

**BCSRIF**

**British Columbia  
Salmon Restoration  
and Innovation Fund**

**ANNUAL  
RESULTS SUMMARY**

**2024-2025 Year 6 Report**

**A Catalyst for Pacific Salmon  
Resilience and Recovery**



Fisheries and Oceans  
Canada

Pêches et Océans  
Canada



BRITISH  
COLUMBIA

COLOMBIE-  
BRITANNIQUE

**Canada**

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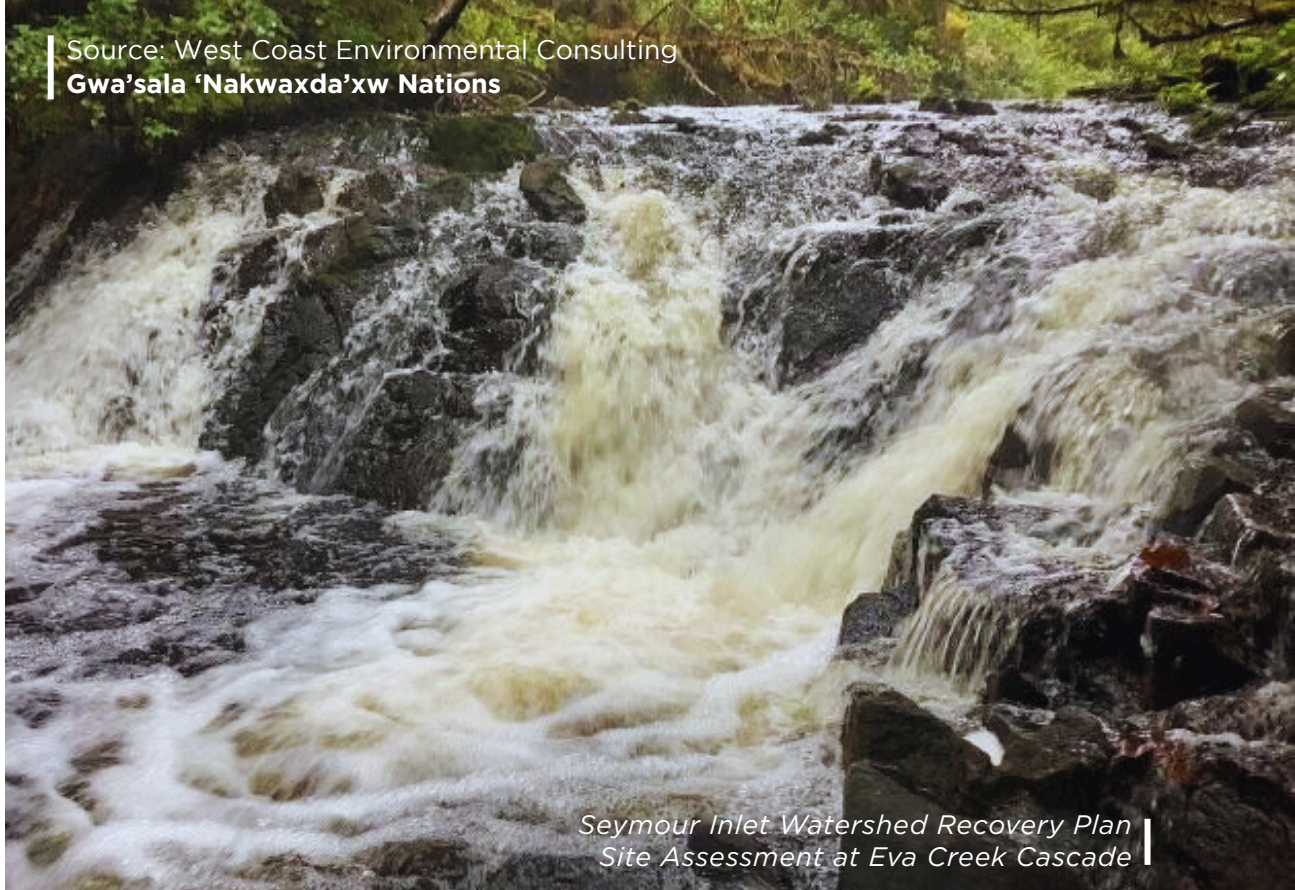
ISSN: 2816-8402

# Acknowledgement

The British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BCSRIF) recognizes that the efforts of its funding recipients span numerous traditional territories of First Nations.

We honour the deep-rooted knowledge and stewardship that Indigenous Peoples bring to these lands. With heartfelt gratitude, we pay respect to those whose territories we work upon, live in, and serve.

Source: West Coast Environmental Consulting  
Gwa'sala 'Nakwaxda'xw Nations



*Seymour Inlet Watershed Recovery Plan  
Site Assessment at Eva Creek Cascade*

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# About the Program

The **British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund (BCSRIF)** supports the recovery of wild Pacific salmon and contributes to the modernization of the fish and seafood sector in British Columbia (B.C.). Over **six years**, the program has **delivered measurable results** through targeted investments across three pillars: **Innovation, Infrastructure and Science Partnerships**.

Jointly administered by the federal and provincial governments, BCSRIF is a high-impact contribution fund that reflects a **coordinated approach to advancing shared priorities in salmon conservation, ecosystem health, and sector sustainability**. Continued investments and collaborative governance position BCSRIF as a **catalyst for Pacific salmon resilience and recovery**, supporting long-term benefits for salmon populations and the communities and sectors that rely on them across B.C.

## Program Overview

**170** total ratified projects

**\$257** million in contribution funds allocated

**73** active projects in 2024-25,  
representing **\$128.4 million in ongoing funding to 2026**

Since 2019, BCSRIF has **approved 170 projects and committed \$257 million in funding**. These initiatives are led by Indigenous organizations, environmental non-governmental organizations (ENGOs), stewardship groups, academia, and industry partners working collaboratively to **address Pacific salmon challenges across their lifecycle**, from spawning to ocean migration. Through effective regional delivery and sustained partnerships, the program has allocated over 99% of available funds, **maximizing public investments** and strengthening the foundation for adaptive management and **long-term resilience**.

# Executive Summary

In the second year of BCSRIF's Phase 2, 73 active projects **delivered real outcomes for people and communities, deepened partnerships**, helped **restore Pacific salmon and their ecosystems**, and **advanced aquatic research and sustainable fisheries**, creating lasting impacts across British Columbia's rural, remote, and coastal regions.

**Indigenous-led** (29 of 73; 40%) and **regionally focused** (34 of 73; 47%) **projects represented the largest share of the portfolio**, supporting approaches informed by local knowledge, ecosystem context, and community priorities. Academic and industry partners advanced applied science and technology, from urban laboratories to remote inlet sites, contributing to fisheries modernization and strengthening infrastructure to support resilience to climate and ecosystem change. This report presents **Year 6** recipient-reported performance outcomes arising from these investments.

## BCSRIF Year 6 Project Performance Highlights



**Capacity Building:** **230+** rural and remote jobs, **1,000** people trained, **1,346** total people paid, with Indigenous Peoples represented in **46%** of the BCSRIF project workforce.



**Partnerships:** **588** organizations contributing expertise, and **51** projects integrating Indigenous Knowledge.



**Science, Innovation & Technology:** **31** publications, **39** research studies, and **41** innovative products/processes adopted.



**Pacific Salmon Recovery:** **85%** of projects advanced salmon recovery, and **63** projects focused on at-risk species.



**Habitat Restoration:** **79** initiatives, **27** engineered site designs, **22** watershed recovery plans, and **372,794 m<sup>2</sup>** habitat restored or reopened.

