

Nechako Watershed Council  
Box 1078  
Vanderhoof, BC  
V0J 3A0



CABINET DU MINISTRE  
OFFICE OF MINISTER

2009 12 22 09 15

000184

Honourable Gail Shea  
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans  
Centennial Towers  
200 Kent Street, Mail Stop: 15N  
OTTAWA, ON K1A 0E6

December 3, 2009

Dear Minister Shea:

**Re: Nechako Watershed Council Report on a Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam**

As you know construction of a water release facility at Kenney Dam on the Nechako River, British Columbia, has been the subject of much discussion and study over the past fifty years. Perhaps most importantly, in 2001 the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund Management Committee consulted with a large number of stakeholders (as mandated by the 1997 BC/Alcan Agreement) and reached the legally binding decision that the best use of the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund would be to construct a Cold Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam.

In 2008, after seven years of work to address technical issues, and to determine the benefits, risks and costs of a Cold Water Release Facility, the Nechako Watershed Council (NWC) recommended that a simplified Surface Water Release Facility be considered, and commissioned a detailed cost estimate for a Surface Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam. The results of that work determined that the current cost to build a Surface Water Release Facility would be approximately \$223.6M, plus an estimated \$35.8M needed for works associated with commissioning of a water release facility, for a total of \$259.4M. We are pleased to enclose a package of information describing these efforts.

It is the NWC's belief that construction of a water release facility at Kenney Dam would create downstream enhancement benefits in the Nechako Watershed area, including benefits in the Cheslatta Watershed, which cannot be achieved by any other means. We are pleased to acknowledge the important research work conducted by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in connection with the proposed release facility as well as the endangered Nechako River white sturgeon and to invite your support for moving the project to completion. Best wishes for the coming Holiday Season.

Regards,

Henry Klassen  
Chair, Nechako Watershed Council

cc: Paul Sprout, Western Regional Director  
Rebecca Reid, Regional Director  
Jason Hwang, Area Chief

# **Kenney Dam Cold Water Release Facility**

Interim Report

(2002-2007)

Robert J. Jantzi  
Secretary

## PREFACE

**This report summarizes the work undertaken by the Nechako Watershed Council and the Nechako Enhancement Society since 2002, towards construction of a Cold Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam.**

Schedule 4 of the BC/Alcan 1997 Agreement and decisions made in 2001 by the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund Management Committee provide a unique opportunity to potentially enhance the downstream Nechako watershed area.

In response to this opportunity and at the request of the Province, the Nechako Watershed Council developed a "Work Plan for the Cold Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam", (March 2002). Subsequently, the Nechako Enhancement Society was formed to implement the Work Plan with funding from the Province and Rio Tinto Alcan.

This Interim Report summarizes, in one document, the 6 years of work costing \$1.3M completed to date, addressing technical issues and documenting the remaining information requirements that must be resolved in order to develop the criteria necessary to design, construct commission and operate a CWRF at Kenney Dam.

The next phase in the Work Plan initiates preliminary engineering and environmental assessment related activities that may involve significant expenditures. In addition to supporting these activities, the Interim Report contains key technical information and updated cost estimates that can be used to assess the feasibility of constructing a CWRF and its potential to enhance the downstream Nechako watershed area.

As Directors of the Nechako Enhancement Society, we respectfully submit the Interim Report to the Nechako Watershed Council, partner agencies and stakeholders for consideration prior to embarking on the next phase of this project.

Sincerely,

Don Timlick, Chair  
Nechako Enhancement Society

Don Cadden, Director  
Nechako Enhancement Society

Justus Benckhuysen, Director  
Nechako Enhancement Society

Wenda Mason, Director  
Nechako Enhancement Society

Mathieu Bergeron, Director  
Nechako Enhancement Society

April 9, 2008

## Executive Summary

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Planning for a Cold Water Release Facility has been underway since the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund (NEEF) Management Committee, in its 2001 final report, determined that a release facility is the best option for enhancing the Nechako watershed.

