Foreshore Inventory and Mapping of Kalamalka and Wood lakes

Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP)

The OCCP is a partnership of 27 organizations with shared goals, which include maintaining regional biodiversity, protecting Species at Risk, maintaining ecological connectivity throughout the valley, and balancing regional growth with conservation. Members of the OCCP include all levels of government (Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO), Ministry of Environment (MOE), regional districts, municipalities), land trusts, businesses, stewardship and outreach organizations. OCCP's mandate is to assist partners in sharing information, collaboration and research to fill knowledge gaps, and setting priorities on conservation issues. This grant will help complete the FIM data set for large to mid sized lakes within the Okanagan Valley.

This grant allows the Okanagan Collaborative Conservation Program (OCCP) to coordinate completion of Foreshore Inventory and Mapping (FIM) on Wood and Kalamalka lakes. Kalamalka Lake lies within both the Central and North Okanagan Regional district boundaries, while Wood Lies solely within the Central Okanagan Regional District. As part of this project the OCCP has facilitated development of an action team that coordinates with both OCCP lead FIM projects in the North & central Okanagan with those in the South Okanagan. Action Team participants include District of Lake Country, District of Coldstream, City of Vernon, Regional District of the Central Okanagan (RDCO), Regional District of the North Okanagan (RDNO), Regional District of the South Okanagan (RDOS), Ecoscape Environmental Consultants, City of Kelowna, OCCP, OKIB and ONA. FIM provides a geo-referenced record of the foreshore, which provides a baseline for regulatory monitoring and enforcement, future restoration, and estimating the cumulative impact of development on species such as kokanee. FIM involves making a video of the entire shoreline by boat and embedding GPS coordinates onto the video images. Data compilation then involves tabulating the number of docks, shore type, land use, riparian condition, shoreline substrate composition, lakeshore structures, level disturbance and other variables for each shoreline section.

The current project is using the most recent FIM data base 2.6 and portions of the North Okanagan completed last year have been upgraded to this standard. Completion of this project and a similar project undertaken by the RDOS will mean that the entire Okanagan Lake and the majority of mid sized lakes will have FIM Mapping available. As outlined for previous projects the FIM data provides a baseline of existing conditions that assist monitoring and compliance efforts as well as providing information on the current state of the foreshore and identifying important natural areas remaining. The product will also assist with RAR compliance and local government development permitting processes. FIM data can be used to help protect foreshore

integrity, which is related to basin-wide water quality because foreshore substrates and vegetation are important for filtering surface water before it enters the lake. Without sound measures to protect these sensitive ecosystems, rapid lakeshore development threatens to severely impact the foreshore of Okanagan Lake, and destroy resources that are critical to the health, vitality and economy of local communities.

With the help of our partners, field work has already been completed for this project. In kind field assistance has been provided by MOE, District of Coldstream, RDCO, City Of Vernon, and District of Lake Country Staff. A recent Action Team (AT) meeting also allowed for updating the team members on progress and discussions about the final reporting requirements and enabled consistency in reporting throughout the valley This will also include AT input into recommendations that will come in the final report. The remaining works will largely be completed by the contractor Ecoscape with assistance from the Community Mapping Network. Draft products will be reviewed by the Action Team.

With fieldwork already completed and video processing underway, the project is on schedule for completion, although the AT meeting has been delayed until the end of October when it is expected that a draft report will be ready. The final reporting is to be completed by the end of December 2009.

The project has progressed fairly smoothly so far and no major obstacles are anticipated, however; the anticipated summer student to complete video cutting did not materialize. Work is underway to find other resources to complete the work. In addition, the OCCP no longer has a coordinator position and the OCCP has now hired a contractor to take over coordination of the project to completion.
The final field day August 14 was the wettest in recorded history in Kelowna with 34 mm falling. Field Crews rescued a loon injured by fishing line was captured by the crew and delivered to the Conservation Officer. The loon was attended by a vet and later released to the same location.