



A NEW DIRECTION

**Resource Rebuilding:
Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program**

Framework Document

(Final Draft)

May 1999



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Canada

Habitat Conservation & Stewardship Program

Framework Document

Table of Contents

1.0	Introduction	1
2.0	Background	2
2.1	<i>Habitat Conservation & Stewardship Program</i>	2
2.2	<i>What We Heard – Forum Feedback</i>	3
2.3	<i>Program Coverage and Delivery</i>	4
2.4	<i>Stewardship Coordinators, Habitat Auxiliaries and Habitat Stewards</i>	5
2.5	<i>Implementation Strategy</i>	6
3.0	Operational Framework	7
3.1	<i>Linkages to Other Programs and Processes</i>	7
3.1.1	Local Capacity Building.....	7
3.1.2	Federal Programs.....	9
3.1.3	B.C. & Yukon Programs.....	12
3.1.4	Policy Direction.....	13
3.2	<i>Responsibilities and Relationships</i>	13
3.2.1	Stewardship Coordinators, Habitat Auxiliaries and Habitat Stewards.....	13
3.2.2	DFO.....	15
3.2.3	Other Agencies and Groups.....	18
3.3	<i>Supporting Initiatives</i>	18
	<i>Appendix</i>	25

1.0 Introduction

In June 1998, the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announced a five-year, \$100-million Resource Rebuilding strategy aimed at conserving and protecting West Coast salmon and their habitat. This strategy forms part of the Pacific Fisheries Restructuring Program. The creation of the strategy was based in part on advice received during the Coho Response Team's Spring 1998 consultations on the critical state of B.C. coho salmon stocks. Among the more pressing concerns voiced in these consultations was the need to restore degraded habitat, improve habitat protection, and better involve stakeholders and the public in habitat-related activities.

Resource Rebuilding consists of four key components:

- a new **Habitat Conservation and Stewardship (HCS)** program that will create Stewardship Coordinators, Habitat Auxiliaries and Habitat Stewards to work with communities on watershed management planning and habitat protection activities (\$35 million);
- extension of the **Habitat Restoration and Salmon Enhancement Program (HRSEP)**, which provides funding for projects that improve or create habitat, rebuild or conserve stocks, or promote local resource and watershed stewardship (\$23 million);
- a new **Strategic Stock Enhancement (SSE)** Program to fund the immediate use of existing hatcheries to conserve or rebuild endangered salmon stocks (\$12 million); and
- a new, independently operated **Long-Term Habitat Fund** to ensure a stable source of funding for projects developed by local stewardship groups (\$30 million).

The different components of Resource Rebuilding will be linked through the Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program Implementation Committee, which includes members drawn from the different components of Resource Rebuilding. The goal is to deliver the elements of Resource Rebuilding as well as activities in habitat research and assessment, habitat restoration, salmon enhancement, habitat protection, and community stewardship. The delivery is designed to be strategic and efficient while avoiding duplication of effort and recognising both local needs and concerns as well as overall policy objectives.

An earlier discussion paper circulated by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) outlined the key elements of the Habitat Conservation and Stewardship component of Resource Rebuilding.¹ The purpose of this document is to outline an operational framework for the HCS program. The paper begins with background on the program and the results of ongoing consultations on design and implementation. The proposed operational framework is then described in terms of key linkages with other programs and processes, and the roles and responsibilities of the various DFO and outside players. Finally, the paper discusses some supporting initiatives that are currently under way to further develop and implement the HCS program.

¹ Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Habitat and Enhancement Branch (1998), *Pacific Fisheries Restructuring and Adjustment Program: Resource Rebuilding Habitat Conservation and Stewardship; Discussion Paper*.

2.0 Background

2.1 Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program

The Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program (HCS) represents a proactive approach to habitat protection that focuses on developing local capacity in habitat conservation and stewardship. The program will establish a network of Stewardship Coordinators (SCs), Habitat Auxiliaries (HAs) and Habitat Stewards (HSs) across the Pacific Region who will support, advise, and work closely with community watershed stewardship groups, First Nations, developers, industry, other stakeholders and government agencies. The Program is intended to protect fish habitat through advancing sustainable land and water use planning, promoting better land and water use practices and increasing community advocacy and capacity with respect to the protection of fish habitat.

Program Vision

The Program seeks to establish partnerships to enhance habitat protection and expanded community capacity to steward fish habitat resources.

Guiding Principles

Planning and implementation of the HCS program will be guided by the following principles:

- strategic delivery in priority areas including watersheds and marine zones;
- scientific and technical information exchange with stakeholders;
- local design and delivery;
- building of long-term community stewardship capacity;
- clear linkages with existing and effective habitat protection programs;
- communication across governments, First Nations, industry, and communities; and
- adaptability to local opportunities, abilities, and fish benefits.

Program Objectives

HCS objectives are to:

- incorporate fish habitat protection requirements into local land and water use plans;
- increase public and stakeholder awareness of fish habitat requirements;
- improve habitat mapping and inventory data required for land management and resource planning;
- increase local stream surveillance and monitoring;
- improve compliance monitoring of development projects;
- provide technical information, advice, and support to partners and communities;

- pilot the development of watershed management plans for several priority watersheds;
- enhance and restore habitats as part of watershed management plan(s); and
- increase community responsibility for watershed management.

2.2 What We Heard: Forum Feedback

In early January 1999, DFO sponsored a two-day forum to help develop the Resource Rebuilding initiative. The forum brought together more than 350 representatives from other federal and provincial agencies, First Nations, local government, interest groups, and communities from across the Pacific Region. The Forum participants expressed their views on the development and implementation of the HCS Program, including the roles and responsibilities of SCs\HAs\HSs.

Following the Vancouver forum, a series of 21 Area Forums were undertaken across the six HEB areas. The Area Forums were helpful in determining the local requirements for full-scale program implementation. The results of these consultations will help refine the operational framework of the program. Comments received from the consultations are summarized in the list of 21 items that follows.²

- The program should be flexible and locally driven, and should build on existing community structures as much as possible.
- Program implementation should be cooperative and inclusive, based on trust, mutual respect, and shared decision-making between communities and the federal government.
- An information clearinghouse should be created to share information on government programs and watershed planning.
- First Nations are very interested in working with this program.
- The program should offer a stable source of funding, facilitate education and awareness, and build local capacity (e.g., in watershed planning).
- Fish habitat protection must be better integrated into existing and future land and water planning exercises (OCP, LRMP, WUP, etc.)
- Better coordination between government programs is necessary to protect fish habitat.
- There is a need to clarify and improve linkages between governments.
- There should be a watershed focus to planning processes.
- While there should be broad geographic access to the program, funding should also be directed to watersheds of the highest priority.

