

# Electrofishing continues in Crowsnest River drainage



Photo courtesy of ACA

Fish biologists electrofishing with tote barge in the South Castle river.

## Submitted

This summer, fish biologists from Alberta Conservation Association (ACA) will be assessing sport fish populations in the Crowsnest River Drainage. Data collection for the project, which is jointly funded by the ACA and Devon Canada Corporation, will occur weekdays from June to August 2010.

Sport fishing is an integral part of the local economy – drawing in anglers and their families who visit and make purchases from businesses in the Crowsnest Pass. Studies like the one ACA is soon to begin are important to the area.

“We are planning to electrofish approximately 60 sites throughout the drainage, including 20 sites on the main stem of the Crowsnest River,” said fish biologist Trevor Council, ACA. “Electrofishing is a sampling technique that places controlled amounts of electricity into the water to temporarily stun fish, allowing them to be captured by dip net,” he explained.

“The length of sample sites will vary with stream width, ranging from 300 to 1000 meters, depending on location of the sites within the drainage,” said Council. “According to Council, the data collected will provide Alberta Fish and Wildlife with a greater ability to protect and conserve the trout and mountain whitefish populations in the drainage.”

ACA biologists use backpack and tote

barge electrofishers to capture the fish. The backpack method requires two crews with two staff who sample the tributaries to the Crowsnest River. The barge electrofisher, in contrast, has a minimum crew size of four and will be used on the main stem Crowsnest River.

Once fish are captured, explains Council, they are temporarily retained until a weight, length, and assessment of hooking damage is completed. All fish are then released immediately back to the river reach in which they were captured.

If you have questions about the assessment please contact: Jason Blackburn at 403-381-5335 or Trevor Council at 403-382-4354. For more information on ACA projects, programs and services across the province, please refer to ACA’s website at [www.ab-conservation.com](http://www.ab-conservation.com).

Anglers and the general public who encounter the ACA crew electrofishing should exit the water and remain on the banks until sampling is complete.

Formed in 1997, ACA is a not-for-profit, registered charity largely funded by Alberta’s hunters and anglers through license levies, and a growing list of corporate partners. Annually, ACA directs more than \$10 million towards conservation efforts, delivering a wide variety of projects, programs and services across the province. Key conservation programs include Wildlife, Fisheries, Land Management and Communications.

## Final report available for Community economic development strategy

### Amy Boeckner

Submitted

After six months of extensive consultation and studious work, the final report for the Crowsnest Pass Community Economic Development Strategy is complete and available soon online for the public to view at [www.crowsnestpass.com](http://www.crowsnestpass.com). The strategy is a project of the Crowsnest Advisory Committee (Chamber of Commerce, Municipality of Crowsnest Pass and Community Futures CNP).

Sincere thanks to all who participated and supported the project! The enthusiasm experienced, knowledge shared and countless hours given was both inspiring and invaluable. Well over 300 hundred individuals contributed directly to the project. Thank you!

The Strategy speaks to the challenges and opportunities, the assets and capacities, and shared visions of Crowsnest Pass. The mes-

sage from participants was clear: coordinated action toward collective community economic development goals is essential to the vitality of our community and the everyday lives of individuals.

The ambitions and passions of Crowsnest Pass need to soar. Clear direction was given on where to start and is detailed at length throughout the strategy.

The public release of the strategy is the first step of many required. It is a starting point for action designed around the following key words: inform, envision, act and reflect.

With the official public release the project is now handed back to the Crowsnest Advisory Committee. Project coordinator, Amy Boeckner, thoroughly enjoyed working on this initiative with the community and was pleased to have held the responsibility. While the final details of the strategy’s next steps are being worked out please contact Community Futures (403-562-8858) for more information and inquiries.