

Fox Creek Pilot Weir a Success

TKC's new video monitoring project helps to monitor returning Chinook Salmon



This female Chinook Salmon was captured on film on August 14, 2020 at 8:53pm.

TKC's LRH Department helped mark the 15th year of efforts to restore Chinook salmon stocks in the Ta'an traditional territory and the Yukon this summer by introducing a special enumeration weir project at Fox Creek. The video weir enumeration system was installed near the mouth of Fox Creek and was able to capture important footage from August 14 to September 6, 2020.

The Fox Creek Restoration Project was started in 2006 when TKC Elders, concerned about the declining Chinook Salmon population, initiated restoration activities in the Fox Creek area. Fox Creek, (about 50 km north of Whitehorse) flows from Fox Lake to Lake Laberge and is a popular and important Chinook salmon spawning stream.

This summer's monitoring system involved installing a special waterproof metal box which housed a tunnel where the salmon, returning to Fox Creek could swim through naturally without being handled or disrupted in any way while being captured on video by a camera triggered by their motion.

"The goal of the project is to better understand how many salmon are returning to spawn in Fox Creek each year and whether they are of wild or hatchery origin," says Kristina Beckmann, TKC's Fish and Wildlife Coordinator.

Kristina notes this year, LRH was able to capture and document four salmon returning to Fox Creek consisting of one hatchery female, two females with adipose fins, and one male with an adipose fin.

"We don't consider this a full count, since we had some

delays in getting the system installed and experienced a few technical problems along the way," Kristina says, adding, "Aside from these difficulties, it was very successful and we hope to improve the system and install it again next year."

The project was made possible with the assistance of the Federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), who loaned LRH the monitoring equipment to try out. The project was also a success due to the team efforts of all LRH staff members along with other departments including Housing and IT.



Jenna Duncan and Andre Eckert-Maret calibrate the system at the enumeration weir pilot project in 2020.