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Kelowna

Creek made fish-friendly

Jennifer Zielinski - Sep 15, 2016 / 5:00 am



It's been years of planning and fundraising, since 2002 work was underway to provide flood-protection and environmental benefits to Mission Creek.

The Mission Creek Restoration Initiative was launched in 2008 to address declining fish stocks by restoring natural hydraulic and biological functions to the lower 12 km of Mission Creek from the East Kelowna bridge to Okanagan Lake.

Now, the restoration is complete.

Stage 1 of the project kicked off in 2002 and was completed in 2015.

This portion of the project realigned a 500-metre section of dike on the south side of the creek between Casorso Road and Gordon Drive. Fish and wildlife stocks were increased as their habitats were enhanced within the expanded floodplain.

Stage 2 was complete just a month ago and entailed the re-connection of a historic side channel along Mission Creek main stem. As well as the creation of deep water refuge habitat and pools for Kokanee spawners.

Tara White with the Ministry of Forests, Lands, and Natural Resource Operations says stage two also saw more than 600 native trees and plants relocated from the old dyke to the flood plain habitat which gave an increase of 24,000 square metres.

“This gave anticipated 15 centimetre reduction in flood levels along this section of the creek.”

Funding for the project came from City of Kelowna Mission Creek Habitat Compensation Bank, Habitat Conservation Trust Foundation, Okanagan Basin Water Board and the province in the amount of \$1.2 million.

The The Mission Creek Restoration Initiative is a multi-phase, multi-stakeholder partnership formed officially in 2008 and included all levels of government (including First Nations) and local nonprofit organizations.

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