

Puntledge Project Water Use Plan

Water Licence Requirement Reporting

Ref Study: PUN 220.4F

*Puntledge River Kayak Pulse Flow Cost Benefit Assessment
(2006)*

Study Period: June 2006

Report Date: September 2006

Golder Associates Ltd.

REPORT ON

**PUNTLIDGE RIVER KAYAK PULSE FLOW
COST BENEFIT ASSESSMENT (2006)**

**ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT UNDER THE
PUNTLIDGE RIVER WATER USE PLAN**

Submitted to:

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EXECUTIVE SUMMARY

BACKGROUND

A Water Use Plan (WUP) was implemented in 2005 for the Puntledge River near Courtenay, B.C.. This set into motion a new operating regime for the Comox Dam affecting the flows on Puntledge River, and a monitoring program designed to address both fisheries and recreation uses of the river in assessing specific outcomes and effectiveness of the WUP. The anticipated benefits of the alternative (new) operating regime compared with the previous regime include enhanced fish habitat, migration and spawning conditions, and enhanced whitewater recreation opportunities below the dam.

MAIN OBJECTIVES

This report is the first annual monitoring report concerned with the socioeconomic implications of the planned “kayak pulse flow event” to benefit whitewater recreation. The purpose of this first phase of study is to document descriptive statistics on the event for consideration by the provincial Comptroller of Water Rights in assessing the effectiveness of the kayak pulse flow releases in providing a net benefit to society. A future phase of this 5-year study would assess the economic costs and benefits that accrue to this initiative under the WUP, and also would address social costs and benefits.

KEY RESULTS

Certain social and economic benefits (not quantified at this time) were associated with the event. A total of 127 people were registered participants in the second annual “Puntledge River Paddling Festival” organized by the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society. Of these event registrants, 85 were surveyed during the course of this study to provide insight into socioeconomic implications of the annual pulse flow release and associated festival. Most of the surveyed paddlers of kayaks, canoes, and rafts came from elsewhere on Vancouver Island and the mainland, with only 13% of them classified as “local”. These visitors spent the weekend paddling and socializing in the community of Courtenay, and in doing so generated some measure of local economic impact. Most of these visitors expressed a strong interest in returning for the event next year, reflecting their reported high level of satisfaction with the Puntledge River flow levels and more generally with all aspects of the whitewater paddling festival.

The results of this first annual monitoring study indicate that the net cost of the kayak pulse flow was zero (i.e. a positive performance measure), considering that no dam release and associated foregone revenue from power generation were required for the event owing to climatic conditions at the time.

CONTEXT

The interpretation of monitoring results is limited because the study design evaluates only the current WUP flow regime, allowing for no comparisons with the quality of whitewater paddling under other (previous) operating conditions. Therefore it is only reasonable to provide a subjective evaluation of the effects of the kayak pulse release flows on the opportunities for whitewater recreation and the quality of the experience.

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1.0 INTRODUCTION

1.1 Background

Water use planning undertaken by BC Hydro is an initiative concerned with achieving an appropriate balance between competing uses of fresh water including electrical power generation, domestic water supply, fish and wildlife needs, recreation, and other uses. In recent years, “Water Use Plans” (WUP’s) for rivers with hydroelectric facilities on them have been completed through a consultative planning process involving different government agencies, First Nations, and affected stakeholders.

Between June 2001 and June 2003 a draft WUP was developed for the Puntledge River near Courtenay, B.C., and then submitted for review and approval by the provincial Comptroller of Water Rights. The 18-member Puntledge River WUP consultative committee recommended a preferred operating regime for the Comox Dam affecting the flows on Puntledge River, and specified a monitoring program that would address both fisheries and recreation uses of the river in assessing specific outcomes and effectiveness of the WUP. Those recommendations in effect were approved through the flow Order made in January 2005 by the Comptroller of Water Rights under provisions of the *Water Act*. Anticipated benefits of the preferred alternative compared with the previous operating regime included enhanced fish habitat, migration and spawning conditions, and planned kayaking opportunities below the dam (BC Hydro 2003).

Golder Associates Ltd. (Golder) was retained by BC Hydro in May 2006 to initiate one of the five distinct WUP 5-year monitoring projects for the Puntledge River, namely the “Kayak Pulse Flow Cost Benefit Assessment”.

1.2 Study Purpose

This study is concerned with whitewater recreation activities and associated social and economic values that are affected by the WUP, and with the effectiveness of that plan in achieving the stated plan objective to: “Maximize the diversity and quality of the outdoor recreation experience in the Comox Lake Reservoir and the Puntledge River” (BC Hydro 2003). More specifically, over five years the study would elucidate the benefits and costs associated with a scheduled, annual whitewater weekend event during which two 8-hour pulse flows are released from the dam to provide what whitewater paddlers consider to be near-optimum conditions. The primary management question addressed by this study is: *What is the economic cost and benefit of the kayak pulse flow releases, after 5 years?* The secondary management question is: *What is the social cost and benefit of these releases?*

The purpose of this first annual monitoring report is to document descriptive statistics on the paddling festival event for consideration by the Comptroller of Water Rights in assessing the effectiveness of the kayak pulse flow releases in providing a net benefit to society, and for future analysis involving comparison of annual monitoring results.

2.0 METHODS

2.1 Study Approach

The terms of reference for this study were structured by BC Hydro such that certain socioeconomic data would be collected, analyzed and reported on annually to address chiefly the secondary management question. Subsequently, in order to address the primary management question, more comprehensive data collection and analysis (enabling economic impact analysis using accepted methods) is to be done only in the fifth and final year of a 5-year monitoring program. The study was implemented by BC Hydro in this way at the request of the key stakeholder group, reflecting an assumption that event participation rates and associated benefits would increase over this period.