In 2002, in direct response to a NEEF Management Committee recommendation, the Nechako Watershed Council (NWC) prepared a Work Plan to investigate the feasibility of, and address the planning needs, for the project. The Nechako Enhancement Society (NES) was subsequently formed to implement the Work Plan.

Between 2002 and 2008 the NES and the NWC have implemented the first six years of activities identified in the Work Plan by directing a series of studies and consultation initiatives on the costs, benefits and technical considerations of a CWRP.

Year seven of the Work Plan may involve significant expenditures for preliminary engineering and environmental assessment related activities. Prior to initiating these activities, the NES prepared this Interim Report to summarize, in one document, the work completed to date related to the issues that must be considered in the design, construction and commissioning of a CWRP at Kenney Dam. Any data gaps that exist have also been identified.

In addition to completing additional work on technical issues where data gaps exist, the question of ownership must be resolved in order that a proponent can undertake the necessary steps to complete a CWRP design prepare and submit the necessary environmental assessment report and assume both the risks and responsibilities associated with construction and operation of a CWRP.

The following table provides a brief summary of the current state of knowledge for nine technical issues.

**Table: Current State of Knowledge for Technical Issues**

| Technical Issue                          | State of Knowledge   |
|--|--|
| <b>Temperature</b><br>Page 6             | <p>Summer temperature criteria for the Nechako River were determined following the 1987 Settlement Agreement between Alcan, the Province of British Columbia and the Government of Canada. The Nechako Fisheries Conservation Plan (NFCP) and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) independently concluded that current flows management has effectively maintained recommended temperatures upstream of the Stuart River and have also mitigated temperatures between Stuart River and Prince George. DFO also concluded that if a Cold Water Release Facility (CWRF) is constructed, temperatures in the Nechako below the Stuart River confluence may rise above the critical temperature threshold. Additional work is ongoing to clarify temperature and flow criteria for a CWRF.</p> |
| <b>Flow</b><br>Page 12                   | <p>Assuming that both the location for measuring and the Nechako River temperature target itself remain unchanged a CWRF could potentially achieve the temperature objective with less water. As a consequence this could free up water for other purposes, potentially benefiting downstream interests. However, DFO has indicated that if this project goes ahead temperature targets may need to be changed and this will influence how much, if any, freed-up flow is available. Work is ongoing to determine how much freed-up flow could be available.</p>   |
| <b>Reservoir Hydrothermal</b><br>Page 17 | <p>Modelling indicates the reservoir will be able to provide sufficient cold water to address existing temperature targets in the Nechako River in most years. However, in some years, the occurrence of unique wind conditions in July could reduce the available volume of cold water. Under these conditions, there would not be enough cold water to achieve the downstream temperature targets during the Summer Temperature Management Program (STMP). It should be noted that to-date these wind conditions have not been recorded during the STMP period but have been observed in early spring.</p>   |
| <b>Total Gas Pressure</b><br>Page 21     | <p>Water released from a CWRF may acquire an elevated total gas pressure (TGP), which can negatively impact fish. The proposed CWRF has two features to reduce dissolved gas:</p> <ol style="list-style-type: none"> <li>1) Flip Bucket Spillway – It has not been confirmed if the flip bucket spillway can deliver water that meets government guidelines.</li> <li>2) Hollow Cone Valves – Hollow cone valves tested at other facilities were capable of releasing water with acceptable TGP levels.</li> </ol>   |

## Technical Issue

## State of Knowledge

### Fish Entrainment

Page 27

Fish, particularly juveniles, can become entrained and pass through water release facilities. The risk of fish entrainment at a CWRP is low to moderate, depending on time of year. There are no government guidelines by which to assess the acceptability of these risks.

### Sediment

Page 30

Large volumes of sediment have been deposited in the Nechako Canyon and within the Cheslatta Fan since the construction of the Kenney Dam. Discharge from a CWRP will mobilize some of the sediment deposited in the Nechako Canyon and the Cheslatta Fan. Likely erosion and deposition zones have been identified in and downstream of the Nechako Canyon but the short and long – term impacts to fish populations, including sturgeon and salmon, are unknown at this time. Additional modelling work has been initiated.