*"The **two consecutive BCSRIF projects have been massive catalysts** for strong partnerships, restoration of habitat vital to salmon, increased monitoring efforts, local capacity building, education, conservation, and stewardship efforts... with **lasting positive benefits far beyond this program.**"*

— BCSRIF Project Recipient, Stewardship Group (South Coast)

As BCSRIF approaches its sunset in March 2026, **Year 6 results** demonstrate a program that has **strengthened community capacity, advanced collaborative science and innovation, supported salmon recovery, and contributed to substantial habitat restoration across British Columbia.**

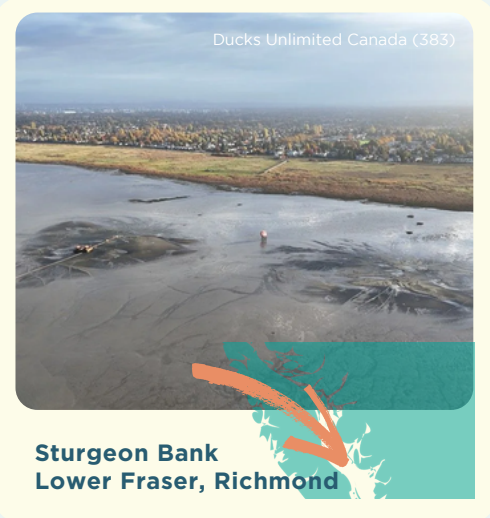
# Project Spotlights

These BCSRIF project features and achievements from 2024-25 **highlight tangible outcomes and showcase scalable solutions** that can further strengthen salmon survival and support a more resilient future for B.C.'s environment and economy.

## 1 Advancing Sediment Solutions to Restore the Fraser River

**Ducks Unlimited Canada** and partners Raincoast Conservation Foundation, Tsawwassen First Nation, and Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance, with BCSRIF's \$9.78 million investment since 2021, are rebuilding lost tidal marsh at Sturgeon Bank. By **repurposing dredged sediment** from maintenance of marine and trade routes, this climate-informed project is creating essential rearing habitat for juvenile salmon and strengthening natural flood protection for the City of Richmond.

**With continued investment**, project leads **could expand** sediment placement, maintain and adapt mounds as sea levels rise, and **scale this model to suitable estuaries across B.C.**



## 2 Investing in the Science That Strengthens Pacific Salmon Survival



With support from BCSRIF's \$9.71 million investment since 2020, the **Pacific Salmon Foundation**, working closely with the BC Conservation Foundation, several First Nation partners, academic institutions, and field research organizations, has expanded ecological monitoring and PIT tagging infrastructure from Goldstream to Campbell River on Vancouver Island.

The initiative has **generated unprecedented data on Chinook and coho survival, migration timing, escapement, and predation pressures**. To date, researchers have deployed **more than 400,000 PIT tags**, complemented by new genomic and pinniped-monitoring tools that are reshaping regional understanding of salmon productivity.

**With continued investment**, the partnership could **sustain critical monitoring infrastructure, advance ecological and predation research**, and **build long-term datasets** that directly support evidence-based management of priority salmon populations.

## Project Spotlights



### Scaling Innovation to Strengthen Climate-Resilient Shellfish Production

With **\$4.5 million in BCSRIF funding over six years**, the **B.C. Shellfish Growers Association** is advancing a **modern, climate-ready shellfish sector** in the Pacific Region. Through targeted industry capacity-building and training, growers strengthened regulatory readiness and gained a competitive advantage in product traceability. These efforts culminated in the implementation of an innovative broodstock pilot program, which has produced **approximately 30 million high-performing oyster seed** to date, demonstrating strong survival rates and climate-resilient traits.

**With continued investment**, project leads could **expand broodstock research, scale seed trials, strengthen licensing pathways, and address emerging risks such as disease**, supporting the long-term sustainability and resilience of B.C.'s shellfish aquaculture industry.



Locations throughout Eastern Vancouver Island and South Coast

Together, these featured projects demonstrate **how** BCSRIF investments **are driving meaningful restoration, innovation, and long-term resilience for salmon and communities across B.C.**

**For a complete list of BCSRIF-funded projects, please visit:**

<https://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/fisheries-peches/initiatives/fish-fund-bc-fonds-peche-cb/projects-projets-eng.html>.

# Section 1: Program at a Glance

## Mandate and Strategic Alignment

BCSRIF supports **coordinated action between two governments**. By embedding **regional co-governance and aligning investments with Pacific Region priorities**, the program advances a comprehensive strategy for salmon recovery and modernization of the fish and seafood sector.

As a program under the **National Fisheries Funds** (2019–2024) and the **Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative** (2021–2026), BCSRIF puts these regional and national strategies into action, ensuring that **shared priorities translate into measurable ecological, socio-economic, and science advancements**.

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## Program Objectives, Partnerships and Impact

Through **joint decision-making by Fisheries and Oceans Canada** (DFO) and **B.C.'s Ministry of Water, Land and Resource Stewardship** (WLRS), alongside coordinated delivery by the Joint Operations Committee and regional DFO Secretariat, funding partners work closely with project recipients to **accelerate restoration, innovation, and stewardship activities**.

This collaborative approach streamlines intergovernmental initiatives, **strengthens partnerships** with First Nations, ENGOs, industry, stewardship groups, and academic researchers in order to support **knowledge sharing, and co-developed solutions for sustainable long-term ecosystem recovery and socio-economic resilience**.

## Program at a Glance

### Funding Approach and Portfolio

BCSRIF advances **DFO's mandate** for sustainable fisheries and supports B.C.'s **WLRS priorities and mandate** to restore estuaries, intertidal zones, and critical salmon habitat. Guided by these shared objectives, **BCSRIF has enabled over \$257 million in targeted contribution fund investments** across the Pacific Region while demonstrating strong **delivery performance**.

#### Program Highlights (2019 - Present)

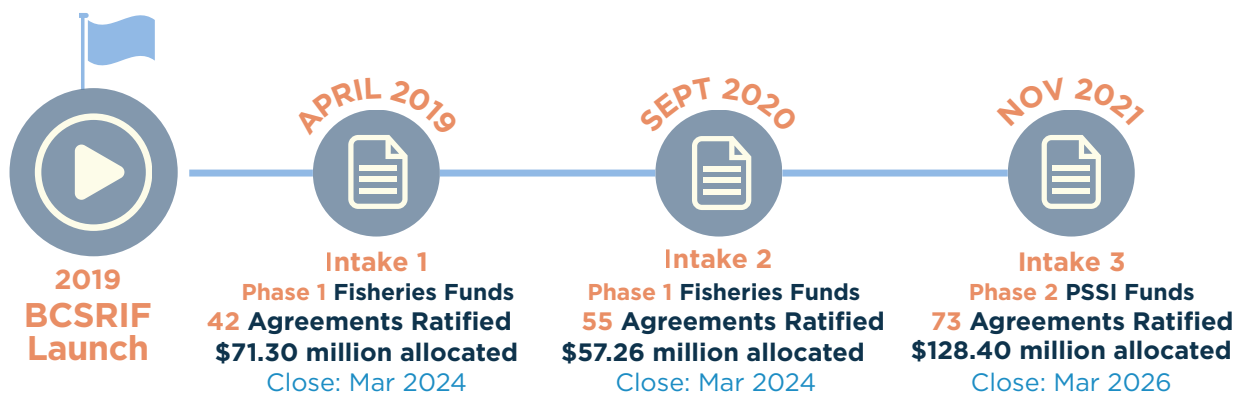


Figure 1: Program Timeline (2019 - Present)

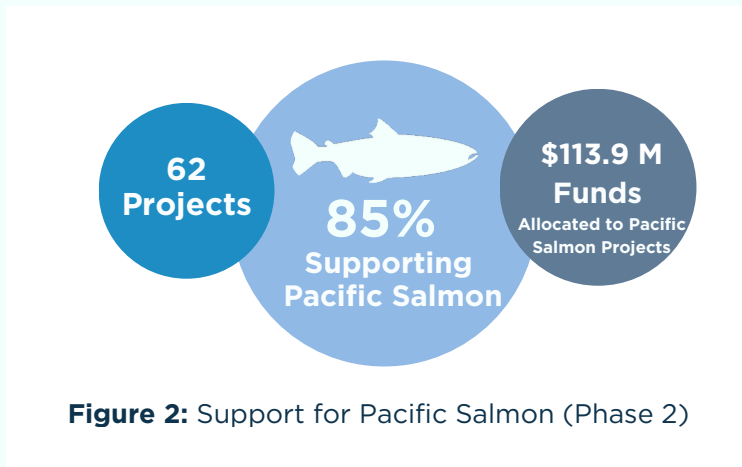
- **170 projects delivered** across major watersheds, rural and urban regions
- **\$257M invested in priority areas** across the Pacific Region
- **100% of funds allocated** to projects carrying out activities in and for B.C.
- **99% of allocated funds expended**, supported by robust financial management
- **100% on-time performance** for core service standards related to approvals and payments

**These investments strengthen coordination across the sector**, enhance local and regional stewardship capacity, and accelerate the uptake of new tools and practices to support program objectives for Pacific salmon.