Accordingly, the monitoring program has two distinct study components, those being a first phase of annual study (years one through five) involving survey design and implementation to address the secondary management question, and the second phase of study to be completed in year five involving actual economic impact analysis. The first phase of study reported on here entailed the following tasks:

- Selection of site and means of on-site survey;
- Development of survey instrument;
- Performing a count of participants at the paddling festival event;
- Administering the survey instrument during the event, primarily to:
 - Determine the origin of event participants (i.e. locals vs. “tourists”);
 - Determine the duration of stay for non-local participants;
 - Characterize the quality of the event from the perspective of the participants (in terms flow conditions, event organization, safety, etc.);
- Compiling and analyzing the data; and
- Summarizing the survey data results and related information in an annual report.

The results presented in this first annual monitoring report will be used in future assessments of trends and participation rates associated with the event in years one through five, and will serve as one general indicator of WUP performance.

The study is planned to extend between the years 2006 and 2010 (inclusive). It should be noted that year one of the monitoring program implementation period is in fact the second year of the annual kayak pulse flows and the “Puntledge River Paddle Festival”, and that no data describing event participation or benefits was collected in 2005.

2.2 Study Location and Context

The study terms of reference called for primary field data collection to be performed during the planned annual kayak pulse flows and associated Puntledge River Paddle Festival event, held June 2-4, 2006, in Courtenay, B.C. This event was organized by the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society (VIWPS) through the cooperation and sponsorship of BC Hydro, and other significant contributions made by volunteers and tourism industry sponsors. All participants in the event were required to register at a booth that was set up on-site and staffed by volunteers, with early registration being free of charge for VIWPS club members and with a nominal fee charged for registrants upon arrival and for the freestyle clinics. All participants were required to be or become members of the Whitewater Kayak Association of BC (WKABC) or VIWPS (a WKABC member club) for reasons of insurance coverage for the event.

The focus of the festival event were two full days of activities on the Puntledge River between Browns River confluence and the Puntledge RV Campground, with events consisting of guided and unguided whitewater kayaking, canoeing, whitewater freestyle “play-boating” clinics, and guided non-commercial rafting trips. In an effort to provide diversity of opportunity for different skills levels and different watercraft, VIWPS had coordinated with BC Hydro for pulse flows to be released starting at 65 m³ on Saturday morning, then ramping up to 85 m³ in the afternoon, and to 110 m³ for the full 8-hour day on Sunday. Many of the event participants having more advanced skills also paddled the upper and/or lower sections of Browns River, and some paddled the upper Puntledge River. The middle/lower Puntledge River is recognized as a stand-out “play” run, having numerous waves and other hydraulic features at certain water levels which provide whitewater paddlers (in kayaks and also in canoes that are specially designed and custom-outfitted for whitewater play) with opportunities to surf, spin, and execute various other movements and stunts while making their way downstream in groups.

A secondary focus of the event was the Saturday night showing of films featuring whitewater sport and river exploration, held downtown in the Elks Hall, which attracted the majority of the event participants and some non-participants. The other key focal area was the Puntledge RV Campground, which served as registration and staging location for the festival as well as the accommodation for the majority of participants. The campground was the location of most social interaction that occurred between event participants (and organizers, and non-participants) throughout the weekend.

2.3 Study Methods

The survey instrument used for data collection was developed by Golder to reflect the study terms of reference, and also to incorporate most of the suggestions made by VIWPS and endorsed by BC Hydro. Further, the survey instrument was designed to probe participant origins and other general information so as to enable some generalized socio-economic analysis of the event (e.g. to determine what proportion of the event participants were non-local, which implies a measure of economic impact). The survey instrument is presented in Appendix I.

The survey instrument was administered by Golder personnel over the course of the festival event weekend in three distinct time periods at two focal locations, as follows:

- 71 participants were surveyed on Saturday evening at the film showing;
- 5 participants were surveyed on Sunday morning at the campground before paddling; and
- 9 participants were surveyed on Sunday afternoon at the campground after paddling.

Additionally, the opportunity was provided to many but not all of the participants on Sunday afternoon to provide additional input to the survey if they had completed the survey before having experienced the flow levels on Sunday, and if they felt they would respond differently to the two survey questions (#18 and #19) concerning flow preferences. Only those participants who were in the campground between 3 pm and 5 pm on Sunday had this opportunity; 11 (of an estimated 45 having the opportunity) responded.

The survey administration was structured in the way described above so as to maximize the sample size. The Saturday night film showing presented an excellent opportunity to gain the full attention of all event participants in attendance (70+), introduce them to the study, and encourage their participation in the survey. With the support of the VIWPS organizers, time was allotted during an intermission between films for all participants to complete the survey. Prizes (energy efficient light bulbs) donated by BC Hydro were awarded to select survey participants on a number draw basis to reward their participation. While for study purposes it would have been desirable to administer all surveys only after participants had the opportunity to experience the river at different flow levels on both days, it was anticipated to be unlikely for the survey administrator to actually connect with all paddlers as they came off the river (at different take-outs) on Sunday and to get their cooperation in completing the surveys at that time.

Data from the completed survey forms were compiled in a Microsoft Excel spreadsheet, and descriptive statistics were employed for analysis of the data. For the purpose of making general summary statements in this report with respect to the descriptive statistics, the following convention was consistently used:

- "Few" means <5% of respondents
- "Some" means 5-20% of respondents
- "Many" means 21-44% of respondents
- "About half" means 45-55% of respondents
- "A majority" means 55-64% of respondents
- "Most" means 65-95% of respondents
- "Almost all" (or "virtually all") means 96-99% of respondents
- "All" means 100% of respondents.

While a literature review was not included within the scope of work for this project, other sources made reference to in the course of this study are cited. The project leader for this study relied on local knowledge, his familiarity with the sport, and directly related project experience to provide additional information and context for this study.

2.4 Study Limitations

Not all event participants were surveyed in the course of this study. Two identifiable groups likely are under represented or not represented at all in the survey responses reported in this study, namely: 1) people who made only rafting trips down the lower river during the weekend; and 2) a pair of school groups who had kayak/canoe instruction on one day and had done a rafting descent of the lower river the other day. While members of the school groups (believed to be 15 people in total) are understood to have registered for the event, VIWPS was unable to confirm by the time of reporting how many of the other rafting trip participants were actually registered for the event and accounted for. None of the approximately 48 people in total who made rafting trips are known to have completed a survey. By contrast, it appears that most or almost all kayakers and canoeists who participated in the event are represented in the survey results.