### Cheslatta River and Lake System Rehabilitation

Page 36

Significantly lower flows and a more natural flow regime in the Cheslatta River and Lake are prerequisites for the rehabilitation of fisheries productivity in Murray and Cheslatta Lakes. They are also important for the rehabilitation of river and stream habitat within the system. An optimal flow regime for the Cheslatta River and Lake system has not been identified to-date.

### Benefits

Page 41

Many of the issues that benefit from the construction of a CWRP are flow dependent. They will be affected by Nechako River temperature criteria and how much freed-up flow is available, neither of which are known at this time. Rehabilitation of the Cheslatta River and Lake system and generation of hydroelectricity at Kenney Dam are the two primary benefits of a CWRP that are not directly dependent on flow and temperature criteria. Twenty-two additional flow-related interests (such as canoeing, flood control, and fish) identified by the NWC depend on the amount of freed-up flow available; which, if any, of these interests could not be met cannot be determined at this time.

### Design and Cost

Page 44

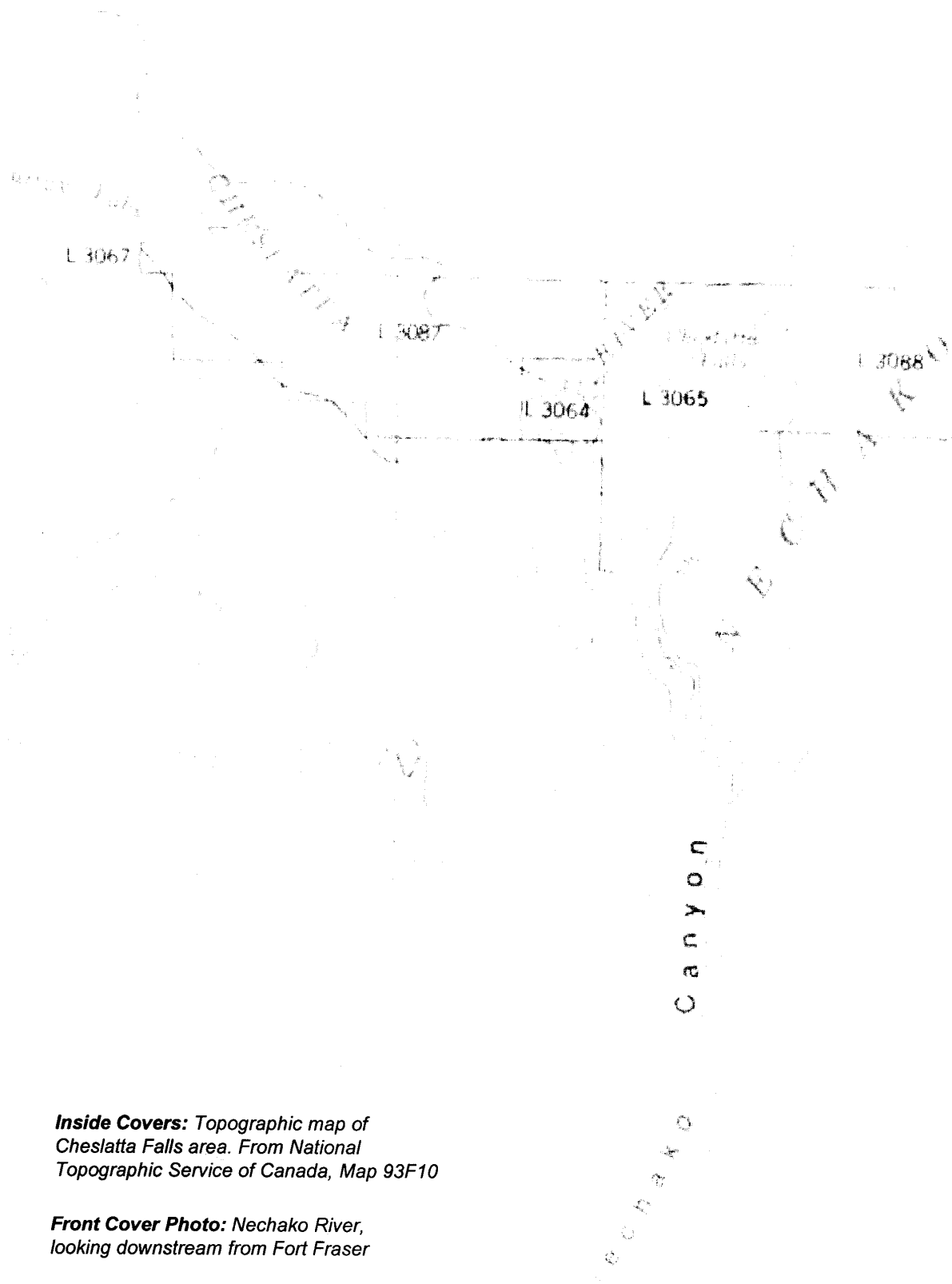
The costs for constructing a CWRP are estimated in 2008 to be in the order of \$184M to \$197M. Costs of constructing a 20MW hydroelectric generating station are estimated at \$46M to \$55M and the costs of constructing a transmission line are estimated to be \$10M. Owner's costs, environmental assessment and other project costs such as the cost of commissioning flows and construction of a Cheslatta Fan channel are not included in the above noted costs.

