



# City of Maple Ridge News Release

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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## **Alouette River Ecosystem Partnership Created to Restore Pacific Salmon Runs**

**Maple Ridge, BC:** A new Alouette River Ecosystem Partnership (AREP) has been created to work constructively with BC Hydro and the Provincial government to restore the salmon runs and ecosystem damage created by the damming and alteration of the Alouette River on the traditional lands of the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations over the past century.

The partnership includes the Katzie and Kwantlen First Nations, the City of Maple Ridge and the Alouette River Management Society who have all been working to improve the state of the Alouette River ecosystem but will now do so in a more collaborative and united way.

BC Hydro plans to submit a water licence application to the provincial Comptroller of Water Rights this fall to secure perpetual water rights over the Alouette Lake and River.

BC Hydro has perpetual water licences for two of three water licences granted to operate the Alouette and Stave generating systems. Water licence 124724 expires on December 31, 2018 and BC Hydro intends to apply for a perpetual water licence this Fall.

AREP seeks direction from the Comptroller of Water Rights, or formal commitment from BC Hydro to the restoration of the seven species of Pacific Salmon and the creation of permanent fish passage at the Alouette River Dam.

The goals of the Alouette River Ecosystem Partnership are to:

- Create a functional watershed ecosystem in the Alouette River area that restores all seven species of Pacific Salmon
- Provide a scientifically sound and functional fish passage that reconnects the watershed above the dam with the river for the benefit of all species of salmon and freshwater fish
- Protect and enhance the current freshwater species
- Enhance wildlife resources in the ecosystem, and
- Develop recreational and educational opportunities with BC Parks and other partners

AREP has sent letters to both the Comptroller of Water Rights and BC Hydro requesting meetings on this important matter and look forward to ensuing discussions.

### **Quotes:**

“The Katzie people look forward to working together with our partners to encourage BC Hydro and the provincial government to fully restore the seven salmon species and fish passage to Alouette Lake,” said Councillor Peter James, of the Katzie First Nation.

“The Kwantlen First Nation is excited about the opportunity to work collaboratively and respectfully with our partners to develop new ways to give renewed health to the Alouette ecosystem for future generations,” said Tumia Knott, Councillor, Kwantlen First Nation.

“The Alouette River Management Society is ready to work with all partners to ensure the return of all salmon species and the improvement of the ecosystem,” said Cheryl Ashlie, Alouette River Management Society President.

“The City of Maple Ridge stands with our partners. We expect firm commitments from Hydro and the Province to restore our salmon runs and commit to the principles we have established in our Memorandum of Understanding,” said Nicole Read, Mayor of Maple Ridge.