It is a recognized limitation of the study that not all survey respondents had the benefit of having paddled at the Sunday flow levels before responding to the two survey questions concerning flow preferences. (However, it is duly noted that the matter of identifying flow preferences is not central to the objectives of this monitoring study). Approximately half of the total 85 survey respondents who completed the survey conceivably would have answered the two questions differently had they been surveyed on Sunday afternoon and not prior. An unknown additional number of the respondents who completed the survey prior to Sunday afternoon are understood to have had the benefit of previous experience on the river at or near the Sunday flow level.

While the study design enables the collection of certain data and subsequently a limited analysis of certain social and economic implications of the pulse flows and paddling event, it is a recognized limitation that the study design does not facilitate a rigorous, multi-parameter assessment of whether the WUP performance measure of “enhanced whitewater paddling quality” was or is being achieved through the preferred alternative operating condition. There is no known baseline for whitewater paddling quality at the previous operating condition. Neither is there data available to describe a baseline for quantity (i.e. number of days per year where there were suitable opportunities for whitewater paddling).

This phase of the study was limited to collection and analysis of mostly qualitative non-economic data, per client direction (reflecting the client’s consultation with the main stakeholder group). The project terms of reference indicate the need to collect and analyze economic data to enable economic impact analysis, but the client has determined that that matter will be the focus of a more comprehensive phase of data collection and analysis to be completed in the fifth and final year of study. It should be noted that certain key data collected in this first year of the monitoring study (e.g. data describing overall participation rates and the breakdown of local vs. tourist participation in the event) will be useful for the future economic analysis.

3.0 SUMMARY OF SURVEY RESULTS

Selected results from the survey conducted during the weekend event are presented below in the form of descriptive statistics under broad thematic headings, with a brief discussion that presents a limited number of qualifiers with respect to statistical method. A more comprehensive and detailed summary of survey results is presented in Appendix II.

Registration count data provided by VIPWS indicate there were a total of 127 registered participants in the 2006 “Puntledge River Paddle Festival” event. Uncertainty remains as to how many of the estimated 48 people who participated in river rafting trips during the weekend were actually registered for the event.

Only 11 survey respondents (13%) were “local” (i.e. residing within 25 km of the Puntledge River, for the purpose of future economic impact analysis). Beyond these Comox Valley residents, the remainder of the respondents were roughly split between Vancouver Island residents (40%) and other parts of B.C. (42%), with a few others from other parts of Canada (1%) and the U.S. (3%).

3.1 Participant Trip Characteristics

Almost all (98%) of the respondents who indicated their primary destination for this trip reported it to be either the Puntledge River, Courtenay, or Comox. Respondents most frequently reported to be away from home on their trip for 2 days and 2 nights. The calculated average trip length was closer to 3 days and 4 nights away from home. Most of the respondents (71%) camped while in the Comox Valley, for a total of 109 nights, most of them presumably at the Puntledge RV Campground. Some (9%) stayed in a hotel or motel and others (12%) stayed in private homes or other unpaid lodging. Virtually all of the respondents made the trip by automobile, and 40% of them also traveled by ferry. Most respondents indicated that they would not have traveled to the Comox Valley were it not for this whitewater paddling event.

3.2 Participant Interest in the Puntledge River

Survey respondents indicated strong interest in paddling the Puntledge River if dam flow releases occurred more frequently. Most (60%) respondents reported not having paddled the river in the previous 12 months, while some (9%) reported having paddled the river more than 10 times in that same period. Seventeen percent (17%) of the respondents paddled the Puntledge River during the unplanned flow release that occurred in the week prior to the event.

3.3 Participant Interest in the “Puntledge River Paddle Festival”

The majority of survey respondents (63%) first heard of the Puntledge River Paddle Festival by word of mouth from friends, while many others (24%) learned of it via the internet and still others via other media. Most (91%) of the respondents visited the VIWPS website prior to the event. One third (33%) of the participants reported having attended the event the previous year. Most (70%) indicated that they “definitely would return” to the event next year, while others (26%) indicated less emphatically that they “probably would return”. No respondents reported that they definitely would not return.

3.4 Participant Experience of the Event and Preferences

Survey respondents most frequently reported making a total of 4 runs on the river(s) over the course of the weekend. The average number of runs made was 3, and the maximum reported was 8. Few respondents favoured the Saturday morning flows at 65 m³/s, although many responded affirmatively to the statement that “all flows were good, for different reasons”. Generalized survey results indicate strongest preference for the higher flows of 85 to 110 m³/s, at which levels many respondents indicated they thought offered better play (hydraulic) features. Those respondents who explained their flow preference by reporting feeling “safer on the river” typically stated a preference for 65 - 85 m³/s flows. On the subject of safety concerns, the fish hatchery weir was identified as the river feature of most concern to more respondents (44%) than any other feature. Some paddlers reported hydraulic features (12%), flow levels (15%), and woody debris (32%) to be of concern.

3.5 Participant Satisfaction and Suggestions for Improvement

The survey respondents indicated high levels of satisfaction with all aspects of the Puntledge River Paddle Festival. It is interesting to note that, despite several negative comments made regarding the price of campground accommodation (see below), the most frequently reported rating for both accommodation and washrooms was a full 10 out of 10 (“very satisfied”). Most respondents (85%) gave the event an overall rating of 8 out of 10 on the satisfaction scale.

While survey respondents indicated a generally high level of satisfaction with the event, given the opportunity to make suggestions for improvement they offered a variety of input as indicated in the summary list below. Most of the suggestions made are variations on one of the following themes:

- 1) Improve access to the river for paddlers and spectators;
- 2) Reduce the cost of camping;
- 3) Extend the length of the event and include other paddling activities/competitions;
- 4) Host a BBQ and other evening activities at the campground; and
- 5) Improve advertising, directions to the event, and communications with participants.