# Section 2: Progress and Performance

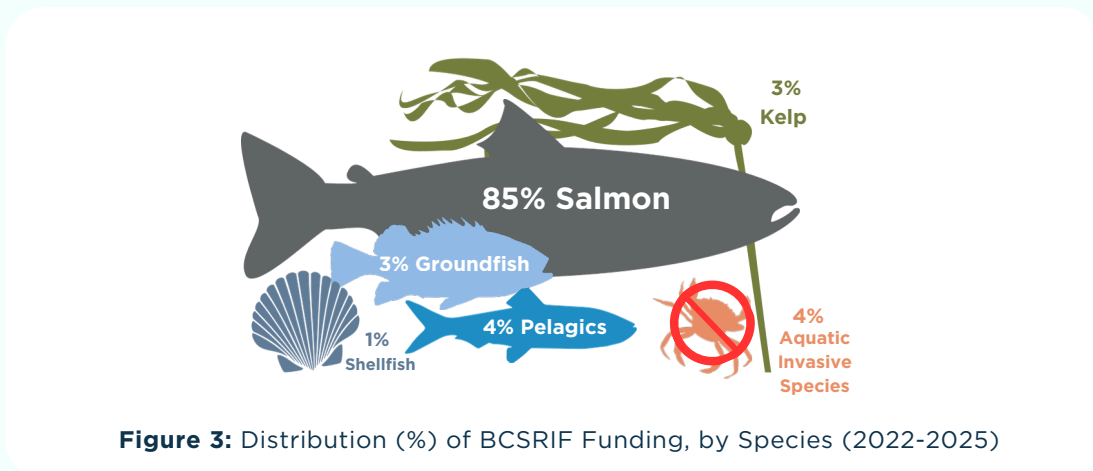
## Phase 2 Overview and Year-in-Review

In Phase 2, BCSRIF expansion achieved significant progress, with **73 projects advancing innovation, science partnerships, and infrastructure improvements**. Of these, 62 directly support Pacific salmon, accounting for 85% of the active portfolio (Figure 2) and underscoring the program’s core commitment to salmon recovery.



**Figure 2:** Support for Pacific Salmon (Phase 2)

While Pacific salmon remain the cornerstone of BCSRIF investments, the program **has also allocated \$14.5 million to strategically support other species and ecosystem components critical to marine health and fisheries resilience** (Figure 3).



**Figure 3:** Distribution (%) of BCSRIF Funding, by Species (2022-2025)

**Across the portfolio, BCSRIF supports** a diverse set of initiatives, expanding knowledge, modernizing fisheries tools and practices, and addressing ecosystem pressures.

## Progress and Performance

Building on BCSRIF's program performance and funding strategies, the following **project features demonstrate how targeted investments are advancing program objectives** across B.C.

### Enhancing Results for Pacific Salmon

#### \* Closing Critical Data Gaps to Improve Conservation Strategies

Reliable data is essential for effective salmon management, yet significant monitoring gaps across B.C. watersheds make it difficult for resource managers, biologists, and partners to assess survival, migration timing, and mortality patterns of Pacific salmon.

To address these gaps, the **Pacific Salmon Foundation** (PSF), working with 10 Indigenous organizations, academic institutions, and field research groups, is leading this project to **identify critical life-stage bottlenecks for Chinook and coho salmon**. In 2024–25, the project reported progress across several key activities, including:

- Implementing non-lethal genomic tools, installing PIT-tags, and conducting laboratory trials to identify genetic markers linked to survival stressors.
- Evaluating winter diets, habitat use, and pinniped predation to identify high mortality periods in the Strait of Georgia.
- Establishing PIT arrays in 12 river systems, improving DFO's 2025 Coho Marine Forecast Bulletin with new population estimates.

**These advancements inform** management decisions on migration, escapement, stress responses, and survival. The project disseminated findings through peer-reviewed papers, workshops, and educational resources to support managers, biologists and partners.



## Progress and Performance

### Improvements for the Fish and Seafood Sector

#### \* *Advancing Sustainability and Competitiveness in Shellfish Aquaculture*

**B.C.'s shellfish aquaculture sector plays a vital role in supporting coastal communities** yet faces growing pressures from climate change, ocean acidification, and increasing demands for market traceability. To strengthen the sector's resilience and modernization, this **industry-led project from B.C. Shellfish Growers Association** aims to enhance the broodstock selection program, building from successes from their BCSRIF Phase 1 initiative. In 2024-25, the project reported measurable progress, including:

- Distributing 2.1 million oyster seed from selectively bred families to license-holders, achieving mortality rates under 5% and improved product quality.
- Conducting genetic laboratory trials, validating traits like climate resilience through analysis to assess the genetic correlation between growth, resistance to ocean acidification, as well as pathogen survival trials, led by academic partners and researchers.
- Strengthening industry readiness through grower training, enhanced traceability tools, and broodstock management development.

**These advances support increased survival and marketability for B.C.'s shellfish aquaculture industry**, supporting long-term sector competitiveness, and strengthened climate resilience of B.C.'s aquaculture sector.



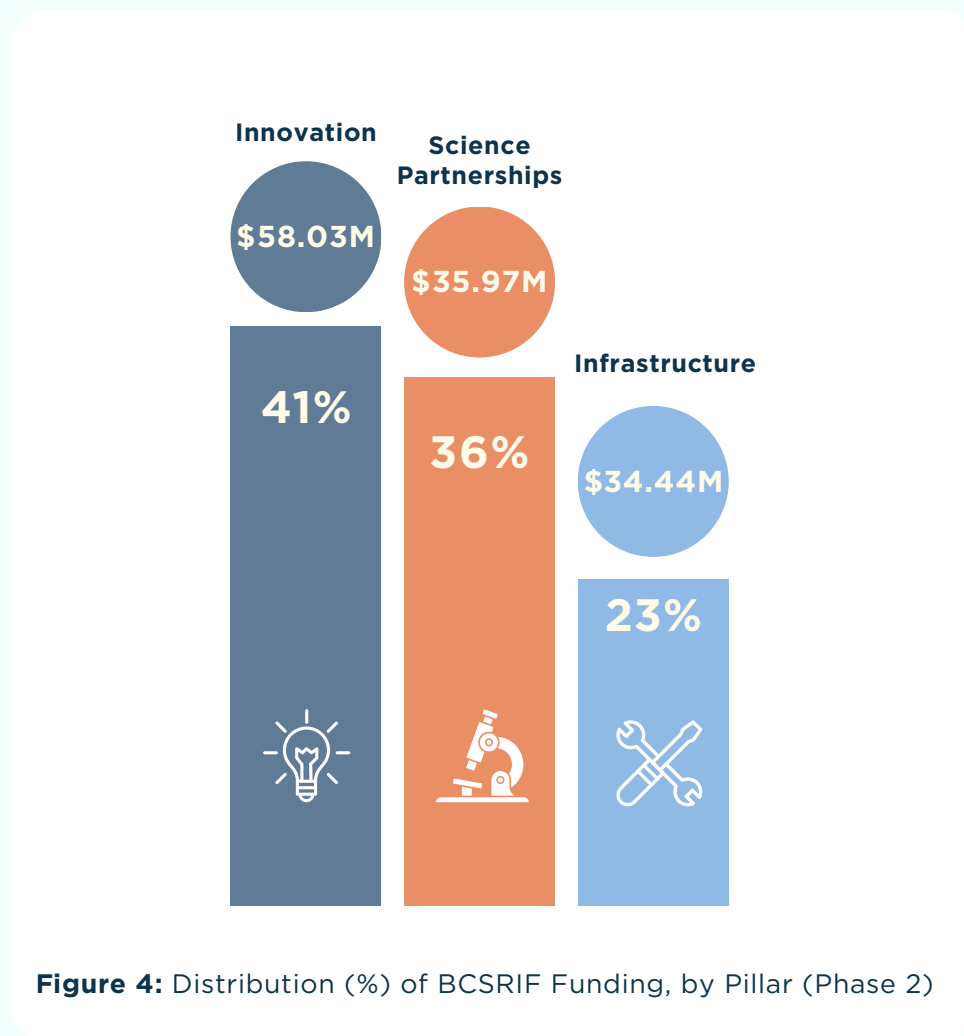
Together, these project results show how strategic BCSRIF investments are accelerating innovation, strengthening sector resilience, and **delivering meaningful outcomes for Pacific salmon and the fish and seafood industry.**