² See Dovetail Consulting Inc. (1998), *A New Direction Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Forum: Summary Report*.

- Planning processes should include mechanisms to monitor implementation and evaluate progress.
- DFO must increase its enforcement to support habitat protection and enhancement work.
- The Department should have more input into provincial land use planning and decisions.
- DFO staff should provide training and technical support for the program.
- SCs/HAs/HSs should be locally hired, directed, and accountable, with their activities tailored to the particular community's needs.
- They should be proactive and cooperative, rather than reactive and confrontational – e.g., going to local government councils, bringing groups together, and taking initiative in municipal and regional planning.
- SCs/HAs/HSs must be free to act as advocates for fish and fish habitat, promoting a conservation ethic through public education and awareness.
- They must have local knowledge, interdisciplinary skills, and a good understanding of federal and provincial programs and practices.
- SCs should be skilled in communication, facilitation, and dispute resolution, responsible for networking, education/advocacy, and the pursuit of funding.
- HAs and HSs should have strong scientific skills, providing technical support, monitoring habitat, and building local capacity.
- The roles of SCs/HAs/HSs need to be clearly defined relative to other DFO positions (e.g., Community Advisors) to ensure their work is complementary.

2.3 Program Coverage and Delivery

HCS will apply to B.C. and the Yukon. SCs, HAs and HSs will be deployed based on identified needs, opportunities and priorities in specific geographical areas, such as watersheds and marine zones. The program will be delivered locally in view of the wide-ranging and variable nature of habitat issues, geographic conditions, community capacities, project opportunities and governance structures across the Pacific Region.

Local tailoring of program delivery, including SC, HA and HS duties, is also advisable due to local needs, opportunities and priorities. HCS Program will build on existing community and administrative structures and programs as much as possible to avoid “reinventing the wheel” and duplicating effort. SCs/HAs/HSs and local DFO staff will work with community and other government partners to determine the appropriate delivery approach to suit local needs.

All SCs, HAs and HSs will receive basic training to establish a common understanding of environmental and administrative processes within the Pacific Region as well as habitat protection and restoration techniques and methods. They may also participate in a mentoring program to benefit from the experience of government or non-government experts. They will work as a team with DFO HEB Area staff (community advisors, habitat biologists, technicians, etc.) to ensure the efficient delivery of effective services.

It is expected that delivery will entail innovative administrative arrangements. For example, initially all HAs and a small number of SCs will be DFO staff, while most SCs and all HSs will be employed by non-government organizations (NGO), community groups, local watershed councils or equivalent entities. Where opportunities exist, positions will be cost-shared with other agencies, First Nations, municipalities, or NGOs.

To enable this community-based delivery of services, DFO will provide ongoing assistance. This may take the form of information, technical advice, guidelines, training, communications materials, Geographic Information Systems (GIS) support, and other forms as needed. These support services will be included under the program umbrella.

2.4 Stewardship Coordinators, Habitat Auxiliaries and Habitat Stewards

Stewardship Coordinators are community-based liaison personnel who will be assigned to specific geographic areas (i.e. watersheds). They will work extensively on habitat protection with existing fish habitat advocacy groups, community watershed initiatives, First Nations, local governments, and other stakeholders and agencies. Where fish advocacy groups are not established, the SC will help in their genesis and development. SCs will also provide support to existing watershed councils and watershed management processes, and will help create new structures and processes in areas where these do not yet exist. Where appropriate, existing management or advisory entities will be used as partners to help deliver the program objectives.

The primary role of the SC is to facilitate and advocate for community fish habitat protection. They will also support restoration and enhancement projects that serve regional/local priorities as a secondary priority (e.g., in conjunction with watershed management plans). Their other functions in building local capacity will include: the provision of public education on habitat-related issues; promotion of a “land stewardship ethic”; coordination of training for community volunteers; and participation in local or regional land and water use planning processes.

Habitat Auxiliaries are technical field personnel who may be assigned by watershed, geographic area, industry sector or duty and are hired as DFO employees. They will work proactively with other agencies and stakeholder groups to encourage more effective habitat protection. They will also support restoration and enhancement activities as a secondary priority.

The focus of their efforts will be to anticipate, prevent, and, where necessary, respond to habitat impact events. HAs will provide technical information for improved planning and decision-making, as well as guidance and advice on the application of habitat protection standards,

guidelines and Best Management Practices in the field. They will educate the public, landowners, industry, etc., about fish needs, habitat impacts, and mitigation measures.

As DFO employees, HAs will have the capacity to assume a regulatory role by engaging in project approval and assessment requirements, in addition to monitoring works in and around watercourses to ensure that projects comply with legal obligations under the *Fisheries Act*. As DFO employees, the HAs will be representatives of the Minister. They will be able to review and assess projects on behalf of the Minister, to provide advice pursuant to the Fisheries Act to individuals and to other government agencies, and to monitor development activities where legally able to do so. Qualified individuals may be granted Inspector Status.

Habitat Stewards are similar to Habitat Auxiliaries in that they are technical field personnel hired or otherwise retained by non-DFO agencies, organizations or entities. They may be assigned by watershed, geographic area or industry sector. The HSs will work proactively with other agencies and stakeholder groups to encourage more effective habitat protection. They will also support restoration and enhancement activities as a secondary priority.

The focus of their efforts will be to anticipate, prevent, and, where necessary, respond to habitat impact events. HAs will provide technical information for improved planning and decision-making, as well as guidance and advice on the application of habitat protection standards, guidelines and Best Management Practices in the field. They will educate the public, landowners, industry, etc., about fish needs, habitat impacts, and mitigation measures

The HS is similar to the HA, but is hired by a community group, local government, etc, outside DFO. The external hiring through a community partner means they cannot represent the Minister of DFO in project review or monitoring and cannot be granted inspector status. The advantage of the HS being hired outside of DFO is that it is a strong first step to empowering local communities to play a greater role in habitat protection.

2.5 Implementation Strategy

Staffing of SC/HA/HS positions in the HCS Program will take place in phases starting with the pilot positions in April 1999. Initially, there will be 15 pilot positions for SC/HA/HS equaling 14 PY's; a minimum of two in each of the six Habitat and Enhancement Branch (HEB) areas with the exception of the Yukon, which will have one.

The balance of the SC/HA/HS positions will be staffed in phases with all positions filled by early 2000. Each position will be on a six-month contract or term. Over the course of the full-scale implementation phase, there will be an emphasis on ongoing evaluation and program improvement, and on managing program resources adaptively. (see Appendix for details on pilot positions)

From December 1999 on, HCS will be evaluated on a regular basis. A key objective will be to determine the effectiveness of the SC/HA/HS positions. Recommendations on the delivery of the program, in whole or in part beyond 2003 will also be made. The intent will be to re-deploy these

positions to self-sufficient watershed groups or to agencies or other organizations that need and can support them over the longer term.