4.0 SUMMARY OBSERVATIONS

4.1 Potential Benefits and Costs

The WUP Consultative Committee had recommended a monitoring study that would allow future assessment of how well utilized the kayak pulse flows are (i.e. number of participants in the annual whitewater paddling events), the economic and social benefits to the community and recreationalists respectively, and the associated cost of lost power revenue. The key monitoring indicator is the net cost of the kayak pulse flow release. The cost of water release is approximately “\$20,000 per day” (in 2004 dollars) according to information provided by BC Hydro (E.Wichmann, *Pers.comm.* July 2006). However, the results of this first annual monitoring study indicate the cost of water for the kayak pulse flows was zero (a positive performance measure) since no dam release and associated foregone revenue from power generation was required for the weekend event, presumably owing to the climatic conditions and runoff from high elevation snowpack at the time. Additional economic and “in kind” costs for staffing, security, safety and organization were incurred by BC Hydro and by the local paddling club.

Certain social and economic benefits (not quantified at this time) clearly were associated with the event. Survey results confirm that a significant proportion of the event participants traveled to the Comox Valley from other parts of the island, and from the mainland, specifically to paddle the Puntledge River during the kayak pulse flows and thereby generated some (albeit likely modest) measure of local economic impact.

Observations made by the survey administrator during the event indicate that the kayak flow release and associated Puntledge River Paddle Festival was not well attended by spectators. Only a handful of spectators, including local photography club members, were in attendance at the “Tarp and Play Wave” location where the hydraulic features there present the best opportunity to view whitewater rodeo maneuvers. (Local knowledge or directions are needed to find the foot path leading to that location). Other spectators were observed at Puntledge Park and further downstream at the Condensory Road Bridge take-out location; however, there was comparably little “whitewater action” to view in these locations. Information gained through informal exchanges with event spectators suggests that most of them were local, and that the few tourists who were in attendance had only happened upon the event (incidental to their trip to/through Comox Valley) or had heard of it locally through word-of-mouth. There may be potential for additional economic impact associated with spectators to the event if the event was better publicized (e.g. through Chambers of Commerce, local/Island tourism-related websites, “packaging” with the concurrent annual music festival in Courtenay) and made more easily accessible.

With or without the added economic impact of event spectators, there is the potential spin-off economic benefit of the annual whitewater event adding to the word-of-mouth “buzz” around the Comox Valley and its market branding as a recreation destination.

The economic impact analysis component of this study to be completed in year 5 will entail expanded surveys and evaluation to explore the types and magnitude of expenditures that are associated with participant travel to and stay in the Comox Valley, other potential indirect and induced economic impact, as well as costs associated with organizing and holding the annual paddling event (e.g. staffing, advertising, safety and other costs), following accepted methods (e.g. per Research Resolutions and Consulting 2005). Results from the economic impact analysis will be analyzed in combination with less quantifiable social and community costs and benefits to weigh the total expected costs against the total expected benefits of the event.

4.2 Additional Observations

Observations made during this event by study personnel, considered in the context of directly related professional and personal experience of the study personnel in other locations, suggest that the Puntledge River Paddle Festival (and other unscheduled flow releases, provided there is notice given by BC Hydro via internet) has the potential to attract a larger and loyal group of whitewater paddlers, and possibly event spectators, to the Comox Valley. The quality and quantity of “friendly” (i.e. Class III) play features that form on the lower river at higher flows, the potential to run more challenging rapids upstream and on the tributary Browns River, and the relatively warm water all are factors which contribute to this being a highly valued river recreation resource. Also there is road access to the river, although the BC Hydro gate on at least one key road represents an obstacle to public enjoyment of this recreation resource outside of the annual event. Finally, the relative certainty of enjoying near-optimum water levels associated with the scheduled kayak pulse flow is key for the paddlers who travel some distance to reach the Puntledge River.

Other southern B.C. rivers that present somewhat comparable opportunities for intermediate whitewater play would include the Clearwater (near Clearwater), the lower Thompson (near Lytton), the Callaghan-Cheakamus (near Whistler), and the Slokan (near Nelson) runs. The Wenatchee River (near Leavenworth, WA) could also be added to that list of whitewater runs within several hours drive of Vancouver. Each of those rivers has a reasonably predictable seasonal window where water levels can be anticipated to be suitable for whitewater paddling. However, it can be hit-or-miss for paddlers to plan vacation time to coincide with optimum water levels on uncontrolled rivers. While many paddlers likely will always be willing to drive several hours on short notice to reach one of those rivers on the basis of reported good water levels there, fewer people are inclined to organize a whitewater paddling festival for a fixed date each year on an uncontrolled river. The Puntledge River may be considered to fill a key niche in that respect, as a

dependable destination for quality whitewater play for which an annual festival can be planned. It also contributes to diversity of opportunity for paddling on Vancouver Island.

One final observation concerns recent and future growth in whitewater paddling activity. A whitewater stream inventory and related investigation completed in recent years for the provincial government probed the matter of growth in paddling and, despite its reporting a paucity of published data quantifying participation rates or growth trends specifically for whitewater sport, it sourced market data that suggested reasonably strong growth in North America and indicated the sport is still young in Canada (Askey 2002). Other observations that were shared recently in a forum of paddlesport industry professionals indicate there has been market growth specifically associated with “the popularity of freestyle and the publicity of extreme paddling”, but also suggest the need for a broader base of participants (i.e. “families, kids and lapsed middle-aged paddlers”) and a renewed emphasis on an enjoyable river experience to sustain whitewater sport (Anon., 2006).

4.3 Recommendations for Future Annual Monitoring Studies

The main recommendation for future monitoring studies that emanates from this first annual study is to structure the survey administration to better capture event participants for the user surveys (i.e. attain 100% survey participation). Previous experience suggests that mail-in surveys and other means of survey implementation are unlikely to achieve this objective. The approach taken in this study to conduct user surveys at the two focal locations should be repeated in future annual studies, and this approach should include improved coordination with the event organizers (VIWPS). Adopting this approach in future years should allow the surveyors to make contact with all event registrants.