## Progress and Performance

### Strategic Investments Across Pillars

Building on a year of measurable progress for salmon and ecosystems, BCSRIF Phase 2 continues to deliver and distribute strategic investments across its three interconnected pillars (Figure 4):

**Innovation** (41%), **Science Partnerships** (36%) and **Infrastructure** (23%).



**Figure 4:** Distribution (%) of BCSRIF Funding, by Pillar (Phase 2)

## Progress and Performance



### INNOVATION: 30 Projects

Mobilizing innovative ideas and technologies to boost productivity while conserving and supporting the protection and restoration of Pacific salmon in B.C.

### Resourceful Restoration

#### \* Pioneering Sediment Solutions to Revive Fraser River Estuary Salmon Habitat



Jamie Guak, Ducks Unlimited Canada (383)

Sediment delivery pipeline transports sediment from the Fraser River to the Sturgeon Bank pilot project site.

Sturgeon Bank in the Fraser River estuary has experienced extensive **habitat loss due to human activities, including the degradation of more than 395 acres of tidal marsh**, critical habitat for species like Pacific salmon.

The *Sturgeon Bank Sediment Enhancement Pilot Project* is addressing this decline by using **dredged sediment to restore marsh habitat, strengthening ecosystem health, carbon storage, and flood resilience**. This work is part of the BCSRIF-funded ReFRESH project, **led by Ducks Unlimited Canada** in collaboration with Raincoast Conservation Foundation, First Nations and collaborators.

Beyond environmental restoration and scientific advancement, the project's **innovative approach** also supports climate resilience through natural flood protection for the City of Richmond.

## Progress and Performance



### SCIENCE PARTNERSHIPS: 26 Projects

Supporting collaboration with universities, First Nations, and research organizations to deepen understanding of pressures facing wild salmon and inform effective conservation and management actions.

### Collaborative Science

#### \* Partner-Driven Science Supporting B.C.'s Forage Fish and Marine Food Web



Virginia East, Project Watershed (397)

Pacific Sand Lance collected during forage fish monitoring

**Forage fish are crucial to B.C.'s marine ecosystem**, yet major knowledge gaps remain regarding species spawning, rearing, and feeding.

**Project Watershed** brings together a coordinated science partnership with First Nations, academia, and citizen science groups to enhance **habitat models and validate them through environmental DNA sampling, egg collection**, and field surveys in the Salish Sea and west coast Vancouver Island.

The project's results, openly shared across the forage fish network, will **strengthen marine conservation efforts, support species-at-risk recovery, and guide long-term protection** of essential forage fish habitats.

K'omoks First Nation, 2023  
BCSRIF Project 318

## Progress and Performance



### INFRASTRUCTURE: 17 Projects

Investing in the systems, tools and natural structures needed to support sustainable fishing practices and protect and restore wild B.C. salmon and their habitats.

### Green Solutions for Salmon

#### \* *Rebuilding Salmon Highways in Clayoquot Sound*



Ross Reid, Redd Fish Restoration (349)

Creation of an engineered log jam along Tranquil (Hiṣyaq̓lis) Creek in Clayoquot Sound.

Pacific salmon are declining in Southern B.C., with Clayoquot Sound seeing up to 95% losses due to freshwater habitat degradation from forestry.

To combat this, **Redd Fish Restoration Society**, in collaboration with local First Nations, installed 11 engineered log jams in Tranquil Creek.

These structures **enhance stream margins, provide shelter and feeding areas, deepen pools, and improve spawning habitats**, ultimately supporting healthier salmon populations and aiding watershed recovery.

Together, these improvements support healthier salmon populations and contribute to the long-term watershed recovery.

K'omoks First Nation, 2023  
BCSRIF Project 318

# Section 3: Outcomes for People, Communities and Partnerships

During 2024-25, BCSRIF projects delivered notable socio-economic benefits alongside ecological outcomes, reflecting **a year of high activity and strong community engagement**. Investments supported **workforce development, strengthened partnerships, and expanded employment and training opportunities** across regions and communities in the province.

## Equity, Inclusion and Reach

In Phase 2, **project-reach and scale of influence was primarily regional (34%)**, followed by provincial (18%), community-level (13%), and a smaller share extending internationally (7%) and nationally (1%) (Figure 5).

Applying a **Gender-Based Analysis Plus (GBA+) lens** allows BCSRIF and other regional initiatives to identify who is participating in funded projects and where gaps in access may occur.

In 2024-25, recipient-reported data showed broad representation across project teams:

- **Women:** Present in 71 of 73 projects
- **Indigenous Peoples:** Present in 52 of 73 projects
- **Youth:** 35 projects (33%) involve students or youth participants
- Additional representation included **minority groups** (25), **seniors** (20), **2SLGBTQI+ participants** (19), **newcomers** (11), **people with diverse abilities** (8), and **veterans** (3).

Tracking participation trends offer program-level observations on how communities engage with contribution funding and help identify areas where future adjustments may support broader or more balanced and equitable participation. **As reporting practices continue to evolve, there may also be opportunities to expand data collection to deepen understanding of roles, representation, and community-level context of inclusion.**

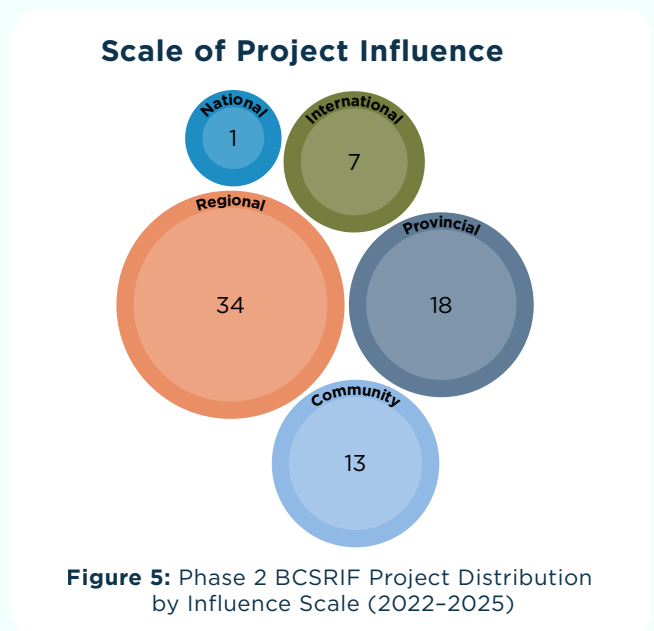


Figure 5: Phase 2 BCSRIF Project Distribution by Influence Scale (2022-2025)

### Partnerships and Collaborative Networks

BCSRIF Phase 2 **projects continue to demonstrate strong, cross-sector collaboration**, with many initiatives **leveraging diverse partnerships to increase impact and expand capacity**. Recipient-reported data from 2024-25 shows the scale of this engagement, with **588 partnerships including 256 Indigenous organizations involved in project delivery** through knowledge, leadership, in-kind contributions, and capacity (Figure 6).

