

Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program



For Immediate Release

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Salmon Hero Honoured by Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program

Vancouver, B.C. – The Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fraser Basin Council announced the winner of their annual Fraser Salmon Hero Award on June 9 as part of their joint Fraser Salmon and Watersheds Program (FSWP). The award honours a person who has made a tangible contribution to the preservation, enhancement and improvement of the Fraser River watershed and its populations of Pacific salmon over the past year. This year's winner is Mark Johnson, Community Advisor in the Fraser Valley with Fisheries and Oceans Canada.

A grant of \$4,000 will be divided among ten organizations in Mr. Johnson's name: Abbotsford Ravine Park Salmon Enhancement Society, Chilliwack River Action Committee, Chilliwack Senior High School Environmental Club, Cultus Lake Aquatic Stewardship Strategy, Fraser Valley Bald Eagle Festival Society, , Fraser Valley Conservancy, Fraser Valley Regional Watersheds Coalition, Rivershed Society of BC, Skowkale Hatchery Revitalization and Education Project, and the Stave Valley Salmonid Enhancement Society.



Mark Johnson (middle) accepts his Salmon Hero cheque from Marion Robinson of Fraser Basin Council and Terry Tebb of Pacific Salmon Foundation.

The award, which is sponsored by Rocky Mountaineer Vacations, was announced at the Fraser Assembly. This annual meeting was established to promote information sharing and coordinated delivery of the FSWP among those working to enhance salmon and watershed health in the Fraser Basin. This year's Fraser Assembly focused on collaboration, and the Salmon Hero was selected with special consideration for his outstanding ability to foster effective collaboration.

"It is an honour to recognize Mark Johnson as this year's hero for his tireless efforts and dedication to restoring salmon in the Fraser Basin," said Dr. Brian Riddell, CEO and President of Pacific Salmon Foundation. "Mr. Johnson is a partnership catalyst for a number of projects and initiatives in the Fraser

Valley. He has supported and played integral roles in the Chilliwack River Action Committee, the Cultus Lake Aquatic Stewardship Strategy, the Fraser Valley Regional Watersheds Coalition, and many others. He is a great ambassador for what FSWP stands for.”

“We applaud Mark Johnson for his contributions to restoring ecosystems in the Fraser Basin,” said David Marshall, Executive Director of the Fraser Basin Council. “Champions such as Mark are an inspiration to everyone who cares about the health of local watersheds and wants to find a way to lend a hand.”

Interested citizens can visit ThinkSalmon.com to share their salmon stories and to learn more about watershed and salmon issues, projects and actions. To find out about local groups that work to preserve your watershed, contact Pacific Streamkeepers Federation at pskf@direct.ca.

“We have been a proud sponsor of the Salmon Hero Award for the last two years and it is an honour to recognize dedicated stewards such as Mark Johnson,” said Ian Robertson, Executive Director, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs of Rocky Mountaineer. “At Rocky Mountaineer, we are dedicated to preserving the national environment along our rail routes and encourage our guests to appreciate the beauty of the Fraser Basin ecosystems.”

Rocky Mountaineer Vacations (RMV) is a family owned British Columbia based business and the owners and operators of the internationally acclaimed Rocky Mountaineer train in Western Canada. As part of the company’s commitment to preserving the regions through which it operates, RMV sponsors PSF programs such as Fraser Salmon Heroes Awards, the Fraser River recovery efforts and a children’s book on the Fraser bear.

The Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program (www.fswp.ca) is jointly managed by Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Fraser Basin Council and is funded by the provincial Living Rivers and the federal Fisheries and Oceans Canada. The FSWP mission is to inspire changes in human behaviour for the benefit of salmon and the watersheds on which we all depend. The program funds a range of projects to protect and restore the salmon habitat and water quality, integrate planning and governance, improve information and approaches for sustainable integrated fisheries management, and educate and engage the public.

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To set up interviews, please contact Ruth Atherley of AHA Creative Strategies Inc. at ruth@ahacreative.com or 604-303-1052. For further information on FSWP, contact Megan Moser at Pacific Salmon Foundation, at mmoser@psf.ca or 604-664-7664 ext. 113.