All CWRP cost estimates to-date are based on conceptual level engineering developed in 2001. Further engineering is required to establish that the concept is technically feasible and that the facility will perform as required by the design criteria before an accurate cost estimate can be completed.

# Kenney Dam Cold Water Release Facility

## Addendum to April 2008 Interim Report (2008-2009)

Nechako Enhancement  
Society



**Inside Covers:** Topographic map of  
Cheslatta Falls area. From National  
Topographic Service of Canada, Map 93F10

**Front Cover Photo:** Nechako River,  
looking downstream from Fort Fraser

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# **Kenney Dam**

## **Cold Water Release Facility**

**Addendum to April 2008**

**Interim Report**

**(2008-2009)**

Nechako Enhancement Society

November 2009

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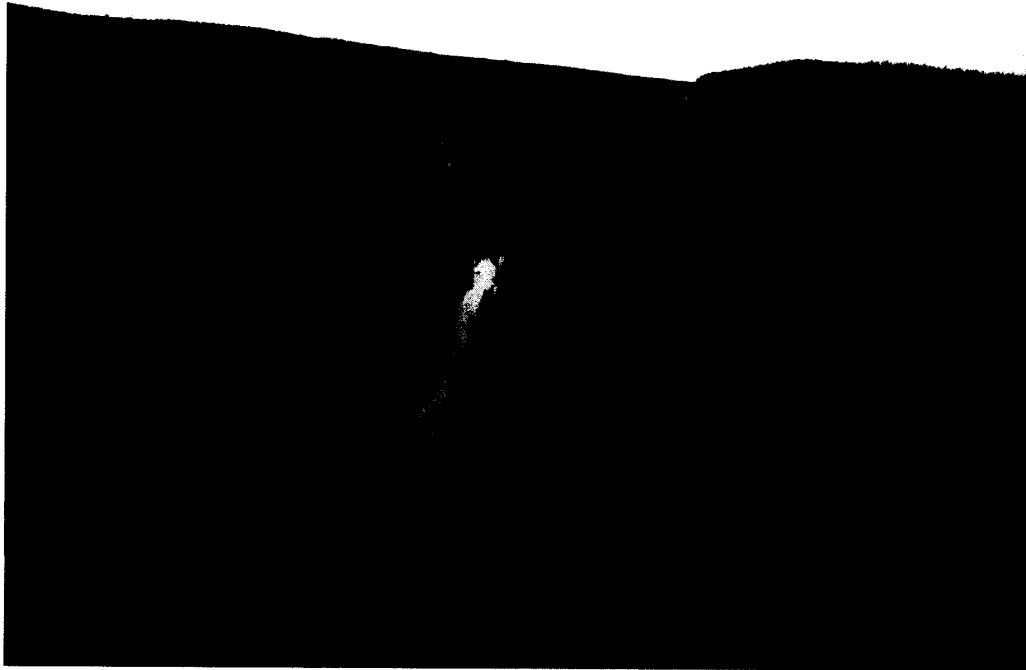
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*Photo: Nechako Canyon and Scour Hole Lake*