Additionally, post-event interviews with event organizers may help to triangulate data obtained through the participant surveys, and to obtain different perspectives from this important stakeholder group on perceived costs and benefits of the paddling event. This information could be collected either in future annual monitoring studies, or in the final year of study in concert with the more detailed economic analysis.

5.0 CLOSURE

We trust that the information presented above is sufficient for your current needs. Please contact us should you have any questions or concerns.

Yours very truly,

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EA/RS/DM/wrs

ATTACHMENTS

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6.0 REFERENCES

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Anonymous, 2006. On-line article in Canoe & Kayak Magazine under Industry News heading entitled “Future of Whitewater Industry” at:
<http://canoekayak.com/features/industry-news/wwsymp05/>

APPENDIX I – SURVEY INSTRUMENT

Date and time: _____ Survey administrator: _____ Survey No. (Unique ID): _____

ABOUT YOUR TRIP and DESTINATION																									
<p>1) WHERE DO YOU LIVE?</p> <p>City/Town _____</p> <p>Province/State _____</p> <p>Country _____</p>	<p>2) DESTINATION OF TRIP (town, region)</p> <p>Primary destination _____</p> <p>Secondary (if applic.) _____</p> <p>_____</p>																								
<p>3) NUMBER OF HOUSEHOLD MEMBERS ON TRIP</p> <p>Total (including yourself) 1 2 3 4 5 6 Other</p> <p>Number under 18 years 0 1 2 3 4 5 Other</p>	<p>4) TRIP DURATION</p> <p>Number of days in COMOX VALLEY on THIS trip _____ days</p> <p>Number of nights you plan to be away from home on entire trip _____ nights</p>																								
<p>4) LODGING NIGHTS (in each location during trip)</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>Lodging Type</td> <td>Comox Valley # of nights</td> <td>Other Parts of Vancouver Island # of nights</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Hotel, resort, lodge, etc.</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Motel</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>B&B</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Campground/RV Park</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other paid lodging</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Private home or cottage (unpaid)</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Other unpaid lodging</td> <td>_____</td> <td>_____</td> </tr> </table>	Lodging Type	Comox Valley # of nights	Other Parts of Vancouver Island # of nights	Hotel, resort, lodge, etc.	_____	_____	Motel	_____	_____	B&B	_____	_____	Campground/RV Park	_____	_____	Other paid lodging	_____	_____	Private home or cottage (unpaid)	_____	_____	Other unpaid lodging	_____	_____	<p>5) TYPE(S) OF TRANSPORTATION USED (check one)</p> <p>Car / truck / motorhome _____</p> <p>Ferry _____</p> <p>Plane _____</p> <p>Other (specify) _____</p> <p>6) TRIP REPLACEMENT</p> <p>Would you have come to Comox Valley in the next three months if you had not come for this paddling event?</p> <p>(circle one) Y / N / Don't Know</p>
Lodging Type	Comox Valley # of nights	Other Parts of Vancouver Island # of nights																							
Hotel, resort, lodge, etc.	_____	_____																							
Motel	_____	_____																							
B&B	_____	_____																							
Campground/RV Park	_____	_____																							
Other paid lodging	_____	_____																							
Private home or cottage (unpaid)	_____	_____																							
Other unpaid lodging	_____	_____																							
<p>7) IMPORTANCE OF EVENT IN DESTINATION CHOICE</p> <p>Circle the number below that best indicates how important this event was in your decision to visit Comox Valley on this trip, where 0 indicates <i>no influence</i> and 5 indicates that the event <i>is the main single reason</i> for making this trip at this time.</p> <table border="0"> <tr> <td>No Influence</td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td></td> <td>Main Reason</td> <td>Don't Know</td> </tr> <tr> <td>0</td> <td>1</td> <td>2</td> <td>3</td> <td>4</td> <td>5</td> <td>X</td> </tr> </table>	No Influence					Main Reason	Don't Know	0	1	2	3	4	5	X	<p>8) SIMILAR RECREATIONAL ACTIVITIES</p> <p>If you had <i>not</i> attended the Puntledge Fest on this trip, where would you have been instead?</p> <p>(circle one) A – Paddling in Comox Valley</p> <p> B – Paddling elsewhere in BC</p> <p> C – Paddling outside of BC</p> <p> D - Doing something else</p> <p> E – Don't know</p>										
No Influence					Main Reason	Don't Know																			
0	1	2	3	4	5	X																			
<p>9) PADDLER INTEREST IN PUNTLEDGE RIVER</p> <p>Would you paddle this river more often each year if planned releases were more frequent?</p> <p>(circle one) A – Yes, at any opportunity</p> <p> B - Possibly</p> <p> C - Not likely</p> <p> D - No, once per year is enough</p>	<p>10) OTHER RECENT VISITS TO PUNTLEDGE RIVER</p> <p>Not counting this event, how many times have you paddled the Puntledge River in the past 12 months? _____</p> <p>11) SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR FLOW RELEASE</p> <p>Do you access BC Hydro's Comox Dam discharge forecast webpage?</p> <p>(circle one) Y / N</p>																								