#### Collaborative Networks in BCSRIF Project Delivery



**588** Overall Partnerships

**256** Partnerships with Indigenous Organizations

**Figure 6:** Recipient-Reported Partnerships in 2024-25 Active Projects

Partnerships remain fundamental to BCSRIF's delivery approach, helping ensure that **projects are informed by local and Indigenous knowledge, strengthened by specialized technical and scientific expertise, and positioned to achieve** outcomes that extend beyond individual project mandates.

### Sector-Wide Participation

A significant proportion of BCSRIF projects are **Indigenous-led or co-delivered by Indigenous partners**. In Phase 2, the funding distribution again highlights the diversity of organizations engaged in project delivery, underscoring the program's broad reach and sector-wide participation:

- Indigenous Organizations: **40%**
- Environmental Non-Governmental Organizations (ENGOs): **21%**
- Post-Secondary Institutions: **16%**
- Industry: **11%**
- Stewardship Groups: **12%**

Across the province, projects reflect **collaborative action by combining technical expertise, community knowledge, and available resources** to work toward common goals.

### Collaborative Governance for Salmon Recovery

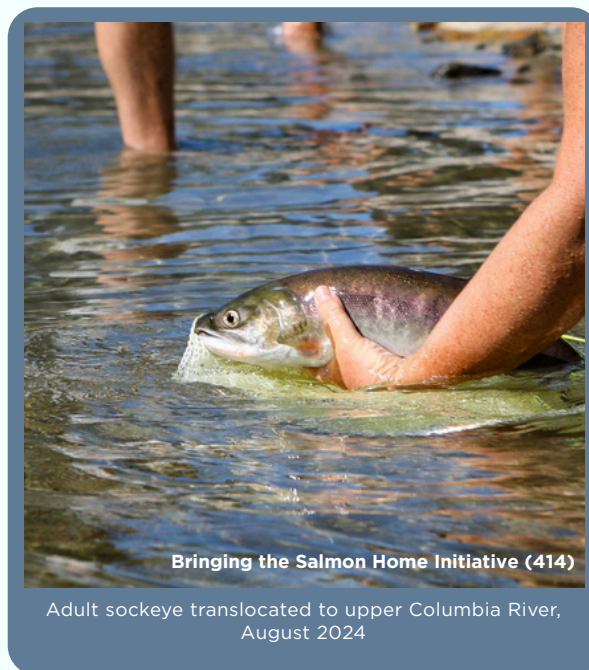
#### \* Integrating Indigenous Knowledge and Science in the Upper Columbia

Dams have blocked salmon from returning to the upper Columbia River since the late 1930's, resulting in **ongoing ecological and cultural losses** to the Syilx Okanagan, Secwépemc, and Ktunaxa Nations.

*Bringing the Salmon Home: The Columbia River Salmon Reintroduction Initiative* is the Indigenous-led collaboration of the Syilx Okanagan Nation, Ktunaxa Nation, Secwépemc Nation, Government of Canada, and Province of British Columbia. **These five governments are working towards the collective goal of reintroducing salmon into the vast watershed that was once the headwaters origin of the greatest salmon runs in the world.**

This initiative is assessing the feasibility of salmon reintroduction in the upper Columbia by **weaving together Indigenous Knowledge and western science. Its scope extends beyond technical studies to include strengthening Indigenous connections to salmon culture, and transboundary relationships** with U.S. Tribes and allies.

Ceremony, storytelling, and community engagement have brought together thousands of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, **reinforcing a shared vision for salmon recovery and showing how partnerships transform collective hopes into coordinated action for future generations.**



### Employment, Training and Community Engagement

BCSRIF investments continue to build capacity across British Columbia by supporting high-quality **employment, expanding technical skills, and strengthening stewardship networks in both rural and urban communities.**

#### Employment Outcomes

In 2024–25, BCSRIF-funded initiatives **employed 1,346 individuals, bringing the cumulative total to over 5,800 people paid through BCSRIF project delivery since 2019.** Nearly half of this year’s workforce (624 individuals; 47%) were Indigenous persons working directly on projects or through partner organizations. Recipients also reported 236 positions in rural or remote communities, providing essential capacity in areas where local employment opportunities are often limited.

#### Strengthening Rural Employment and Indigenous Leadership in Ecosystem Protection

##### \* *Central Coast – Mitigating the Effects of the Invasive European Green Crab*

In Bella Bella, the **Heiltsuk Tribal Council** is leading efforts to **address the ecological threat posed by invasive European green crab**, which also has **socio-cultural implications for marine harvests and traditional food systems**, central to Heiltsuk culture.

The project **expands remote community employment and provides specialized training** in ecological monitoring and invasive species management. This contributes to both **economic stability and skill development**, particularly in roles that support long-term stewardship. The integration of Heiltsuk traditional knowledge with western science methods further **reinforces cultural continuity while strengthening technical capacity.**

Together, these efforts **advance Indigenous-led stewardship, support local socio-economic well-being, and build the community’s capacity** to protect ecosystems and long-term biodiversity.



Kristine Seibel, Heiltsuk Tribal Council (417)

European Green Crab collected from a trapping site in Bella Bella, British Columbia.

### Training and Skill Development

**BCSRIF projects delivered significant training and skill-building opportunities during 2024–25.** Training activities reached 1,000 participants, including 436 Indigenous Peoples, developing the workforce in B.C. with advanced technical and environmental stewardship skills. Volunteer engagement remained high, with **882 volunteers contributing their time and expertise to project activities** across the province.

### Advancing Research and Career Pathways in Environmental Science

#### \* *Identifying and Mitigating Hot Spots of Salmon Exposure to Toxic Road Runoff*

Tire wear particles are an emerging contaminant of concern due to the formation of 6PPD-quinone, a chemical linked to coho mortality and increasingly detected in urban waterways such as those in Greater Vancouver.

To address these risks, the **University of British Columbia (UBC) Department of Engineering** is collaborating with Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations, municipalities, and environmental groups to advance research on tire-derived contaminants and green infrastructure, with a **strong focus on hands-on training and knowledge transfer.**

In 2024–25, the project:

- Trained Indigenous partners in sampling, monitoring, and interpreting contaminant impacts.
- Engaged youth and schools, such as through monitoring at Musqueam Creek, to spark interest in science and engineering.
- Supported fieldwork that generated new data on contaminant pathways and mitigation options.

By linking research, education, and field-based stewardship, the project is **building environmental literacy and strengthening the technical skills** needed for future resource stewards and science professionals.



The UBC Department of Engineering (361)

Hand-collected streamwater samples used for 6PPD-Q concentration analysis.

# Outcomes for People, Communities and Partnerships

## Community Engagement and Capacity Building

BCSRIF-supported initiatives continue to deepen community involvement and strengthen stewardship networks across British Columbia. **Through education, volunteer participation, and collaborative local partnerships, projects help broaden public understanding of salmon ecosystems** and foster community-based environmental stewardship.

### Skills for Salmon Stewardship

#### \* *Building Community, Skills, and Stewardship in an Urban Watershed*

In Greater Victoria's urban watershed, **Peninsula Streams Society** is enhancing community stewardship through hands-on salmon habitat restoration and monitoring.

Municipalities, First Nations, academic institutions, and local volunteers work together to **advance community-based practices**. Through participation, community members, university and K-12 students are gaining experience in PIT-tagging, smolt trapping, and assessing and restoring streamside habitats.

In addition to supporting the project objectives throughout the watersheds, these activities **build environmental awareness, support pathways into conservation careers, and strengthen local stewardship capacity** in an urban environment.



Peninsula Streams Society (435)

Recaptured coho smolt, PIT-tagged at Colquitz River smolt fence three days prior.

Across the province, BCSRIF projects are building **the skills, knowledge, and experience required to sustain long-term salmon recovery efforts**. Through employment, technical training, and community-based stewardship, these initiatives generate **tangible socio-economic benefits while empowering communities to protect and restore their local ecosystems**.