## 1 INTRODUCTION

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In April of 2008 the Nechako Enhancement Society (NES), on behalf of the Nechako Watershed Council (NWC), prepared an Interim Report<sup>1</sup> which summarized in one document the work completed during the first six years of the NWC work plan, the gaps identified and progress made to date in addressing the technical issues that must be considered in relation to the design, construction and commissioning of a CWRP at Kenney Dam.

Included in the Interim Report was a discussion of the fact that ongoing work by DFO suggests that there may be a requirement to define new temperature criteria for that portion of the Nechako

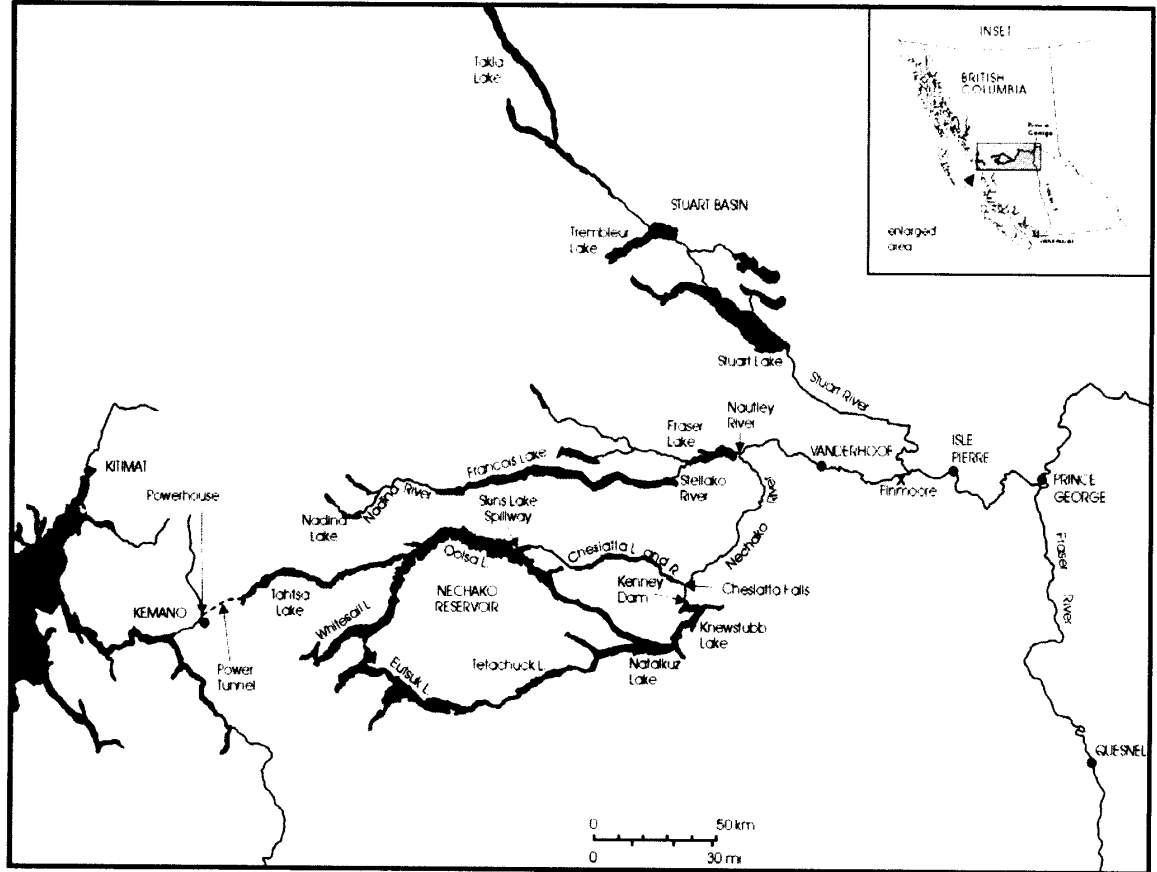
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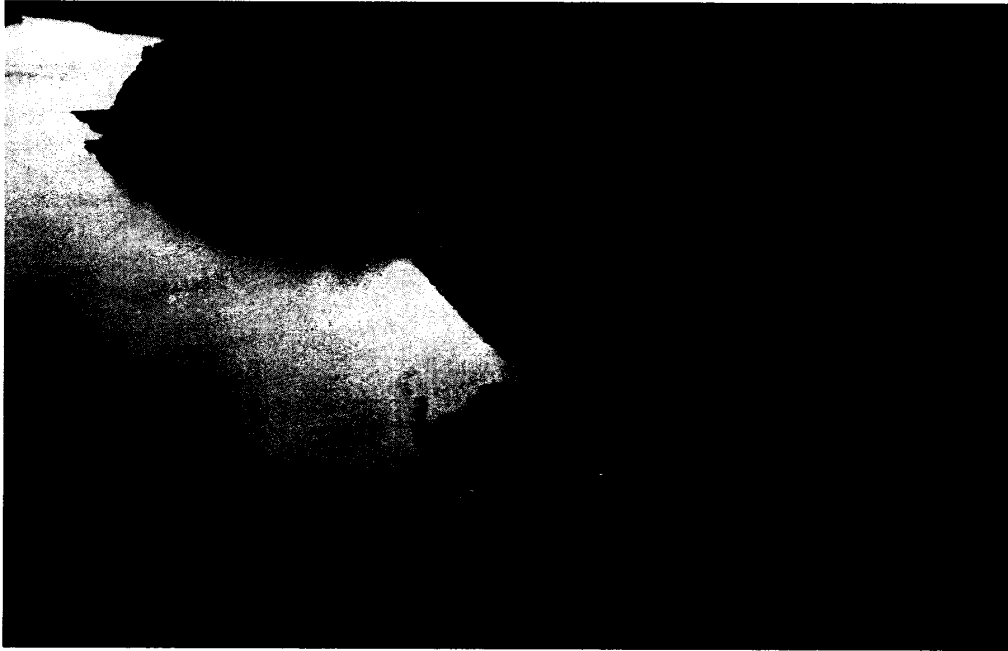
<sup>1</sup> Kenney Dam CWRP Interim Report 2002-2007, April 2008

