



NEWS RELEASE

Salmon Heroes honoured by the Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program at Fraser Assembly meeting

VANCOUVER, June 24, 2007 – The Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program (FSWP) and Rocky Mountaineer Vacations today jointly announced the winners of the inaugural Fraser Salmon Hero Awards. These awards honour those who have made a tangible contribution to the preservation, enhancement and improvement of the Fraser River watershed and its populations of Pacific salmon. An award is given in each of the four areas addressed by FSWP, and each awardee is honoured by a \$1,000 contribution to the project or group of their choice.

Tina Donald of Simpcw First Nation in Barriere is the Salmon Hero in the area of Collaborative Governance. She has worked with Simpcw fisheries for 15 years. Under her guidance, the Simpcw communal fishing program in the North Thompson and Upper Fraser drainages has expanded into a sustainable selective harvest program in partnership with DFO and with other First Nation organizations. The fishing program focuses on educating youth and her award will benefit the Raft River Interpretive School Program.

In the area of Education and Engagement, the honoured Hero is Victor Elderton of the North Vancouver Outdoor School which is at the centre of the Dave Marshall Salmon Reserve in Brackendale. An award winning provincial and national centre of excellence that has operated for 39 years, the school is an international benchmark in environmental action education, providing life-changing hands-on experiences with salmon for everyone from elementary students throughout the province to national and international policy makers and the general public.

Chief Fred Sampson of the Siska Band in Lytton is honoured as Salmon Hero in the area of Fisheries Management. He has led the Siska towards innovation and partnerships that allow them to selectively harvest higher valued salmon products. By generating more revenue from less fish, the hope is that economic needs can be met while also rebuilding weak salmon runs. The youth program of the Siska Traditions Society will receive the award money.

Matt Foy of Fisheries and Oceans Canada in Delta is the Salmon Hero in the area of Habitat & Water Restoration. He has combined his technical ability to pioneer and localize habitat improvements with a talent for coalition building to the benefit of hundreds of habitat restoration projects in the Fraser Basin. Salmon River Enhancement Society is the beneficiary of this award.

The Heroes are being recognized by FSWP at its annual Fraser Assembly meeting, held in Prince George on June 25-26. Fraser Assembly participants are welcome from all stakeholder and First Nations groups addressing salmon and watershed issues in the Fraser Basin. FSWP seeks advice from the Fraser Assembly on priority activities for each of its program areas.

The Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program is jointly managed by Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) and the Fraser Basin Council (FBC). Rocky Mountaineer Vacations, owners and operators of the Rocky Mountaineer and Whistler Mountaineer trains, sponsored the awards. Nominations were invited from throughout the Fraser Basin via ThinkSalmon.com and other outreach. The Salmon Heroes being honoured were selected from among the nominees by advisory teams from the Fraser Assembly for FSWP.

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"It is an honour to recognize our 2008 heroes for their tireless efforts and dedication to restoring salmon in the Fraser Basin," stated Dr. Paul Kariya, Executive Director of PSF. "The leadership and positive impact of these honorees is a role model for the youth of British Columbia."

"BC wild salmon are a precious resource," said David Marshall, Executive Director of the Fraser Basin Council. "We are proud to pay tribute to these Salmon Heroes, some of the truly inspirational people who give so much of themselves to safeguard the health of salmon and watersheds."

"We extend our sincere congratulations to the Fraser Salmon Heroes," said Ian Robertson, Executive Director, Corporate Communications & Public Affairs of Rocky Mountaineer Vacations. "Their dedication to sustaining BC's Pacific Salmon population is truly outstanding and we are honoured to play a part in recognizing their remarkable efforts."

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 is contributing \$400,000 over the next eight years to support PSF programming in BC. This includes the Fraser Salmon Heroes Awards, on-going fundraising and educational dinners and the Gates Creek Recovery Effort, a small and important watershed on the Fraser River.

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Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program



Media Backgrounder

See also www.fswp.ca, www.ThinkSalmon.com

The Fraser Salmon & Watersheds Program (FSWP) seeks to inspire changes in human behaviour for the benefit of salmon and the watersheds on which we all depend. Launched in 2006, it is jointly managed by Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fraser Basin Council. FSWP's business plan defines three long range goals

1. Foster effective communications and governance approaches
2. Protect and restore habitat and water
3. Support responsive and effective fisheries management

FSWP is supported by the Living Rivers Trust Fund with \$10 million over four years and Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Fraser Basin Initiative (FBI) with \$10 million over five years, contributed as \$5 million cash and \$5 million in technical expertise, staff time, and resources. Pacific Salmon Endowment Fund Society provides \$5 million over five years towards capacity at Pacific Salmon Foundation, along with commitments from several private sector partners.

FSWP pursues its mission through ongoing collaboration to identify, scope, implement, and fund priority activities in four program areas:

- Habitat & water restoration and stewardship
- Integrated planning and governance
- Improved information/ approaches for sustainable integrated fisheries management
- Education and engagement

FSWP seeks to engage First Nations and their world views in all four areas. To date, FSWP has funded over 117 projects to benefit Fraser Basin salmon and watersheds.

Pacific Salmon Foundation (www.psf.ca) is an independent, non-profit organization and a national leader in the conservation and recovery of Pacific salmon. Formed in 1987, PSF directs funding to grassroots, volunteer-driven projects focused on the conservation of Pacific salmon. PSF has grown into the leading Canadian non-profit organization to forge partnerships with local communities, First Nations, all levels of government, industry, educational institutions, commercial and recreational fisheries and non-profit organizations all working together to restore and enhance Pacific salmon.

Fraser Basin Council (www.fraserbasin.bc.ca) is a charitable non-profit society that promotes sustainability in all its dimensions: social, economic and environmental. The Council's vision for the Fraser Basin is a place where social well-being is supported by a vibrant economy and sustained by a healthy environment. The Council has a unique collaborative governance structure that brings together on its board of directors representatives from the four orders of Canadian government (federal, provincial, municipal and First Nations), as well as the private sector and civil society. The FBC helps others collaborate for their mutual benefit and carries out various research initiatives, strategies and programs that support sustainability.