# Section 4: Outcomes for Pacific Salmon and their Ecosystems

In Year 6, BCSRIF projects produced clear ecological gains, restoring habitat, improving watershed function, and **enhancing long-term salmon resilience aligned with conservation priorities.**

## Key Trends and Highlights in 2024-25

- **Multi-Factor Restoration:** Projects enhanced stream channels, riparian areas, floodplains, and estuaries.
- **Advancements in Fish Passage:** Barriers were removed or upgraded, reopening spawning and rearing habitats.
- **Support for Watershed Planning and Design:** Expanded recovery plans and site designs advanced integrated, long-term ecosystem strategies.

Investments advanced restoration, fish passage improvements, watershed planning, and nature-based solutions, addressing key limiting factors for salmon across B.C. The following feature highlights a multifactor, low-tech approach to improving fish habitat.

## Restoring Connectivity through Nature-Based Solutions

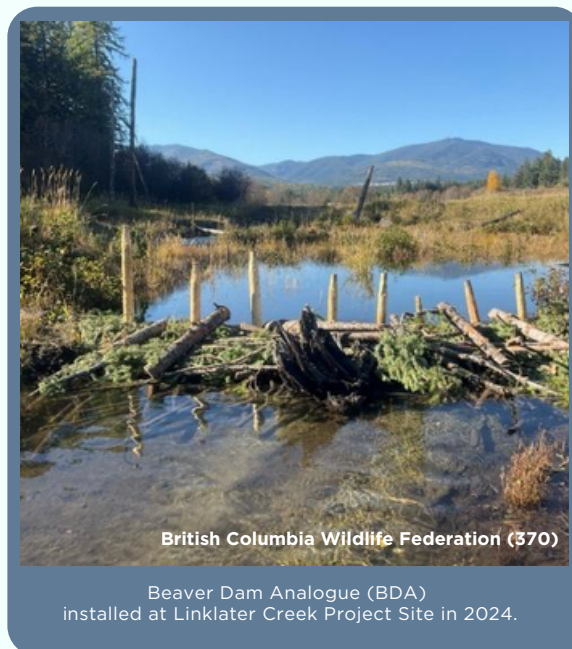
### \* *B.C. Wildlife Federation – 10,000 Wetlands Initiative*

Many B.C. streams have lost the structural complexity needed to support salmon spawning and rearing. The *10,000 Wetlands Initiative* demonstrates a low-tech response through the **construction of beaver dam analogues (BDAs)**—human-made structures designed to mimic the ecological functions of natural beaver dams.

In 2024-25, **70 BDAs** were installed across six sites, producing immediate ecosystem benefits, including:

- Increased hydraulic complexity, reducing erosion and restoring connectivity.
- Improved resilience to flood, fire, and drought.

These cost-effective structures are **creating conditions that support salmon life-stages while laying the foundation for long-term habitat recovery.**



# Outcomes for Pacific Salmon and their Ecosystems

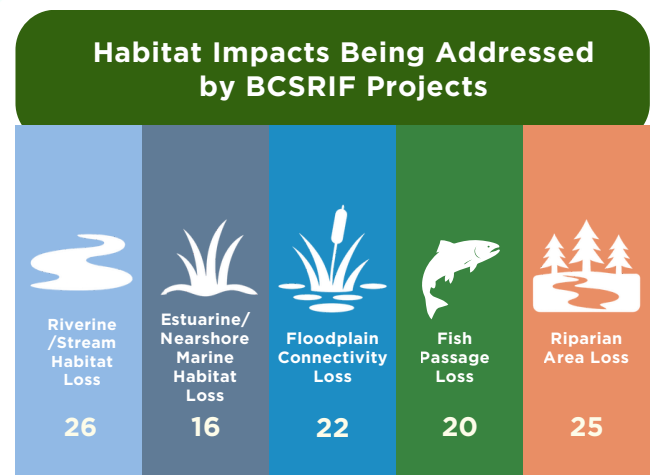
## Addressing Fish Habitat Limiting Factors

In 2024-25, **80% of projects reported addressing one or more key limiting factors in salmon recovery**, targeting root causes of habitat decline to improve watershed function (Figure 7).

### Reported Limiting Factors Addressed in 2024-25:

- Riverine/stream habitat loss: **26 Projects**
- Estuarine/nearshore habitat loss: **16 Projects**
- Floodplain connectivity loss: **22 Projects**
- Fish passage loss: **20 Projects**
- Riparian area impacts: **25 Projects**

Increased responses across all factors compared to 2023-24 indicate ongoing progress. **Multi-factor habitat assessments provide communities with insights for effective watershed planning**, as shown in the project feature below.



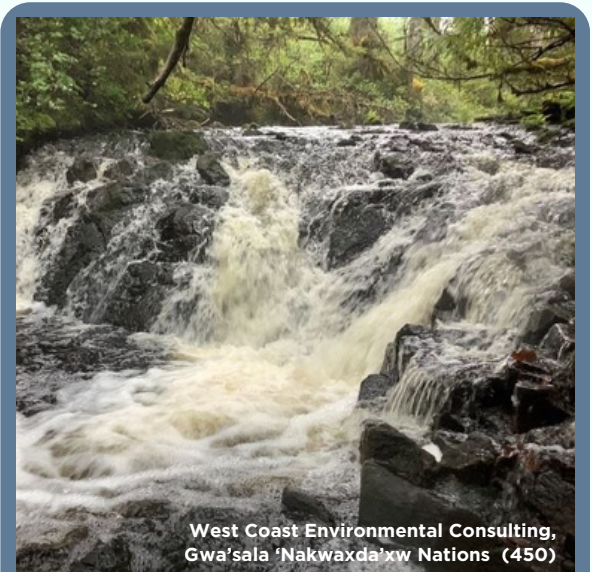
**Figure 7:** Fish and Fish Habitat Impacts Being Addressed by BCSRIF Projects (2024-2025)

## Indigenous-Led Watershed Planning for Salmon Resilience

### \* Identifying Habitat Constraints to Guide Watershed Restoration

The Seymour Inlet, home to 27 watercourses that **once supported vibrant salmon populations**, has seen fish and fish passage loss without fulsome assessment due to colonial displacement from this remote area. Through this work, **Gwa'sala-'Nakwaxda'xw Nations (GNN)** is advancing the *Fully Integrated Salmon Habitat Restoration Project* which aims to address the disconnection from traditional territory, knowledge, and ecological data **through Indigenous-led stewardship and planning**. In 2024-25, GNN guardians and biologists were deployed to gather drone imagery, field observations, and mapping data at priority sites. The assessments provide:

- Updates to historical habitat information.
- Opportunity to evaluate changes to salmon habitat and watercourse connectivity.
- Restoration and enhancement opportunities.



West Coast Environmental Consulting, Gwa'sala 'Nakwaxda'xw Nations (450)

The Eva Creek Cascade site assessment aids in developing the Seymour Inlet Watershed Recovery Plan.

This **remote project in Indigenous-led stewardship supports the development of a watershed recovery plan for the area** and long-term salmon ecosystem resilience.

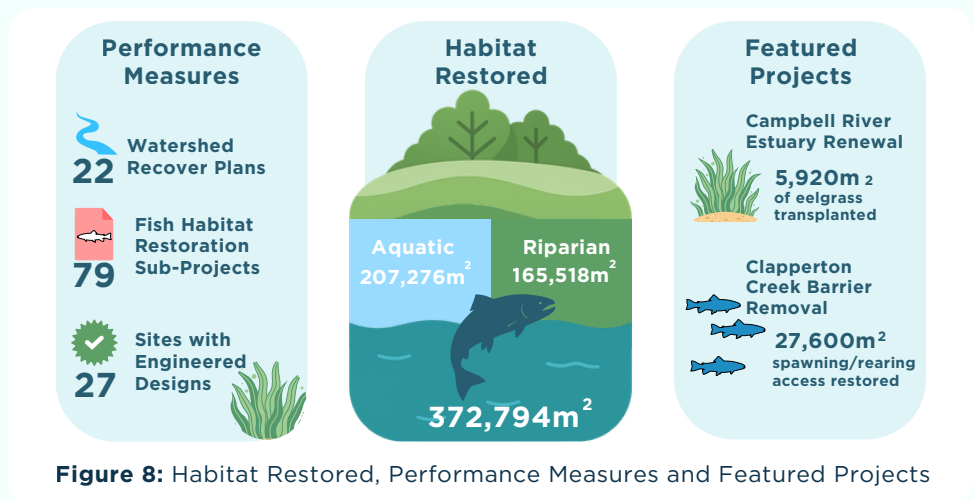
# Outcomes for Pacific Salmon and their Ecosystems

## Restoring Habitat and Planning for Long-Term Recovery

This section summarizes the progress and outcomes of Phase 2 BCSRIF projects focused on fish and fish habitat restoration. In 2024–25, projects reported developing **22 watershed recovery plans**, advancing **79 restoration initiatives**, and preparing **27 engineered designs** (Figure 8).