River downstream of the Stuart River confluence and that this in turn may result in little or no freed up water being available for downstream enhancement. Also discussed were the results of an updated cost estimate which showed that the costs of construction had almost doubled compared to the 2001 NEEF Management Committee estimate.

At a subsequent, June 2008 NWC meeting, the NWC concluded that because of the engineering risks, lack of "freed-up" flows and escalating cost, a CWRF was no longer the preferred option. A surface WRF would result in similar flow releases, fewer engineering risks and lower costs and would still allow the primary benefit of rehabilitation of the Cheslatta River and Lake System, but "freed-up" flows for downstream environmental enhancement of the Nechako River would be minimal, if any. Therefore, the NWC directed the NES to obtain a detailed cost estimate for a simplified surface Water Release Facility (WRF) at Kenny Dam.

**Figure 1-1: Map of Nechako River Watershed**





*Photo: Kenney Dam.  
Photo provided by Alcan.*

## 2 WATER RELEASE FACILITY

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In January 2009 the NES issued a contract to SNC Lavalin to prepare a report and cost estimate for a surface water release facility (WRF) at Kenney Dam. The NES requested that the design of the WRF be based on the work previously commissioned by the Management Committee of the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund (NEEF) as well as Rio Tinto Alcan (RTA) information that was used to design the cold water release facility at Kenney Dam.