ABOUT THE PUNTLEDGE FEST																																																																																																																									
<p>12) HOW DID YOU <u>FIRST</u> HEAR ABOUT "PUNTLEDGE FEST"? A. Friends B. Internet C. Magazine D. Newspaper E. Other (specify) _____</p>	<p>13) DID YOU ATTEND THIS EVENT LAST YEAR? (circle one) Y / N</p>																																																																																																																								
<p>14) SOURCE OF INFORMATION FOR THE "PUNTLEDGE FEST" Did you access the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society webpage before attending the Puntledge Fest? (circle one) Y / N</p>	<p>15) INTEREST IN RETURNING FOR EVENT NEXT YEAR (circle one) A - Definitely would return B - Probably would return C - Might or might not return D - Probably would not return E - Definitely would not return F - Don't Know</p>																																																																																																																								
<p>16) UTILIZATION OF THE FLOW DURING THE EVENT How many times did you paddle or will you paddle Puntledge River this weekend, including any repeat runs down the same sections of the river? ____ Times</p>	<p>17) CONCERNS Of all the dangers on the river, which if any were of most concern? (circle one) A - Hydraulic features B - Hatchery weir C - Flow levels D - Woody debris</p>																																																																																																																								
<p>18) PREFERENCE FOR DIFFERENT FLOW LEVELS When were water levels best for you? (circle one) A - Saturday morning (65 m3/s) B - Saturday afternoon (85 m3/s) C - Sunday (110 m3/s) D - All flows were good, for different reasons</p>	<p>19) EXPLANATION OF FLOW LEVEL PREFERENCE Why were the flows better? (circle one or more if applicable) A - safer on the river B - better play features C - I was only there once D - I just like that time of day more E - not applicable (responded "d" to Question 18)</p>																																																																																																																								
<p>20) RATING OF EVENT FOR VARIOUS CHARACTERISTICS</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th></th> <th colspan="5">Very Unsatisfied</th> <th colspan="5">Very Satisfied</th> <th>No Opinion</th> </tr> <tr> <th></th> <th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th> <th>6</th><th>7</th><th>8</th><th>9</th><th>10</th> <th>x</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td>Water levels</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Organization</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Accommodation</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Washrooms</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td>x</td> </tr> <tr> <td>Parking/Access</td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td>x</td> </tr> </tbody> </table>		Very Unsatisfied					Very Satisfied					No Opinion		1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10	x	Water levels											x	Organization											x	Accommodation											x	Washrooms											x	Parking/Access											x	<p>21) OVERALL RATING OF EVENT</p> <table border="1"> <thead> <tr> <th colspan="10">Very Unsatisfied</th> <th>Very Satisfied</th> <th>Don't Know</th> </tr> <tr> <th>1</th><th>2</th><th>3</th><th>4</th><th>5</th><th>6</th><th>7</th><th>8</th><th>9</th><th>10</th> <th></th> <th>X</th> </tr> </thead> <tbody> <tr> <td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td><td></td> <td></td> <td></td> </tr> </tbody> </table>	Very Unsatisfied										Very Satisfied	Don't Know	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	9	10		X												
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<p>22) SUGGESTIONS FOR IMPROVEMENT OF THE EVENT If there was one thing that you could change to improve your experience at the Puntledge Fest, what would it be?</p>	<p>23) COMMENTS Use this space to register any other comments about the event or about this survey.</p>																																																																																																																								

ABOUT THIS SURVEY

The Puntledge River Project Water Use Plan (WUP) project was initiated by BC Hydro in June 2001 and concluded in June 2003, with the provincial Comptroller of Water Rights having issued a Flow Order in January 2005 according to the recommendations of the WUP Consultative Committee. As a result, certain changes were made in how the Puntledge River hydroelectric facility is operated, including the annual release of two 8-hour "kayak pulse flows" to achieve specified flow targets during the weekend of the "Puntledge Fest" organized by the Vancouver Island Whitewater Paddling Society. As part of the WUP, a 5-year monitoring program was established to investigate the results and implications of changes in the operation of the dam on Comox Lake. This survey is part of a five-year study to assess the benefits and costs associated with the annual kayak pulse flows. More specifically, the objective of this monitoring program is to allow future assessment of how well utilised the kayak pulse flow is (i.e. number of event participants), what are the associated economic and social benefits to the paddlers and to the community respectively, and what is the associated cost of lost power revenue. Economic benefits will be calculated from data collected during events, while social benefits will be characterized from survey responses. After 5 years, the monitoring results will be reviewed by BC Hydro in consultation with federal and provincial agency representatives and other interested parties.

APPENDIX II – DETAILED SURVEY DATA SUMMARY

The following data are summarized below in the order corresponding to the survey instrument (Appendix 1). The reader is referred to that instrument for specific survey questions answered by the respondents, since only the title of the field is presented below.

Survey Question 1: Where do you live?

Of the 85 respondents, approximately half (53%) were from Vancouver Island but only 11 participants (13%) were locals residing in the Comox Valley. Many (42%) were from other parts of B.C., and a few came from other parts of Canada (1%) and the U.S. (3%). The following table summarizes the survey responses.

Place of Residence	Number of Respondents
Barrier	2
Burnaby	1
Campbell River	3
Canby	1
Canmore	1
Chilliwack	2
Comox	3
Coombs	1
Coquitlam	1
Courtenay	8
Crofton	1
Delta	1
Duncan	4
Ferntree	1
Humbolt	1
Kamloops/Whistler	1
Lake Cowichan	1

Langley	1
Mission	1
Nanaimo	7
Nanoose Bay	1
North Vancouver	4
Parksville	2
Salt Spring Island	1
San Diego	1
Seattle	1
Surge Narrows	1
Ucluelet	1
Vancouver	13
Victoria	12
West Vancouver	2
Whistler	2
Whistler/Vancouver	1
White Rock	1

Survey Question 2: Destination of trip

This question elicited a wide variety of answers, as summarized in the following tables. Five of the 85 surveys did not have this question completed and 3 indicated “n/a”.

Primary Destination of Party	Number of Respondents
Alaska	1
Comox	8
Courtenay	45
Puntledge River	22
Quadra Island	1

Secondary Destination of Party	Number of Respondents
Browns	1
Browns River	1
Campbell River	1
Courtney	3
Mill Bay and Ladysmith	1
Nanaimo	2
Puntledge	1
Tofino	2
Vancouver Island	1
Victoria	1

Survey Question 3: Number of household members on trip

Of 85 persons surveyed, 4 did not answer this question and 1 respondent chose “other”. Of the remaining 80 surveys, half of the respondents were traveling with other household members). Of the 40 respondents traveling with other household members, 10 (25%) reported having 1 or more people under the age of 18 in the group. Of the 10 respondents who reported having someone under the age of 18 in their group, the mean number of persons under the age of 18 was 1.9.

