

Alberta Conservation Association 2013/14 Project Summary Report

Project Name: Enhanced Fish Stocking Project

Fisheries Program Manager: Peter Aku

Project Leader: Trevor Council

Primary ACA staff on project:

Trevor Council and Diana Rung

Partnerships

Access Pipeline
Agrium Redwater
Aquality Environmental
Aux Sable Energy
City of Fort Saskatchewan
Complete Crossings
DOW Agro Sciences

Key Findings

- The Enhanced Fish Stocking project provides anglers opportunities to catch and harvest rainbow trout in regions of Alberta where angling opportunities are limited.
- We stocked 60 waterbodies with 120,900 twenty-centimetre rainbow trout.
- We installed ACA signage at 13 waterbodies.
- ACA has stocked over two million rainbow trout into various waterbodies since 1998.

Introduction

Alberta Conservation Association assumed responsibility for the Enhanced Fish Stocking (EFS) project in 1998. The primary objective of the project is to provide Albertans with increased recreational angling opportunities, particularly in areas of the province where such fishing opportunities do not otherwise exist. Under the EFS project, we stock catchable-sized (i.e., 20 cm minimum total length) rainbow trout into ponds to create put-and-take fisheries where anglers are allowed to harvest up to five fish per day. To prevent interaction with native fish stocks, trout stocking occurs in the White Zone of Alberta (settled area of the province) only and in waterbodies that frequently winterkill; these waterbodies require generally less than 4,000 rainbow trout in a single stocking. Most ACA stocked lakes are close to municipalities, making them very popular family destinations.

Methods

We delivered all rainbow trout stockings through contracts with private growers. We sent out contracts for tender 1.5 years prior to stocking dates to give the private grower opportunity to grow the rainbow trout to the required 20 cm minimum size. Most stockings occurred between mid-April and the May long weekend. We monitored contracts closely to ensure that the appropriate number and size of rainbow trout were stocked in the designated waterbodies within a set time frame. Once growers were ready to transport the rainbow trout, a stocking date was arranged with a load-out monitor and a lake contact. The load-out monitor travelled to the grower's operation to inventory the rainbow trout being shipped and to measure a random subsample (20 to 100 fish) to ensure that fish were of adequate size. We enforced a penalty system to deter growers from stocking under-sized fish. The load-out monitor also assessed overall well-being of the fish by checking condition factor (plumpness) and obvious signs of disease and deformity. Once fish were loaded into transport containers, the load-out monitor and grower signed a form documenting the number and size of fish. At the receiving waterbody, a lake contact monitored the stocking process to determine if there were transport or stocking-related mortalities. We installed signage at stocked waterbodies that displayed ACA's logo and those of contributing partners.

Results

In 2013/14, we stocked a total of 60 waterbodies with 120,900 rainbow trout (20 cm) during 84 stocking events. Three private growers, operating under a total of 10 contracts, supplied the rainbow trout. Approximately 60% of the stockings were completed during the first stocking prior to the May long weekend; the remainder were completed as part of the June and September stockings.

Since 1998, when ACA assumed responsibility for the EFS project, we have stocked over two million rainbow trout in 1,376 stocking events (Table 1). The number of waterbodies stocked has ranged from 59 (2011) to 81 (1998).

We installed ACA signage at 13 waterbodies (Table 2) in 2013/14. The signage displayed ACA's logo as well as those of contributing partners.

Table 1. Summary of rainbow trout stocking in the Enhanced Fish Stocking project from 1998 to 2013.

Year	Number of waterbodies	Number of stockings	Number of rainbow trout
1998	81	100	144,000
1999	74	93	132,650
2000	68	86	131,300
2001	71	85	131,300
2002	67	84	132,100
2003	68	84	131,300

2004	67	85	131,300
2005	66	78	122,100
2006	64	85	131,100
2007	64	87	131,100
2008	60	86	131,100
2009	61	86	131,100
2010	60	83	131,100
2011	59	84	131,100
2012	61	86	129,100
2013	60	84	120,900
Total		1,376	2,092,650
Average	66	86	130,790

Table 2. Waterbodies where Alberta Conservation Association Enhanced Fish Stocking project signs were installed in 2013/14.

Waterbody
Bashaw Pond
Beaumont Pond
Centennial Park Pond
Cipperley's Reservoir
Dewitt's Pond
Fort Lions Community Fish Pond at West River's Edge
Gibbons Pond
Gooseberry Park Pond
Kraft Wimborne Pond
Lamont Pond
Midway Reservoir
Niemela Reservoir
Tees Trout Pond

Conclusions

The EFS project provides anglers with increased opportunity to catch and harvest rainbow trout in regions of Alberta where angling opportunities would not exist otherwise. Private growers, administered through 10 contracts, raised and delivered the rainbow trout to designated waterbodies in 2013/14. A total of 60 waterbodies were stocked with 120,900 twenty-centimetre rainbow trout during 84 stocking events, and 13 ACA signs were installed at stocked waterbodies.

Communications

- A complete list of rainbow trout stockings is located on the ACA website and is updated annually.
- Articles were published in local newspapers to promote the project and inform the public of angling opportunities.

Literature Cited

N/A

Photo Captions



Ackenberry Trout Farm staff member Lorne Loudon testing water prior to stocking trout at Pleasure Island Pond. Photo: Diana Rung
[filename: Photo1_EFS_2013-14_Diana Rung.jpg]



A view of the Kids Can Catch Event at Fort Lions Community Fish Pond at West River's Edge.
Photo: Kevin Fitzsimmons
[filename: Photo2_EFS_2013-14_Kevin Fitzsimmons.jpg]



Fingerling rainbow trout at Smoky Trout Farm. Photo: Diana Rung
[filename: Photo3_EFS_2013-14_Diana Rung.jpg]



Smoky Trout Farm staff member Max Menard measuring rainbow trout prior to stocking. Photo: Diana Rung
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Smoky Trout Farm staff member Max Menard weighing rainbow trout prior to stocking. Photo: Diana Rung
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