The scope of work included a cost estimate, construction schedule, construction strategy, and facility description including conceptual design drawings for each of the following items:

- a surface water release facility (WRF) at Kenney Dam;

- modification to Skins Lake Spillway (SLS), (once completed this will be the subject of a separate report.)

Once the contract was underway the scope of work was expanded to include:

- The digitization of the topographic and geological information based on previous surveys and geotechnical studies in order to establish ground and rock surfaces at the location of the proposed WRF at Kenney Dam; and
- Development of an alternate design of WRF at Kenney Dam.

The cost estimate was requested to be accurate to 30% and based on an EPCM (Engineering, Procurement and Construction Management) type of contract. During development of most infrastructure projects, the facilities are designed and defined in more detail with the result that costs are more likely to increase than decrease. Such estimates therefore probably have a range of accuracy of 0% to +30%.

SNC Lavalin was provided with the following design criteria:

- the WRF at Kenney Dam must be capable of operating all year around, releasing flow of 5 m<sup>3</sup>/s to 45 m<sup>3</sup>/s through the low-level outlet during the winter, and flows of 45 m<sup>3</sup>/s to 450 m<sup>3</sup>/s through a surface spillway in summer.

Operational parameters were specified as follows:

Reservoir Elevations:

- Probable Maximum Flood Level (PMF)  
857.11 m

- Maximum Normal Operation Reservoir Level 853.44 m
- Minimum Operation Reservoir Level (MOL) 844.30 m
- Controlled Reservoir Level at 450 m<sup>3</sup>/s discharge 851.00 m

Surface Spillway Discharge:

- Maximum spillway discharge 450 m<sup>3</sup>/s
- Maximum spillway discharge at MOL (el.844.30) 283 m<sup>3</sup>/s

Low Level Outlet Discharge:

- Maximum discharge 45 m<sup>3</sup>/s
- Minimum discharge 5 m<sup>3</sup>/s
- Maximum invert elevation of intake channel, or lower 832.00 m
- Top of WRF spillway control structure, or higher 859.50 m

Tailwater Elevations:

- Maximum Tailwater Level at 450 m<sup>3</sup>/s discharge 769.90 m
- Maximum Winter Tailwater Level at 45 m<sup>3</sup>/s discharge 766.74 m
- Tailwater under no-flow condition 764.50 m

## 2.1 INFORMATION STATUS

In their May 2009 report SNC Lavalin provided an alternative concept layout, construction planning details and a cost estimate for a WRF at Kenny Dam.<sup>2</sup>

The SNC Report describes a facility as shown in Figure 2-1.

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<sup>2</sup> SNC, 2009





The facility shown in Figure 2-1 consists of the following:

- A surface water intake channel in the left abutment of Kenney Dam;
- A release structure equipped with regulating gates and maintenance bulkheads, incorporating a bridge to maintain road access across the dam;
- A chute spillway with flip bucket energy dissipater;
- A pre-excavated plunge pool;
- Downstream left bank protection;
- A low-level outlet;
- Diesel generator power supply;
- Electrical distribution system, lighting, HVAC equipment, local and remote controls and instrumentation, and security monitoring system; and
- Accommodation for a permanent operator, with facilities for temporary accommodation of maintenance personnel situated on the left abutment, above the facility.

Using a proposed basic configuration developed in 2001 but excluding both the deep-water intakes and pipeline components, SNC Lavalin developed an alternative layout for the WRF. The alternative layout comprises three (3) surface water outlets and a low-level water outlet releasing water through a combined penstock and spillway chute. The chute will discharge via a flip bucket and the penstock via an energy-dissipating valve house, designed for future conversion into a power generating facility.

