

For Immediate Release
2008LR-GB/VI-0011
September 23rd, 2008

Water is scheduled to be released from Westwood Lake in Nanaimo, BC to aid stream-rearing salmon and trout.

Nanaimo: The City of Nanaimo, Living Rivers – Georgia Basin/Vancouver Island and Fisheries and Oceans, Canada, are scheduled to open a newly constructed siphon at Westwood Lake Monday September 29th at 10am to allow stored water to feed into the Millstone River Bowen Park side channel.

Hundreds of juvenile coho are present in the Millstone side channel, however the flow has been reduced to less than .555 litres per second (lps) over the dry summer months.

In Phase I of a short-term release project, the City will allow DFO to release water into Darough Creek, which flows into Millstone River, at a rate of 9 lps or about two milk jugs per second. In Phase II of a longer-term project, the lake level will be increased 15 cm and this stored water will be released between August and October.

James Craig, Project Manager BC Conservation Foundation said, “Storage released from Westwood Lake will add critical late summer flow to the lower Millstone system, including the 800m bypass channel constructed in 2007.” He added, “This water contributes directly to increased rearing habitat for coho salmon juveniles, the target species of the 2007 project. More living space for coho will result in increased juvenile survival and smolt production the following spring, increasing adult returns to this high profile ‘Salmon in the City’ project.”

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1 backgrounder(s) attached

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