3.0 Operational Framework

3.1 Linkages to Other Programs and Processes

One of the major needs voiced during the January 1998 forum was the need to clarify the linkages between HCS and other federal and provincial habitat-related programs in order to avoid duplication of effort and maximize Program benefits. Under the Canada-B.C. Agreement, DFO is working with a number of provincial government ministries to coordinate habitat enforcement, restoration and enhancement projects in British Columbia. The following section outlines key linkages between HCS and other federal, provincial, and local habitat-related programs and processes.

3.1.1 Local Capacity-building

SCs will work with communities to build local capacity in fish habitat protection and stewardship. While many capable fish habitat advocacy groups have developed across the Pacific Region in the last decade, the SCs will help initiate them where they don't exist. They will also develop relationships with the broadly based watershed councils, community roundtables or equivalent structures,³ and will provide support to these groups, including habitat-related education and awareness, training, and technical advice for watershed planning, restoration and strategic enhancement.

Where such structures are not well established, SCs will work with the community or equivalent entities to bring interests together, and to create and develop the appropriate multi-stakeholder process for addressing fish habitat protection and watershed health. Depending on the circumstances of a particular community and watershed, this multi-stakeholder process may take the form of a watershed council, community roundtable, joint planning process, or other structure/ process.

A multi-stakeholder process will generally encompass NGOs, federal, provincial and territorial agencies, local government, First Nations, and industry interests in fish and habitat protection. HAs and HSs will support the activities of SCs in the above activities where appropriate. The ultimate goal of SC/HA/HS efforts will be the development of a self-sustaining local "fish habitat protection coalition" that will advocate for habitat, promote public awareness, participate in various planning processes, and champion and develop habitat conservation and stewardship projects.

³ Examples of these community-based groups include the Alouette River Management Society and the Ridge Meadows Watershed Council, the Salmon River Watershed Roundtable in Salmon Arm, and the Salmon River Watershed Management Partnership in Langley.

Existing Land and Water Use Planning Processes

SCs, supported by HSs and DFO HEB staff, will help community groups represent their fish and habitat interests in local, regional, and other planning processes. Examples of these include OCPs, LRMPs, Water Use Plans (B.C. Hydro), Marine Protected Areas/Integrated Coastal Zone Management and Yukon Land Use planning. In partnership with community groups they will supply information and data, attend planning meetings, coordinate with DFO staff, etc. HAs and HSs will provide local technical support and advice on habitat protection requirements and restoration opportunities.

The goal will be to ensure that land and water use decisions better reflect local watershed interests in protecting fish habitat. For example, the establishment of limits to urban growth, protected areas, and adequate water flows for fish from hydropower facilities. It is important to note that SCs and HSs that are not DFO employees will not necessarily represent DFO in a planning process. However, HAs and SCs who are employees of the Department will be representatives of DFO.

The SC hired externally through a community partner will focus on ensuring effective community participation in a planning process in a manner that represents fish habitat protection. It is incumbent on external SCs and HSs to meet the terms of their obligations to DFO when participating in any planning process.⁴

Watershed Management Planning

To help better define watershed management planning in the B.C. context, the HCS Program will endeavour to identify what can be done within the present legislative and administrative framework in the Pacific Region with respect to fish habitat protection. It will also conduct a literature review to identify existing watershed management plans, methodologies, processes, etc. outside B.C.

Early in the implementation of the HCS Program a manual will be produced to identify existing and sunrise planning processes, which concentrate on or are related to watershed management planning. To support the manual, a “cookbook” will be produced for SCs/HAs/HSs and community groups to outline how they can participate meaningfully in existing land and water planning processes. This project will be completed with the participation of government and NGO representatives to make it applicable across the Pacific Region.

The Canada-B.C. **Habitat Restoration and Salmon Enhancement Working Group** is developing a process for watershed-based planning that will integrate fish production, harvest management, habitat protection, and other key fish/habitat components within B.C.⁵ This planning process will occur at different levels (local, regional, and provincial) based on

⁴ Where land or water use plans involve fish and habitat concerns, DFO and other agencies may have their own representatives “at the table.”

⁵ See Fisheries and Oceans Canada and B.C. Ministry of Fisheries (1998), *Watershed Fish Production Planning in British Columbia*.

watershed priority and will interact with the existing land and water use planning processes described above.

While these processes are being developed and implemented, SCs/HAs/HSs will work with community groups to promote the concept of watershed management planning and to educate them on its components (e.g., fish production planning, land use water quality relationships, etc.) and practices. When planning processes do get under way, they will assist community groups in developing and implementing watershed management plans at the local level. SCs/HAs/HSs will also provide advice to planning teams at the regional level for determining watershed management priorities.

The ultimate goal will be to put in place watershed management plans that integrate habitat protection concerns with other fish and resource interests at the local and regional levels.

Support for Community Projects

There are many different programs undertaken by DFO, other government agencies and NGOs that offer funding and/or technical support for local habitat restoration, conservation and enhancement projects.⁶ These include HRSEP and SSE, Forest Renewal BC's Watershed Restoration Program (WRP), the Urban Salmon Habitat Program (USHP), Fisheries Renewal BC programs and others. SCs/HAs/HSs will work with community groups other organizations (e.g., local Fisheries Renewal BC Boards) and agencies to identify, prioritize and implement local habitat projects. It is hoped that eventually these priorities will be determined through watershed management plans or other successfully completed land use planning processes. They will also help community groups to develop project proposals and identify and access appropriate funding sources.

3.1.2 Federal Programs⁷

The HCS Program will be coordinated with the other elements of Pacific Fisheries Restructuring and Adjustment Program through office of the Director of Strategic Initiatives. HCSP will also be integrated with the various components of Resource Rebuilding in addition to the activities of other DFO programs and branches wherever possible. SCs/HAs/HSs will assist communities with their project proposals to HRSEP, SSE, the Salmonid Enhancement Program (SEP), the Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS), and other DFO funding programs. In addition, they will provide feedback to DFO programs with regard to spending priorities for habitat protection and enhancement projects.

Habitat Restoration and Salmon Enhancement Program (HRSEP)

The Habitat Restoration and Salmon Enhancement Program aims to conserve West Coast salmon stocks and to improve the quantity and quality of habitat available to these fish. Projects funded through HRSEP focus on restoring freshwater and estuary salmon spawning and rearing habitat

⁶ See Fisheries and Oceans Canada and B.C. Ministry of Fisheries (1998), *supra* Note 3.

⁷ Other in-house linkages (e.g., with DFO Conservation and Protection, research, and stock assessment functions) are outlined under Section 3.2.

and migration. The program also supports monitoring of stock abundance, stream inventories, habitat mapping, and cooperative resource management that will assist salmon conservation.

