

**Alberta Conservation Association
2022/23 Project Summary Report**

Project Name: Fish Stocking

Fisheries Program Manager: Peter Aku

Project Leader: Diana Rung

Primary ACA Staff on Project: Diana Rung

Partnerships

Alberta Environment and Protected Areas	NFP
Canadian Tire – Cochrane	Nutrien
CCI Inc.	Saddle Hills County
City of Beaumont	Shell Canada Energy
City of Fort Saskatchewan	Southern Alberta Outdoorsmen
City of Lacombe	SysGen Solutions Group Ltd.
City of Medicine Hat	Town of Cochrane
City of Red Deer	Town of High River
County of Grande Prairie	Town of Morinville
Lethbridge County	Town of Taber

Key Findings

- The Fish Stocking Project provides anglers with opportunities to catch and harvest trout in regions of Alberta where few angling prospects exist.
- We stocked 65 waterbodies with 109,794 rainbow trout, 6,640 brook trout, 2,300 brown trout, and 1,770 tiger trout, for a total of 120,504 trout.
- Approximately 64% of the stockings were completed in spring before the May long weekend, 17% in early June, and the rest in the fall.
- We acquired four new corporate partners.

Abstract

The Fish Stocking Project provides anglers with increased opportunities to catch and harvest rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, and tiger trout in regions of Alberta where angling opportunities are limited. Recipient waterbodies are prone to winterkill and require annual stocking of fish to maintain angling opportunities. We stocked 65 waterbodies with 109,794 rainbow trout, 6,640 brook trout, 2,300 brown trout, and 1,770 tiger trout, for a total of 120,504 trout. We stocked 63 waterbodies with rainbow trout; of these, we supplemented 8–10 ponds with various combinations of brook trout, brown trout, and tiger trout. We stocked one pond (Shell True North) with brook trout and tiger trout only and another one (Mirror Reservoir) with brown trout only. Overall, we stocked 43 ponds with single species and 22 ponds with multiple species to increase diversity in fishing experience for anglers. Approximately 64% of the stockings were completed in spring before the May long weekend, 17% in early June, and the rest in the fall. We acquired four new corporate partners.

Introduction

Stocked trout ponds are an integral part of Alberta anglers' sport fishing experience. The primary objective of Alberta Conservation Association's (ACA) Fish Stocking (FS) Project is to provide Albertans with sport fishing opportunities in areas of the province where fishing opportunities are limited. The ACA-stocked ponds are prone to winterkill and require annual stocking of fish to maintain angling opportunities. We stock sterile, catchable-sized (approximately 20 cm total length) trout into ponds to create put-and-take fisheries where anglers can harvest up to five trout per day. We stock a small number of 30 cm rainbow trout in select ponds to support Kids Can Catch events. To prevent interaction with native salmonids, trout stocking occurs only in waterbodies in the White Zone of Alberta (settled area of the province). Most stocked ponds are near or in urban centres, making them accessible and popular for families and anglers of all ages.

Methods

We contracted two trout suppliers to grow and stock trout: Smoky Trout Farm Limited, a private grower, provided rainbow trout only, while the Government of Alberta (GoA) fish hatchery provided four species: rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, and tiger trout. We negotiated the

stocking contracts more than one year prior to stocking. Spring stockings occurred between mid-April and the May long weekend, and early summer stockings occurred by the middle of June. Fall stockings occurred in September and October. Both Smoky Trout Farm and GoA ensured that the appropriate number and size of triploid trout were stocked into designated ponds. Fish were measured, weighed, and loaded into transport containers by hatchery staff. At the receiving waterbody, a volunteer lake contact monitored the stocking process to determine if there were stocking- or transport-related mortalities; ACA staff monitored approximately half of the Smoky Trout Farm trout deliveries. Each stocking event was verified with appropriate documentation.

We negotiated with and confirmed four new corporate partners that will contribute funding to the FS project annually for a three to five year period.

Results

In 2022/23, we stocked 65 waterbodies with 109,794 rainbow trout, 6,640 brook trout, 2,300 brown trout, and 1,770 tiger trout, for a total of 120,504 trout. We stocked 63 waterbodies with rainbow trout; of these, we supplemented 8–10 ponds with various combinations of brown trout, brook trout, and tiger trout. We stocked one pond (Shell True North) with brook trout and tiger trout only and another one (Mirror Reservoir) with brown trout only. Overall, we stocked 43 ponds with single species and 22 ponds with multiple species to increase diversity in fishing experience for anglers. Approximately 64% of the stockings were completed in spring before the May long weekend, 17% in early June, and the rest in the fall.

We acquired four new corporate partners: City of Red Deer, NFP, Southern Alberta Outdoorsmen, and Town of Taber.

Conclusion

The FS project provided anglers with increased opportunity to catch and harvest rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, and tiger trout in regions of Alberta where angling opportunities do not otherwise exist.

Communications

A complete list of rainbow trout, brook trout, brown trout, and tiger trout stockings was posted on our website and updated frequently during trout stocking season.

Literature Cited

Not applicable

Photos



Photo 1. A bucket full of tiger trout. Photo: Diana Rung



Photo 2. A 30 cm rainbow trout. Photo: Diana Rung



Photo 3. A young angler with his first tiger trout at Shell True North Pond. Photo: Tracy Mills