Survey Question 4: Trip duration

Of 85 surveys, 6 did not complete this question or specified that it was not applicable, suggesting that they were locals on a day trip to the festival. Of the remaining 79, a mean trip duration of 2.9 days was calculated with a mode of 2 days (36 of 79 people surveyed). Nine of 85 people surveyed indicated “n/a” or did not complete the field for the number of nights spent away from home for the duration of their entire trips. Of the 76 respondents who did complete this question, a mean of 3.8 nights and a mode of 2 nights away were calculated.

The second portion of this question asked respondents to specify the number of nights spent at different types of accommodation, and specified inside and outside of the Comox Valley. There were 7 options to choose from. One respondent of 85 did not complete this field.

For nights spent within the Comox Valley, of the remaining 84 respondents, 7% indicated that they stayed at a hotel, resort or lodge for 1 or more nights for combined total of 13 nights stay in this type of accommodation; 2% of the respondents indicated that they stayed at a motel for 1 or more nights for a combined total of 5 nights; none specified accommodation at a bed and breakfast; 71% of respondents stayed in a campground or RV park for a combined total of 109 nights; 0 indicated 'other paid lodging'; 7% indicated staying at a 'private home or cottage (unpaid)' for a combined total of 20 nights; and 5% indicated 'other unpaid lodging' for a combined total of 16 nights.

For nights spent outside the Comox Valley, of the 84 respondents who answered this question, 4% indicated staying at a hotel, resort or lodge for 1 or more nights for a combined total of 4 nights; 0 indicated staying a motel; 0 indicated staying at a bed and breakfast; 5% indicated camping outside the Comox Valley for a combined total of 57 nights (this number is drastically increased by one respondents answer of 50 nights camping outside the Comox Valley); 0 for 'other unpaid lodging'; 5% indicated private home or cottage (unpaid) for a combined total of 11 nights; and 4% indicated 'other unpaid lodging' for a combined total of 5 nights.

Survey Question 5: Type(s) of transportation used

Respondents selected applicable modes of transport from a list of four transportation possibilities. Of 85 respondents, 3 did not complete this field. Of the remaining 82 respondents, 96% indicated the use of a car, 40% the use of a ferry, 0 indicated the use of a plane, and 4% indicated 'other', however, none specified the mode.

Survey Question 6: Trip replacement

Of 85 surveys, 13 people did not complete this field, 10 indicated that they didn't know, 44 indicated 'no' and 18 'yes'. Of the 62 people that answered 'yes' or 'no', most (71%) indicated that they would not have come to the Comox Valley in the ensuing three months if it was not for this paddling event.

Survey Question 7: Importance of this event.

Within the 83 respondents that completed this question, most (74 people or 89%) indicated that the Puntledge Fest was the ‘main reason’ for their visit to the Comox Valley.

Survey Question 8: Similar recreational activities.

Of 85 people surveyed, 1 did not complete this field and 4 (5%) indicated “Don’t Know”. Of the remaining 80, a majority (54 people or 68%) chose “Paddling elsewhere in BC”, many (18 people or 23%) chose “Doing something else”, and some (5 people or 6%) chose “Paddling elsewhere in the Comox Valley”.

Survey Question 9: Respondent interest in Puntledge River.

Of the 83 persons who completed this field, most (71 people or 86%) answered ‘A’ (yes, at any opportunity) and some (12 people or 14%) answered ‘B’ (possibly) to the question: “Would you paddle this river more often each year if planned releases were more frequent?”

Survey Question 10: Other recent visits to Puntledge River.

Of 85 persons surveyed, 3 did not complete this field. Of the remaining 82, the mean number of times respondents indicated having paddled this river in the last 12 months was 2.9. However, 49 respondents (60%) specified ‘0’ which considerably lowered the average and suggested that many respondents did not take into account paddling the river over the festival weekend. The maximum number of times recorded by a single respondent was 55, and some (7 people or 9%) of the 82 respondents indicated having paddled the Puntledge River more than 10 times over the past 12 months.

Survey Question 11: Paddling use of unplanned flow releases.

Of the 83 persons surveyed who completed this question, most (69 people or 83%) answered ‘no’ indicating that they had not paddled the Puntledge River during the unplanned flow release in the last week of May 2006. Some (14 people or 17%) indicated that they had.

Survey Question 12: How did you first hear about the Puntledge Fest?

Of 85 persons surveyed, 3 did not complete this field. Two respondents indicated multiple sources (selecting more than 1 field on the survey form), therefore, there are more responses than respondents and the following percentages sum to greater than 100. Of the 82 respondents, a majority (52 people or 63%) indicated 'A', that they heard of the festival from friends, and 20 (24%) indicated 'B' (internet), 8 (10%) recorded 'E' (other), 3 (4%) 'C' (magazine), and 2 (2%) indicated 'D' (newspaper).

Survey Question 13: Did you attend this event last year?

Of 85 persons surveyed, 4 did not respond. Of the remaining 81 respondents, 54 (67%) answered 'no' and 27 (33%) answered 'yes'.

Survey Question 14: Sources of information for the Puntledge Paddle Fest

Of 85 persons surveyed, 3 did not respond. Of the remaining 82 respondents, 75 (91%) answered 'yes' and 7 (9%) answered 'no'.

Survey Question 15: Interest in returning for event next year.

Of 85 persons surveyed, 5 did not respond. Of the remaining 80 respondents, 56 (70%) answered 'A' (definitely would return), 21 (26%) indicated 'B' (Probably would return), 2 (3%) answered 'C' (might or might not return), 1 (<1%) answered 'D' (Probably would not return), and none answered 'E' (definitely would not return).

Survey Question 16: Paddler utilization of the flow during the event.

Of 85 persons surveyed, 5 did not respond. Of the remaining 80 respondents, the minimum number of runs was 0 and the maximum 8. The mean number of runs was 3 and the mode was 4 (28 people). 85% of the respondents paddled the river 2 – 4 times during their visit to the festival.

Survey Question 17: Concerns.