HCS will link with HRSEP as follows:

- HCSP will assist HRSEP to develop criteria for the evaluation of proposals under the “stewardship” envelope of HRSEP.
- SCs/HAs/HSs will work as a team with community groups and government agencies in the development of Restoration and Enhancement plans for their geographical areas.
- SCs/HAs/HSs will aid in developing community-based HRSEP proposals in accordance with watershed plans.
- SCs/HAs/HSs will make recommendations to the HRSEP technical review committee, or may serve on it.
- HRSEP will provide reports on funded projects to SCs/HAs/HSs.
- SCs/HAs/HSs will look for joint funding and in-kind support for restoration, stewardship and enhancement projects

Strategic Stock Enhancement Program (SSE)

The objective of the Strategic Stock Enhancement Program is to assist in the conservation and rebuilding of endangered salmon stocks. SSE refers to the short-term use of fish culture technology (hatcheries) to conserve or rebuild endangered stocks while simultaneously maintaining stock integrity and genetic diversity. SSE is conservation enhancement; it is not intended to maintain or supplement commercial, recreational, or aboriginal fisheries.

HCS will link with SSE as follows:

Priorities for SSE will be established in conjunction with watershed management planning and fish production planning where appropriate.

- SSE will provide reports on funded projects to SCs/HAs/HSs.
- Area Coordinators will communicate with SSE and HRSEP to ensure that components of the Resource Rebuilding initiative are delivered in tandem.

Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy

The Aboriginal Fisheries Strategy (AFS) is DFO’s interim measures program leading to modern day treaties with Canada’s aboriginal people. One important AFS objective is to help build capacity among First Nations communities to prepare them for managing land and resources and to involve them in the cooperative management of fisheries resources. The program currently

engages 24 First Nations groups in B.C. and the Yukon in various kinds of habitat and enhancement projects. Projects are developed by joint technical committees, which also identify the approvals required. SC/HS/HAs will coordinate with AFS habitat restoration and enhancement projects in conjunction with other watershed planning, restoration and enhancement initiatives and processes.

Human Resources Development Canada

As part of the \$400 Pacific Restructuring Program, Human Resources Development Canada (HRDC) will provide employment adjustment assistance to individuals and communities affected by licence buy backs. The focus is to help people adjust to changes in the fishery; whether to prepare for employment outside the fishery, to supplement or replace fishing employment with alternative work, or to explore other adjustment possibilities.

Other Federal Initiatives

Western Economic Diversification (WED) Fisheries Adjustment Program is one example of other relevant federal initiatives. WED supports setting up multi-stakeholder processes to prepare long-term watershed management plans. The WED program is delivered through a number of local Community Futures Development Corporation (CFDC) offices along the Pacific Coast. It has funded a program that will see "outreach positions" that are expected to be compatible with the DFO SCs/HAs/HSs. Outreach will serve to assist hard hit communities along the Pacific Coast in accessing programming and funding opportunities that will lead to greater economic strengths within their region.

Local coastal CFDC offices recognize the need to work together to achieve shared goals in fish and habitat protection. The Habitat Conservation and Stewardship Program and WED administrators will work together to avoid duplication of services and to leverage greater outcomes through pursuing opportunities for rationalization of these SCs/HAs/HSs and Outreach positions. The ultimate goal of SC/HA/HS efforts will be to ensure self-sustaining local "fish habitat protection coalitions". Such coalitions will advocate for habitat, promote public awareness, participate in various planning processes, and champion and develop habitat conservation and stewardship projects.

Georgia Basin Ecosystem Initiative (GBEI)

Environment Canada (EC) and BC Ministry of Environment, Lands and Parks (MELP) have committed themselves to achieving specific results during their coordinated Georgia Basin program. The two partners have developed a set of action plans to improve air quality, reduce and prevent water pollution, combat climate change, conserve and protect habitat and species and support community-based environmental initiatives.

The EC/MELP project will improve links between the environmental activities of other government agencies and non-government groups and communities. There is a direct link between GBI and DFO via HEB Water Quality Unit, but its direct link to HCSP is still being

defined. The conservation and protection of habitat and species and the support of community based environmental initiatives makes it a very likely partner with HCSP.

Oceans Act

The Oceans Act came into force January 31, 1997. The act outlines Canada's duties and responsibilities in its ocean territory and introduces a new ocean management model, which promotes sustainable development of Canada's oceans and their resources.

The Oceans Act is divided into three parts. The first recognizes Canada's Oceans Jurisdiction. The second deals with the development of the Oceans Management Strategy, which includes provisions for Integrated Coastal Zone Management, Marine Protected Areas and Marine Environmental Health. The third deals with the consolidation of Federal Responsibilities for Canada's Oceans National Framework for Integrated Coastal Zone Management in Canada, which is currently being developed by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. The developing framework is a fundamental component of the overall Oceans Management Strategy that will be undertaken by the Oceans Directorate with the assistance of existing HEB staff as well as SCs/HSs/HAs

3.1.3 B.C. and Yukon Local Programs

HCS will coordinate with provincial, territorial and local agencies to pursue opportunities for cost-sharing SC/HA and HS positions. In the Georgia Basin region, the provincial and local governments already cost-share (on a 50:50 basis) environmental coordinator positions under the Urban Salmon Habitat Program (USHP). In addition to cost sharing these local coordinators, USHP provides funding for community watershed planning and habitat restoration projects. The program is scheduled to terminate on March 31, 2000.

Partnerships in B.C. will be developed between local governments / regional districts and HCS in the delivery of habitat protection initiatives on private property and developing lands. As local governments and Regional Districts are the primary governmental authority regulating development activities for residential lands in British Columbia, developing effective partnerships is critical to ensure fish habitat is protected. Individual agreements outlining agreed upon goals and objectives will be formulated to address issues unique to each municipality or district. A variety of incentives are being offered to local governments and Regional Districts in order to address the regional disparity in financial and economic abilities of the communities they represent.

In the Yukon, the Salmon Committee, and/or other Umbrella Final Agreement entities, and tribal councils or First Nation governments could be partners in the delivery of this Program. Other partnerships may be possible with municipal governments or other structures.

3.1.4 Policy Direction

Strategic policy direction for the HCS program will be provided by DFO's Habitat and Enhancement Branch, with direction from the policy statement titled: "A New Direction for Canada's Pacific Salmon Fishery." This document outlines 12 broad policy principles that will guide the approach of the HCSP. The policy principles are grouped into the three broad categories with respect to conservation, sustainable use and improved decision-making.

