

BRIAN RIDDELL

CONFERENCE CHAIR

Conference Objectives

- Examine the wild salmon habitat recommendations of the Pacific Salmon Forum.
- Learn about existing collaborative salmon habitat initiatives on the Skeena and coast.
- Learn about the impact of salmon diversity, ecosystem services and climate change.
- Develop the Skeena as a prototype for collaborative, ecosystem-based management.

* Transcribed

"The first part of the Conference is specifically about the recommendations that were filed by the BC Pacific Salmon Forum last January, went to the provincial government and then—with the election and change and some of the aquaculture rules and so on—there really has not been a formal response to the forum's recommendations. We have the two key authors here today to talk about these recommendations and to lead-off the session.

The second group is about learning from local experience. A number of groups are working in collaborative governance-type activities, ecosystem-based management, etc. This will be about sharing experience.

The third theme, then, is about the basic importance of diversity, ecosystem services and the challenges of climate change. This is tomorrow's main theme.

I asked Richard, though, what we really want to achieve from this. Where would you like to see this go, in the end? Without actually directing any of your comments, or anything else, I think the big goal is that there is an opportunity to step forward with prototypes. Could we really develop the Skeena as an example of collaborative ecosystem-based management and really make a significant proposal to the provincial government to take that role on here in the Skeena region?

The other thing that we discussed is, who would be willing to participate in writing such a proposal and moving that forward with government? It would have to be a collaborative program, of course. We would have to involve the numerous First Nation groups that we work with and all of the other activities in this basin.

There are some elements of this working in the fish side, but I think it would be a great idea if we can get a small group at the end, if everybody agrees that we can do this now. That does require certain cooperation and maturity to move this forward, in the end. I think we can take a great lead from the report filed by the BC Pacific Salmon Forum."

Skeena Salmon Habitat Conference – September 15 & 16, 2009