Of 85 persons surveyed, 7 did not respond and 2 circled more than one answer, therefore there are more responses than respondents. Of the 78 respondents, 34 (44%) answered 'B' (hatchery weir), 25 (32%) answered 'D' (woody debris), 12 (15%) answered 'C' (flow levels), and 9 (12%) answered 'A' (hydraulic features).

Survey Question 18: Preferences for different flow levels

Data for this question was split into three distinct groups: “Group 1” respondents were surveyed on Saturday evening or Sunday morning, after paddling only on Saturday; “Group 2” were those respondents surveyed on Sunday evening after paddling both days; and “Group 3” respondents were those who had the opportunity and chose to revise on Sunday afternoon their surveys completed previously (after paddling both days).

Group 1 is comprised of 65 respondents, 5 of which did not complete this question. Of the remaining 60 respondents, most were split between either option ‘B’ (85 m³/s) and option ‘D’ (all flows were good for different reasons), with 43% and 42% respectively. Some (10%) selected ‘C’ (110 m³/s) (even though they had not paddled this level yet), and relatively few (5%) selected “A”.

Group 2 is comprised of 9 respondents, all of whom completed this question. Most respondents selected either option ‘B’ (44%) or ‘C’ (33%), and many (22%) chose ‘D’.

Group 3 is comprised of 11 respondents, all of whom completed this question. About half (45%) selected option ‘C’, many (27%) selected ‘D’, some (18%) selected ‘B’, and one person (9% of the sample) selected option ‘A’.

Survey Question 19: Explanation of flow level preferences

Data for this question was split into the three distinct groups identified above. Option ‘B’ (better play features) was the most selected explanation of the flow level preference across all three groups.

Group 1 was comprised of 65 respondents, 4 of whom did not complete this question. Of the remaining 61 respondents, a majority (64%) selected ‘B’ (better play features), some (18%) selected ‘A’ (safer on the river), some (18%) selected ‘E’ (not applicable), and relatively few (5%) selected ‘C’ (I was only there once).

Group 2 was comprised of 9 respondents, most of which (78%) selected ‘B’. Some (11%) selected ‘C’ and some (11%) also selected ‘E’. No respondents from this group selected ‘E’.

Group 3 was comprised of 11 respondents, most of which (73%) selected ‘B’. Some (18%) selected ‘A’ and some (9%) selected ‘C’. No respondents from this group selected ‘D’ or ‘E’.

Survey Question 20: Rating of event for various characteristics.

a. Water levels

The mean rating for this field of 82 respondents was 8.6 out of 10 with a mode of 10; the range of responses was from 1 to 10.

b. Organization

The mean rating for this field of 81 respondents was 7.9 out of 10 with a mode of 8; the range of responses was from 1 to 10.

c. Accommodation

The mean rating for this field of 73 respondents was 7.9 out of 10 with a mode of 10; the range of responses was from 1 to 10.

d. Washrooms

The mean rating for this field of 72 respondents was 7.7 out of 10 with a mode of 10; the range of responses was from 1 to 10.

e. Parking

The mean rating for this field of 80 respondents was 7.8 out of 10 with a mode of 10; the range of responses was from 1 to 10.

Survey Question 21: Overall rating of the event.

Respondents indicated a high level of satisfaction with the event. Of 85 persons surveyed, 3 did not respond. Of the remaining 82 respondents, 31 (%) answered 10 (very satisfied), 19 (answered) '9', 20 answered '8', 9 answered '7', and only 1 respondent answered to each '5', '2', and '1'. The source of the 1 (unsatisfied) was likely an error as this survey also indicated that the same respondent would return to the event next year (Question 9) "at any given opportunity". 85% of the respondents answered 8 or better as an overall rating of the event.

Survey Question 22: Suggestions for improvement of the event.

While survey respondents indicated a generally high level of satisfaction with the event, given the opportunity to make suggestions for improvement they offered a variety of input as indicated in the summary list below.

List of Suggestions for Improvement
3 days of water release, film fest at campground, music, party
a more friendly camp host, she was not very accommodating
additional assistance from BC hydro in media relations
advertise
better access through gates
better access to the river, good take out areas and washroom and change rooms at put-in take outs
Better flow Saturday morning
better posting of events and access
camping fee expensive
Camping fee expensive. Should rent entire grounds and include cost in registration fee
cheaper camp site with free showers or no key to washrooms
cheaper camping, barbeque
Cheaper camping, group barbeque, increase flow sat. morning
communal fire
extreme race
fewer paddlers in line ups
Free beer, food and camping
Free camping
freestyle event
[comment expressing dissatisfaction with campground operator]
good water levels
great event
great stuff
have a barbeque and videos, music all at campground
higher put-in
hold it over more days
Improve explanation of registration and schedule on web site
Keep gates open longer to access hydro roads
keep it going
Live music
Make clear location of check in
more beer
More canoes, and lower flows for canoes
more consistent flow
more releases before event and before its warm enough for tubers
more runs on upper sections
more time
More women
night paddling
open access gates to everyone
open access gates to put in for everyone, not just shuttle
organized barbeque after sat. paddle, at least one race/competitive event

Rent whole campground
River access improved for easier shuttling/spectating
shuttle every hour
The festival participants should have use of the campground facilities, not just the participants that are camping.
vendors on site

23. Comments

Overall the comments on the event offered by survey respondents were very positive, as indicated in the following summary list.

Comments List
awesome event
BC ferries is a rip off
excellent
excellent tourism generating event
excellent, I've waited all year for this
flow releases should be forecast on web with 2 days notice
good hard work by organizers
good people, weather and campground
good spectating
great event
great event, good water, safe, that's why I live here
Great event, keep up great work, much appreciated
great event, lets have more
Great for spectating or participating, the place to be
great start
great volunteers and shuttle service
I love BC Hydro
keep the good relations with hydro
low level sat. morning made me sad
more publicity
more sunshine
planned releases, features are excellent
poor river access, better parking
This event rocks, I will spend my USD\$ here every time you release
very disappointed with the campground "take out" fee, seems like a money grab
Very impressed with BC Hydro for release
very very fun