3.2 *Responsibilities and Relationships*

Another important concern voiced at the Vancouver forum was the desire for clearly defined roles and relationships for SCs/HAs/HSs, DFO staff, agencies, and other groups. It is important to clarify the roles and responsibilities of the various players in HCS to avoid duplication and ensure that everyone is working together effectively towards the goal of improved habitat protection. Figure 1 outlines the major players in program delivery and the reporting linkages between them.

Stewardship Coordinators, Habitat Auxiliaries and Habitat Stewards

Stewardship Coordinators will undertake the following activities in their assigned areas:

- work with government and non-government stakeholders (i.e., federal provincial and territorial agencies, NGOs, First Nations, Yukon Land Claim entities, local watershed groups, etc.) to promote and implement more effective local protection, restoration and enhancement of fish habitat;
- identify and address habitat concerns by participating in the development of local or regional watershed management plans, or participating in existing land and water use planning processes (i.e., O.C.P., etc.);
- assist in the planning, coordination, and implementation of community fish habitat protection, restoration, and enhancement projects;
- provide public education and information on fish biology, habitat requirements, and the role of the public roles in habitat protection;
- coordinate training for volunteers in habitat assessment and planning, and in inventory, monitoring, and enhancement/restoration techniques;
- encourage community watershed stakeholders to play an active role in local decision-making by compiling and providing fish and habitat information, facilitating stakeholder involvement in projects and processes, and acting as an advocate for local fish habitat concerns; and
- work closely with HAs/HSs and other DFO staff to respond to public concerns and local queries about stewardship and habitat matters.

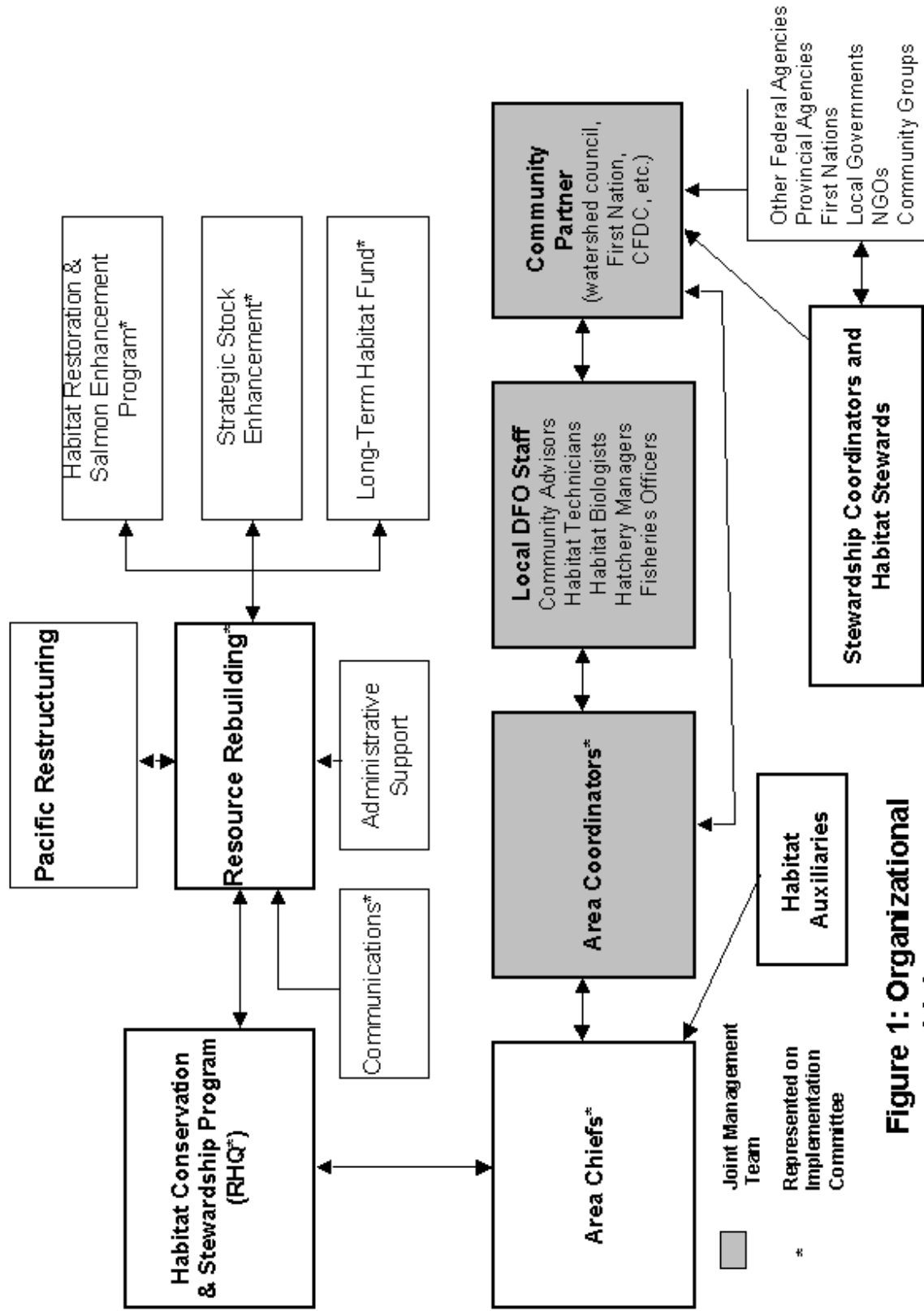


Figure 1: Organizational Linkages

In their areas, Habitat Auxiliaries will:

- work with government and non-government stakeholders (i.e., federal and provincial agencies, First Nations, NGOs, local watershed groups, etc.) to promote and implement more effective local protection of fish habitat;
- provide support for habitat conservation field presence and existing habitat protection programs;
- anticipate, prevent, and, where necessary, respond to habitat impact events;
- work proactively with stakeholders, planners, and other clients by providing “hands-on” technical information to improve planning, decision-making and everyday land use practices;
- provide guidance and advice on the application of habitat protection guidelines and standards, project review process and assessment requirements, and legal obligations under the Fisheries Act;
- monitor works in and around water to ensure that projects comply with habitat protection requirements;
- educate the public and industry about fish needs, habitat impacts, and mitigation measures; and
- work closely with SCs/HSs and other DFO staff to respond to public concerns and local queries about stewardship and habitat matters.

In their areas, Habitat Stewards will:

- work with government and non-government stakeholders (i.e., federal and provincial agencies, First Nations, NGOs, local watershed groups, etc.) to promote and implement more effective local protection of fish habitat;
- provide support for habitat conservation field presence and existing habitat protection programs;
- anticipate, prevent, and, where necessary, respond to habitat impact events;
- work proactively with stakeholders, planners, and other clients by providing “hands-on” technical information to improve planning, decision-making and everyday land use practices;
- educate the public and industry about fish needs, habitat impacts, and mitigation measures; and
- work closely with SCs/HSs and other DFO staff to respond to public concerns and local queries about stewardship and habitat matters.