Recipient-reported outcomes showcase **ongoing efforts** to improve aquatic ecosystems, restore critical habitats, and **support fish recovery in B.C.**

Project-level results demonstrate how restoration actions enhance fish recovery and habitat function in key areas.



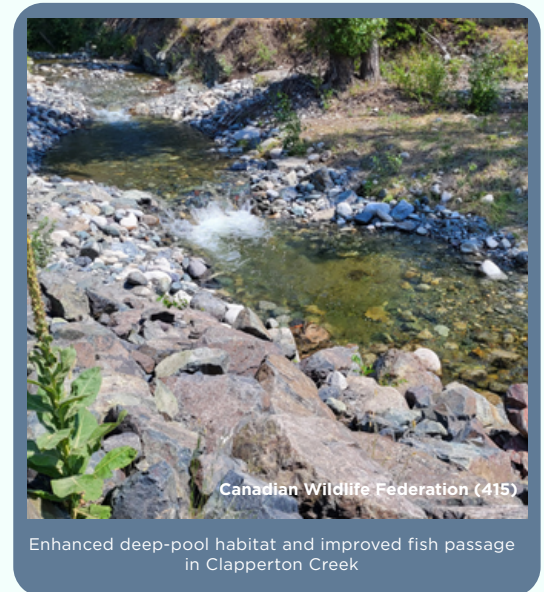
## Restoring Freshwater Pathways

### \* Removing Barriers for Pacific Salmon

Connectivity between spawning, rearing, and foraging habitats is essential for salmon survival, and in 2024–25 the **Canadian Wildlife Federation (CWF)** & partners advanced major improvements through the *Restoring Freshwater Connectivity for Pacific Salmon* initiative, in continuation of a Phase 1 BCSRIF project.

A key achievement was the removal of a collapsed irrigation dam on Clapperton Creek, completed with the Lower Nicola Indian Band and partners, **restoring year-round access to 27,600 m<sup>2</sup> of spawning and rearing habitat for salmon.**

Alongside this and other fish passage initiatives, project teams have also **developed Watershed Connectivity Remediation Plans** across B.C. and **enhanced the BCFishPass modeling framework** to more effectively prioritize barrier rehabilitation projects. These efforts will help ensure salmon can reach vital habitats, strengthening populations, and supporting the long-term health of B.C.'s watersheds in collaboration with First Nations, communities, and government partners.



### Species at Risk Performance Measures

Phase 2 projects continue to prioritize species listed by COSEWIC and B.C.'s Conservation Data Centre, **helping conserve biodiversity** within salmon-bearing watersheds, recognizing that the health of Pacific salmon as keystone species is **inseparable from the overall integrity of their ecosystems**.

#### Number of Projects Reporting a Focus on Key Species at Risk

- Southern B.C. Chinook: **32 Projects**
- Interior-Fraser coho: **12 Projects**
- Fraser sockeye: **11 Projects**
- Thompson-Chilcotin steelhead: **8 Projects**
- Other SAR listed by the Committee on the Status of Endangered Wildlife in Canada (COSEWIC): **18 Projects**
- Other species that are red or blue-listed by the B.C. Conservation Data Center (CDC): **6 Projects**

As the example below shows, project-level work focused on Species at Risk is strengthening fish recovery and habitat function across B.C.

#### Restoring Critical Habitat for Species at Risk

##### \* *Advancing Local Stewardship for Long-Term Estuary Revitalization*

Decades of industrial activity degraded the Campbell River Estuary, a key nursery habitat for juvenile salmon. **Greenways Land Trust and the Wei Wai Kum First Nation** are leading a process-based restoration effort to rebuild salt marsh and eelgrass ecosystems, and strengthen local stewardship.

#### Key achievements include:

- Elevation-lowering to prepare restoration areas
- 2,000 m<sup>2</sup> of eelgrass transplanted in 2023-24
- 3,920 m<sup>2</sup> of eelgrass transplanted in 2024-25

These actions **restore critical rearing habitat for out-migrating chum and Southern B.C. Chinook and build long-term stewardship capacity** across the Nation and regional partners.

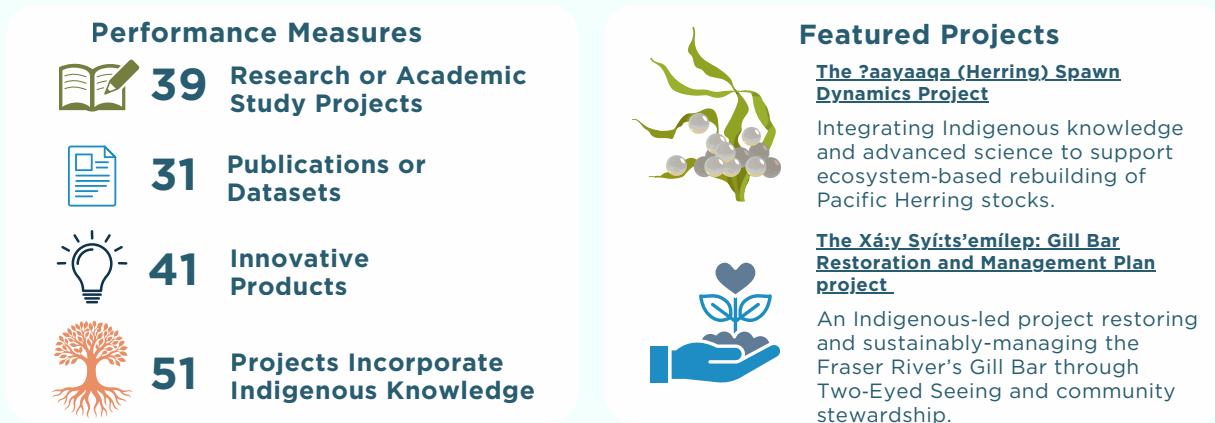


The results reported in Section 4 of this report **underscore the continued importance of sustained restoration efforts** to secure resilient ecosystems for Pacific salmon in the years ahead.

# Section 5: Advancements for Aquatic Research and Sustainable Fisheries

BCSRIF investments continue to **advance applied research, scientific analysis, and technical innovation** that support sustainable fisheries management, resilient commercial fisheries, and the long-term health of Pacific salmon and aquatic ecosystems.

In 2024-25, BCSRIF **projects enhanced data to support informed decision-making, strengthen technological capacity,** and integrate multiple knowledge systems, including **Indigenous Knowledge**, to address complex and changing environmental conditions.



**Figure 9:** Research, Innovation and Indigenous Knowledge

In 2024-25, salmon and fisheries projects achieved notable advancements:

- **39** projects focused on research and academic studies.
- **31** projects produced publications and datasets.
- **41** projects developed innovative tools.
- **51** projects integrated Indigenous Knowledge (IK).

These efforts enhance habitat assessments, population modeling, climate adaptation, fisheries management, and restoration planning, **showcasing the broad impact of B.C.-based initiatives** on scientific and industry communities beyond the province.

