oct 14
Thursday Oct 15
Friday, Oct 16 | # of Volunteers =
of Volunteers =
of Volunteers = |
| <input type="checkbox"/> WBD – Waterton Reservoir to Belly River | Saturday, Oct 17
Sunday, Oct 18
Monday, Oct 19 | # of Volunteers =
of Volunteers =
of Volunteers = |

Maps and directions will be posted on our website:

<http://www.tucanada.org/FishRescue.shtml>