Because Habitat Stewards are hired external to DFO via a community partner, they lack the authority to represent the Minister of DFO in reviewing projects or providing advice, and in inspection, monitoring, works or undertakings which may affect fish or fish habitat.

DFO

The HCS Program will be delivered primarily by DFO's Habitat and Enhancement Branch in conjunction with other DFO Branches. HEB staff and the SC/HA/HS positions will work as a team in the delivery of program objectives. HEB has a key responsibility in the development of habitat policy in land use planning, habitat management, project review and enhancement and restoration.

The Habitat and Enhancement Branch will have direct and indirect contact at both the regional and local levels with SCs/HAs/HSs. Initially, a small number of SCs and all HA positions will be located in HEB. All HS positions and most SC positions will be hired through the community partners. It is the goal of the HCS program to ensure that all positions created by the program will eventually be located outside of government.

Local Areas

Area Directors are responsible for delivery of all DFO programs in the six areas of the Pacific Region. The Area Directors will ensure that the various elements of the Pacific Restructuring and Adjustment Program, which HCSP is a component, are integrated at the Area level.

Area Chiefs are responsible for delivering HEB programs in the six areas of the Pacific and Yukon Region: the Yukon, North Coast, Upper Fraser, Thompson Mid Fraser, Lower Fraser, and South Coast. They will have a key role in implementing the Program within the HEB areas and will ensure financial accountability of HCS program expenditures within their areas. Area Chiefs will ensure that Area Coordinators (see below) and SCs/HAs/HSs are integrated with other existing area staff to form a team approach to habitat protection, enhancement, and restoration.

Area Coordinators are responsible for overseeing and coordinating the activities of various local DFO HEB staff with respect to the HCS program (see below). They will interact directly with SCs/HAs/HSs, and area HEB staff to ensure that their activities are consistent with the program vision, and will report to the Area Chiefs. Area Coordinators will assist in the hiring of SCs/HAs/HSs, contracting, administrative needs and the development of complementary work plans.

Other duties will include the local coordination of training, mentoring and planning processes. Area coordinators will provide the SC/HA/HS with the primary link to DFO programs. They will also liaise with Regional Headquarters staff and with their counterparts in other HEB areas, to promote consistency in the program's delivery across areas. Area Coordinators will facilitate the regular communication of SC/HA/HSs among themselves, as well as the completion of complementary work plans with appropriate HEB area staff (see below).

Local DFO HEB Staff will work closely with SCs/HAs/HSs, Area Coordinators, and local stakeholders to implement the program. They will communicate with SCs/HAs/HSs on a regular basis to provide guidance and mentoring on habitat protection, enhancement, and

restoration planning and other issues. A team approach to program implementation will be taken, through the joint development of work plans, evaluation measures, sharing of information and equipment, and periodic evaluations of progress with HEB staff where appropriate.

Complementary workplans are critical to ensuring local considerations in each area are reflected in the day to day activities of SCs/HAs/HSs. Such plans will help enable local staff to work cooperatively without the duplication of effort. This team approach ensures workplans of HAs/HSs/SCs and CAs and other local staff are complementary. Local HEB staff will serve as the scientific authorities for contracts and will be responsible for determining whether SCs/HAs/HSs meet their contract obligations.

Community Advisors work with local stakeholders to provide technical and funding support on HEB (and Oceans Canada) contract/volunteer enhancement and stewardship projects. As such, in many cases they will be the logical choice to link with SCs; however, the appropriate relationship will depend on each community's unique biological, social and geographic circumstances. In any case, CAs and SCs will coordinate their activities to complement each other in the delivery of the goals of the HCS Program. CAs and SCs in each area will develop workplans that are complementary to ensure the efficient delivery of the DFO mandate.

Habitat Biologists and Technicians have a legal responsibility to administer the habitat provisions of the Fisheries Act. They review proposals from clients with respect to work that may have an effect on fish habitat, monitor habitat development mitigation and compensation sites, conduct and review research into matters pertaining to fish.

They also act as experts with regard to habitat violations of the Fisheries Act, educate the public and the development sector on fish and fish habitat needs and provide advice on behalf of the Minister on matters pertaining to fish and fish habitat. Habitat Biologists and Technicians will be the primary program link with Ha/HS. Habitat Biologists and Technicians will interact closely with SCs where and when appropriate.

Hatchery Managers provide a link to existing DFO enhancement programs. Where appropriate, the manager will provide office space and equipment to support the SC/HA/HS. The Hatchery Manager will provide the link to community volunteers and hatchery staff, as well as provide education on fish culture.

Resource Restoration Teams (RRT) are made up of area DFO staff (biologists, engineers and technicians) engaged in habitat restoration. The RRT will provide technical expertise, training and aid in proposal development to SCs/HAs/HSs and community groups engaged in restoration work.

Other DFO Branches

Operations Branch

Conservation and Protection

Fisheries Officers are responsible for the enforcement of the Fisheries Act and regulations. HAs may assist them in collecting evidence of habitat violations, and in monitoring compliance. HAs will establish regular communication with Fisheries Officers to support each other on an ongoing basis.

Aboriginal Fisheries Program

SC/HS/HAs will co-ordinate with AFS habitat restoration and enhancement projects in conjunction with other watershed planning, restoration and enhancement initiatives and processes.

Program Services

Administration

The HCSP recognizes the additional administrative burden associated with contracting SC and HS positions with community partners and the hiring of HAs. Therefore, to offset increased administrative demands, HCSP has identified financial resources that will be deployed in consultation with local administrative staff.

Marine and Environmental Habitat Science Division

Science Branch staff conduct scientific studies on various fish and habitat-related matters. Area Coordinator and HEB staff to provide input to Science Branch on potential projects identified by SCs/HAs/HSs and community groups. Branch staff will keep AC and HEB staff aware of research projects for possible use by SCs/HAs/HSs and community groups in planning processes.

Stock Assessment Branch staff is responsible for enumerating and assessing fish stocks. AC and HEB staff will liaise with them to obtain stock assessment data for SC/HA/HSs and community groups to be used in watershed management and other land and water use planning processes, and in prioritizing and developing project proposals.

Regional Headquarters

RHQ HEB staff will oversee the regional implementation of the program in terms of the allocation of funding and consistency of vision across areas. They will ensure regional consistency of training, mentoring, and other support services for SCs/HAs/HSs as well as assistance with respect to watershed management plans (e.g., research, stock assessment, GIS support). RHQ will provide the link to National Headquarters, as well as to the Pacific

Restructuring and Adjustment Program. RHQ is ultimately financially accountable for the program, and will perform regular evaluations of program activities.