# Advancements for Aquatic Research and Sustainable Fisheries

## Innovation Supporting Sustainable Fisheries

**BCSRIF promoted innovation in restoration science and fisheries technologies by supporting** projects that combine Indigenous Knowledge, Western science, and new technology, **as shown by the featured project and outcomes for 2024-25.**

### Advancing Fisheries Management

#### \* *Indigenous-Informed Models for Herring Management*

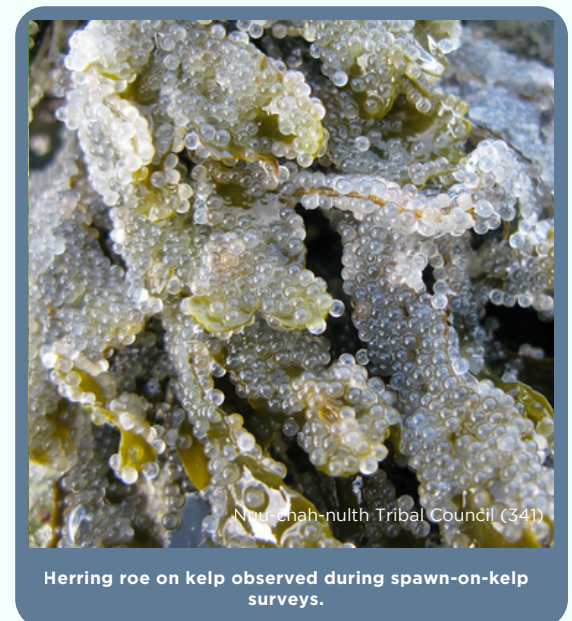
Pacific Herring are central to Nuu-chah-nulth culture and coastal ecosystems. Led by the **Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council**, this project is tackling the challenge of rebuilding Pacific Herring stocks by developing an ecosystem-based fisheries management approach.

It is the **first project to address these topics** with an aim of developing **Indigenous management models and frameworks** that could be **implemented in real-world fisheries.**

#### Reported outcomes in 2024-25:

- Advanced fine-scale spatial and temporal modeling of stock structure and spawning behaviour.
- Incorporated life-history traits (age, size) into productivity models.
- Added spawn-on-kelp fisheries to stock assessments.
- Began exploring in-season and spatial management.

This innovative initiative demonstrates **how Indigenous-informed modeling is directly supporting real-world fisheries decision-making and long-term resilience** for B.C.'s fisheries sector.



Herring roe on kelp observed during spawn-on-kelp surveys.

# Advancements for Aquatic Research and Sustainable Fisheries

## Applied Science for Habitat and Species Recovery

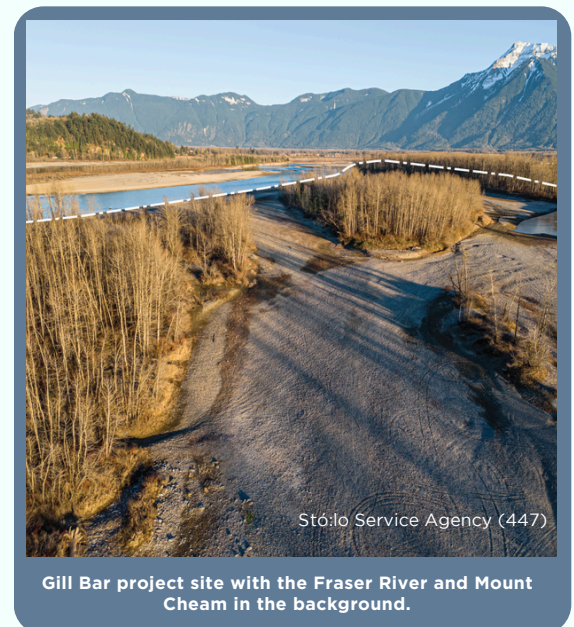
Under BCSRIF, projects in 2024–25 focused on conserving and recovering wild Pacific salmon by generating habitat and species-use data, applying nature-based techniques, and enhancing community monitoring capacity, as demonstrated in the project feature below.

### Indigenous Leadership Driving Nature-Based Restoration at Gill Bar

#### \* *Alliances in Nature-Based Restoration*

The Xá:y Syí:ts'emílep: Gill Bar Restoration and Management Plan advances **Indigenous-led research and nature-based restoration on the Fraser River**, guided by **ecosystem science, cultural teachings, and a Two-Eyed Seeing approach**. Key accomplishments include:

- Habitat and species-use inventories to inform long-term management.
- Removal of invasive plants and reestablishment of native species using low-impact, nature-mimicking methods.
- Community engagement, including 80+ youth and students, connected for mentorship in hands-on learning with elders, Guardians, knowledge holders, and subject-matter experts.



This work **strengthens stewardship capacity** and informs approaches for long-term ecosystem protection and management at Gill Bar and beyond.

The 2024–25 science advancements reported by BCSRIF projects support a strengthened foundation for sustainable fisheries and ecosystem resilience in British Columbia.

# Closing



The **British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund** exemplifies the impact of sustained, collaborative investment in advancing Pacific salmon recovery and modernizing B.C.'s fish and seafood industry.

In its sixth year, BCSRIF continues to deliver high-impact outcomes as a federal-provincial initiative that brings together Indigenous, community, academic, and industry partners. In 2024-25, the fund **expanded local skills and workforce capacity, strengthened partnerships, restored salmon habitat and watershed health, and supported new technologies and innovative practices** that modernize the sector.

Pacific salmon remain central to British Columbia's ecosystems, economies, and cultures, supporting biodiversity, food systems, and deep cultural significance for Indigenous Peoples and communities. From a targeted funding program, BCSRIF has grown into a catalyst for collaboration, demonstrating the **lasting value of coordinated investment in this shared resource that matters deeply to British Columbians.**

# Recognition

The British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund acknowledges the contributions of the many teams and individuals who worked tirelessly on delivery of projects mentioned within.

## Phase 2 Project Recipients, with Active Projects in 2024-25:

A Rocha Canada  
A-Tlegay Fisheries Society  
British Columbia Conservation Foundation  
British Columbia Shellfish Grower's Association  
Canadian Wildlife Federation  
Coastal Restoration Society  
Comox Valley Project Watershed Society  
Ducks Unlimited Canada  
Ecofish Research Ltd.  
Gitanyow Fisheries Authority  
Great Bear Initiative Society  
Greenways Land Trust  
Gwa'sala 'Nakwaxda'xw Nations  
Halalt First Nation  
Heiltsuk Integrated Resource Management Department  
Huu-ay-aht First Nations  
Investment Agriculture Foundation British Columbia  
Ka:'yu:'k't'h'/Che:k'tles7et'h' First Nation  
Kitsumkalum Indian Band  
Kwantlen Polytechnic University, Applied Genomics Centre  
Lax Kw'alaams Business Development LP.  
Lheidli T'enneh First Nation  
Lil'wat First Nation  
Lower Fraser Fisheries Alliance Society  
MakeWay Charitable Society  
Nanwakolas Council Society  
Nature Trust of British Columbia (NTBC)  
NEWSS  
Nootka Sound Watershed Society  
North Pacific Marine Science Organization  
Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council  
Office of the Wet'suwet'en  
Okanagan Nation Alliance  
Pacheedaht First Nation  
Pacific Climate Impacts Consortium  
Pacific Salmon Foundation

Peninsula Streams Society  
Redd Fish Restoration Society  
Salish Sea Indigenous Guardians Association  
Salmon Coast Field Station Society  
SCBC Stewardship Centre for BC  
Scw'exmx Tribal Council  
SeaChange  
Secretariat of the Haida Nation  
Secwepemc Fisheries Commission  
Simon Fraser University, Department of Biological Sciences  
Skeena Fisheries Commission  
Skeetchestn Indian Band  
Skw'lax te Secwépemcuclew  
Sport Fishing Institute of BC  
Squamish River Watershed Society  
St'át'imc Government Services (SGS)  
Stó:lo Service Agency  
The B.C. Wildlife Federation  
Tsawwassen First Nation  
University of British Columbia Okanagan, Department of Biology  
University of British Columbia, Department of Civil Engineering  
University of British Columbia, Department of Earth, Ocean and Atmospheric Sciences  
University of British Columbia, Department of Zoology  
University of British Columbia, Institute for the Oceans and Fisheries  
University of Northern British Columbia, Department of Geography, Earth and Environmental Sciences  
University of Victoria, Department of Biology  
University of Victoria, Department of Geography  
West Coast Kelp Ltd.  
Wild Canadian Sablefish Ltd.  
Xwemalhkwa (Homalco) First Nation

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