Other Agencies and Groups

The **Community Partner** is the organization that will contract directly with DFO and hire the SC/HS. It may be a community roundtable, First Nation, local government, NGO or other organization. In conjunction with the Area Coordinator and local DFO staff, the community partner will be responsible for developing job descriptions and work plans for SCs/HSs, hiring them, monitoring and evaluating their progress, and arranging support services.

Other agencies, governments, and stakeholder groups (i.e., other federal, territorial and provincial agencies, local governments, First Nations, NGOs, community groups) will interact with SCs/HAs/HSs through formal and/or informal processes and arrangements. Formal arrangements will include serving as the Community Partner who hires and manages the SC/HS as part of a Joint Management Team (see below).

In other cases, the SC or HA may be hired by DFO, but deployed by a provincial agency or local government. Informal arrangements will include the SC/HA/HS providing public education, training, inventory, monitoring and compliance, and other services to stakeholders, as part of his or her contractual duties.

Joint Management Team

The establishment of a **Joint Management Team** comprised of the Community Partner, Area Coordinator, and appropriate local DFO staff is recommended. This team will be involved in hiring for the SC/HS position, developing the contractual obligations and completing auditing and evaluation work. Depending on the community and the management team membership, there will be one or more teams per HEB area.

3.3 Supporting Initiatives

Several initiatives are under way to further develop and implement the HCS program. Ten key initiatives are described below.

1. Watershed and Fish Planning Group

One of the roles of SCs/HAs/HSs will be to assist community groups with planning processes, including the development of watershed management plans or their equivalent. As such, it is essential that they have the training, tools, and other support necessary to participate effectively or initiate these processes. The Watershed and Fish Planning Group (WFPG) is comprised of members from the Implementation Committee and has the following objectives:

- The development of a work book describing the current legal framework and the administrative environment with respect to the management of land and water resources in

BC and the Yukon. This would include existing and sunrise planning and administrative processes. An analysis would be included to allow SC/HS/HA to identify how the laws and planning processes interact with each other. For example, such an analysis would include topics such as the paramountcy of law, the division of powers between the federal, provincial/territorial, regional, First Nation and municipal governments, and the nature of plans, their development, implementation, and processes of variance.

- The development of a “cookbook” that presents the objectives of watershed planning and describes strategies and tactics to meet the objectives of fish habitat protection and stewardship of aquatic resources; and
- In support of the “cookbook”, the collection of watershed plans, planning methodologies, processes, analyses, etc., from within and beyond the Pacific Region. This would be available to SC/HS/HA to allow them to consider which processes would be effective in their geographical areas. The format has yet to be determined.

2. Stewardship Centre

A need has been identified for a Pacific Region Stewardship Centre that would provide education, outreach, training, information, research, and networking support services for stewardship and habitat conservation to a host of diverse client groups. In November 1998, an ad hoc stewardship working group funded a preliminary scoping exercise to explore options and opportunities for such a centre. The working group participants currently include: DFO; Environment Canada (EC); MELP; the Ministry of Municipal Affairs; the Habitat Conservation Trust Fund; B.C. Hydro; the Ministry of Transportation and Highways; and the Provincial Capital Commission.

The following tasks are underway and will continue into the 1999/2000 fiscal year:

- Web page. A web site (<http://www.stewardshipcentre.org>) is under construction that will include downloadable versions of the entire Stewardship series of documents. DFO, MELP, and EC are providing digital copies of their stewardship materials and are contributing limited funding to convert these materials to pdf files for the web.
- Consultation. As soon as funding is defined and available, a multi-sectoral team will be contracted to identify and consult with leaders in industry, academia, the environmental community, government, and funding organizations to determine their requirements and potential contributions to a Stewardship Centre. A forum may then be convened with representatives of these groups to confirm and develop funding, roles, and structure of the centre.
- Creating the Centre. If the consultation results are favourable and funding available, a Board of Directors will need to be established, an Executive Director hired, and a site for the Centre secured. Startup costs and staffing support will also be required, and all agencies have been requested to identify what support they could offer. DFO has

indicated that it could provide some funding as well as a SC position for fisheries support services during startup of the centre and for several years of its operation.

3. Community Capacity Assessment

- A report entitled *Getting Ahead of the Curve: An Assessment of Community-Based Processes and Organizations* is now being completed.⁸ The report examines the experience with community-based initiatives and programs in B.C. to determine the appropriate roles for community groups in fish habitat protection. It outlines the kinds of activities in which community groups have been engaged and where they have both fallen short and succeeded in protecting fish habitat. The document also includes a list of criteria for judging successful community-based organizations.
- The report indicates that community groups must evolve from their current support role of providing a “bio-technical” extension service to government agencies (e.g., hatchery operation, stream inventory work) to becoming proactive advocates for habitat protection through formal and informal processes and forums. Five levels of community group activities have been identified:
 - small-scale local initiatives focused on a particular stream, etc.;
 - streamkeeper groups and other local organizations with an additional planning focus;
 - well-established groups that undertake planning and management on a watershed basis;
 - watershed councils that integrate local and watershed interests for fish and other resource sectors; and
 - coast-wide community, linking the interests of different fishing communities together, as well as linking coastal communities to the inland freshwater habitat areas.

The report also identifies seven criteria for an effective community group:

1. broad local support;
2. a stable functioning group;
3. knowledge and understanding of community functions;
4. financial stability;
5. a track record of accomplishments;
6. an understanding of habitat-related development and approval processes; and
7. diverse sources of funding.

Getting Ahead of the Curve is useful for identifying the type of successful community groups with which HCS may wish to partner. It also makes several conclusions and recommendations

⁸ Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Habitat and Enhancement Branch (May, 1999); *Getting Ahead of the Curve: An Assessment of Community-based Processes and Organizations*; Howard Paish and Associates

that indicate the necessary focus that the Program and these groups must take if they are to be effective at protecting fish habitat in the long run.

4. Watershed Prioritization Criteria

In other related work, a number of draft criteria have been developed for consideration in selecting significant watersheds for HCS planning and project selection purposes. Priority watersheds will be chosen based on a number of criteria, which may include:

- fish production potential for wild stocks;
- current production level for wild stocks;
- biodiversity/uniqueness of stock;
- risk to habitat;
- manageability of fish produced;
- manageability of watersheds (size);
- cost and extent of restoration and enhancement opportunities;
- involvement of other partners;
- importance to First Nations; and
- human population and development pressure

5. Training

An HCSP training committee has been established to identify training requirements, as well as to develop appropriate course curriculum and to arrange its delivery. All SCs/HAs/HSs are expected to complete the regional orientation and training program, as well as subsequent specific training as needed, (e.g., courses on integrated watershed planning).

6. Mentoring

Mentoring is divided into two categories. The first focuses on SCs, HSs and community groups with regard to building local community capacity and knowledge. The second focuses primarily on HAs with respect to gaining an understanding of DFO policies and practices.

Mentoring SCs/HSs and Community Groups

Mentoring of SCs/HSs and community groups will be focused on three primary objectives:

- establishing community interest(s) for fish habitat advocacy in areas of the Pacific Region that are not currently served by such interests/groups/initiatives;
- providing specialized advice, where required, with respect to existing or emerging community interests/groups/initiatives to improve their effectiveness as advocates for fish habitat protection; and
- fostering an understanding of the administration of the Fisheries Act, both as a stand alone document and in relation to other legislation, administrative processes and planning.

Mentors would be drawn from a pool of individuals with significant knowledge and experience in the various aspects of community group function, the administration of the Fisheries Act and related legislation, and fish habitat advocacy. These individuals could come from existing community organizations, retired resource management personnel, First Nations, agency personnel, academia, communications professionals, private landowners, and other groups. The criteria for identifying ‘mentors’ and the means of deploying them to work with various SCs/HSs and community groups is still to be developed. However, mentoring will be conducted in coordination with the DFO staff at all levels in the Pacific Region. It will also be directly linked to the developing Stewardship Centre.

Mentoring Habitat Auxiliaries

Where considered advisable by local HEB staff, HAs will be mentored by experienced habitat management staff to gain an understanding of policies and procedures. Mentoring will reflect the unique characteristics of each area and the focus of the specific HA position (e.g. agriculture, forestry, urban development, enforcement, etc., or a combination of same). The HA would accompany the DFO person, who would describe the technical, legal and policy basis of departmental actions taken in regard to any situation. Through this, the HA would be given insight into the department’s local administration of the Fisheries Act.

This DFO mentoring could also be offered to SCs and HSs where appropriate. The understanding gained through mentoring should foster understanding between SCs/HSs and DFO staff, and allow consistent approaches to habitat protection.

A high degree of flexibility in approach is desirable. The form that the mentoring will take should be discussed between, and agreed to, by both parties. Agreements should be informal and adaptive, with the overall objective of forming long term positive relationships between external and DFO staff.

7. Communications

HEB has a communications function designed to promote its activities and increase public understanding of the value of habitat and the need for stewardship. Promoting the Resource Rebuilding initiative, including HCS, will be a significant communications focus over the next four years.

A DFO web site dedicated to the HCSP with links to other sites will be developed. A broad range of communication tools and media may be developed internally, or with the support of external partners, to support HCSP.

8. Monitoring and Evaluation

A monitoring and evaluation program is critical to HCSP. The SC, HA and HS positions, as well as supporting initiatives (e.g., mentoring, stewardship centre, etc.), will be monitored on a regular basis to ensure they are proceeding according to the vision, goals, and objectives of the HCS program. They also serve to ensure that adaptive management of the SC/HA/HS experience can be applied to improve their future effectiveness.

Monitoring and evaluation will concentrate on the following broad areas:

- effective participation in existing land and water use planning processes and/or the development of watershed management plans or equivalent (plan implementation, as well as plan development);
- the development of broad-based partnerships for fish habitat advocacy among stakeholders (government and non-government) who affect or have an interest fish habitat – including the creation of broader based multi-stakeholder groups, forums, round tables, etc.;
- improved communication and coordination with respect to fish habitat advocacy across all stakeholders;
- the promotion and adoption of a land stewardship ethic among stakeholders;
- education and technical extension services provided by SCs/HAs/HSs;
- community capacity to advocate for fish habitat protection at the local level;
- inventory and assessment to aid more informed decision making;
- improved compliance and monitoring of development projects;
- increased local stream surveillance and monitoring; and

- better habitat protection and an improved state of fish habitat.

In addition to focusing directly on the SC/HA/HS positions with regard to delivering program objectives, the effective interaction of these new positions with existing DFO Staff in the areas of cooperation, communication linkages, program consistency, etc., will also be evaluated. Detailed criteria for monitoring and evaluation is being developed.

9. Stream Team Initiative

Stream Teams are groups of high school and post-secondary students who promote awareness and stewardship of local watersheds. Team members are trained and certified under DFO's volunteer Streamkeepers program. In the spring of 1999, the Stream Team will complete a "road show," travelling to six B.C. communities. A one-day workshop will provide participants with a hands-on introduction to stewardship practices as well as a package of materials to establish their own community Stream Team.

10. Salmonids in the Classroom Curriculum Revision

As part of its Community Involvement program, DFO provides educational materials for teachers and students to promote awareness of salmon habitat, biology, and stewardship. The Salmonids in the Classroom kit was developed more than ten years ago and was a great success. A survey conducted by the BC Ministry of Education and selected teachers has revealed that an update is advisable. Under a proposed contract, the primary and intermediate curriculum materials will be revised to make them more engaging, regionally inclusive, and science-based, with a greater emphasis on habitat and stewardship.

Appendix

SC/HA/HS Pilot Positions

DFO Regional Headquarters staff initiated pilot SC/HA/HS positions in each of the six HEB areas in November 1998. These local test cases will provide valuable feedback on contract design, job descriptions, roles and responsibilities, operational linkages with DFO staff and other stakeholders, joint funding opportunities, administrative support requirements, training needs, and other matters prior to full-scale implementation of the HCS program.

Work to establish community contracts and begin staffing started in early January 1999. The DFO pilot placements are a mix of SCs/HAs/HSs in areas with high priority habitat concerns.

Stewardship Coordinators

<i>Partner</i>	<i>Location</i>
Salmon River Watershed Roundtable*	Salmon Arm
Bulkily Morose Salmonid Preservation Group*	Smithers
Haida Gwaii Marine Resources Group*	Queen Charlotte City (1/2 py)
Regional Aquatic Management Society	Port Alberni
Caribou-Chilcotin Fisheries Enhancement Society	Williams Lake (1/2 py)
Nechako-Upper Fraser Fisheries Council	Prince George (1/2 py)
Lower Fraser - Coquitlam to Alouette	Maple Ridge

Habitat Auxiliaries

<i>DFO Assignment</i>	<i>Location</i>
DFO - Agricultural Liaison	Abbotsford
DFO - Habitat Auxiliary	Salmon Arm
DFO - Habitat Auxiliary	Williams Lake
DFO - Habitat Auxiliary	Queen Charlotte City
DFO - Habitat Auxiliary	Whitehorse

Habitat Stewards

<i>Partner</i>	<i>Location</i>
Veins of Life Watershed Society	Victoria
Regional Aquatic Management Society	Gold River
Comox - Strathcona Regional District / District of	Campbell River