The layout, described more fully in their report includes the following components:

- An intake channel conveying water from the reservoir to the regulating structure;
- A high level outlet regulating structure with the capacity to pass 450 m<sup>3</sup>/s;

- A low-level outlet with the capacity to pass 45 m<sup>3</sup>/s via a 3 m-diameter penstock embedded below the spillway chute and leading to the valve house;
- A flip-bucket spillway designed to discharge flows greater than 45 m<sup>3</sup>/sec;
- A valve house designed to accommodate 4 energy-dissipating valves with provision to replace two valves with two horizontal axis turbine-generator units, if required in the future.

For the purposes of construction planning, the project was divided into five major areas of activity:

- Surface Water Intake Channel
- Regulating Structure
- Spillway, Flip Bucket, Plunge Pool
- Low Level Outlet
- Valve House

Construction was planned and scheduled in stages designed to maintain uninterrupted traffic to and from the dam crest as this "restriction" and the "freshet fisheries window" were both found to create the critical path for the Project.

A number of construction methodology assumptions were identified and should any of these assumptions not be accurate there could be significant implications to both the schedule and costs for the Project.

A schedule showing it would take a total of 52 months to build and commission the WRF was developed. Preliminary design (including Computational Fluid Dynamics Studies and Physical Modelling) and Regulatory approvals are shown to precede the tender and award process. The duration

of the actual construction job is 37 months from the date of award of the construction contract shown at month 15 on the overall schedule.

An estimate of costs was prepared using Heavybid (HCSS) Estimating and Bidding Software. This cost estimate did not include PST or GST, escalation costs for material and wages during the Project or annual operating and maintenance costs.

The estimated cost for construction of the WRF was determined to be \$150,583,955. This cost estimate included a 5% contingency and was reported to be accurate only to +30% due to the preliminary (pre-feasibility) level of design.

At a July 2009 NWC meeting the NES tabled and discussed the results of the completed SNC Lavalin Report. In preparation for that meeting the NES developed a Table wherein the costs estimated by SNC Lavalin were broken out by year and assigned to the activities detailed in the construction schedule. Estimates for additional items such as additional works associated with commissioning, preliminary engineering and costing, contingencies and the environmental assessment process and permitting were included. Since July, the costs associated with modifications required to the Skins Lake Spillway to accommodate the lower flows into the Cheslatta River and Lake system have been completed and the work plan and budget have been updated (Table 2.1).

The October 2009 SNC Skins Lake Spillway Water Release Facility Report presents a conceptual design and cost estimate for a water release facility at Skins Lake Spillway. The design of the facility was based on the work previously completed and in accordance with RTA design criteria. The layout developed relied

heavily upon sparse contour information and assumptions about bathymetry. For the next stage of engineering, a number of additional studies will be required.

An estimate of costs was prepared using Heavybid (HCSS) Estimating and Bidding Software. The estimated cost for construction of the facility was determined to be \$22,066,059. This cost estimate was reported to be accurate only to +30% and excludes escalation, GST and owners costs. Annual operating and maintenance costs of the facility were excluded from this estimate.

To proceed with further engineering, the environmental assessment and construction of a both a WRF at Kenny Dam and a facility at Skins Lake, the total estimated cost is \$259.4M. This estimate does not include the unknown costs for: water for commissioning the WRF, commissioning and post-commissioning environmental monitoring and Cheslatta River and Lake system rehabilitation costs.

## 2.2 INFORMATION GAPS

The SNC Lavalin Report identified that hydraulic model studies will be required to evaluate the proposed geometry and alignment of WRF structures for Kenney Dam WRF. These studies will comprise both, Computational Fluid Dynamic (CFD) and subsequent Physical Modelling. The computational modelling will provide valuable insight and allow improvements to be made and tested at low cost. The physical hydraulic model will provide a valuable performance check of the proposed layout.

The October 2009 SNC Lavalin Report on the Skins Lake Spillway identified that topographic and bathymetric field surveys will be required. Hydraulic model studies to evaluate the proposed geometry and alignment may also be required. The feasibility of winter operations will need to be proven and all of the aforementioned studies will need to be completed before construction can proceed.

### **3 REFERENCES**

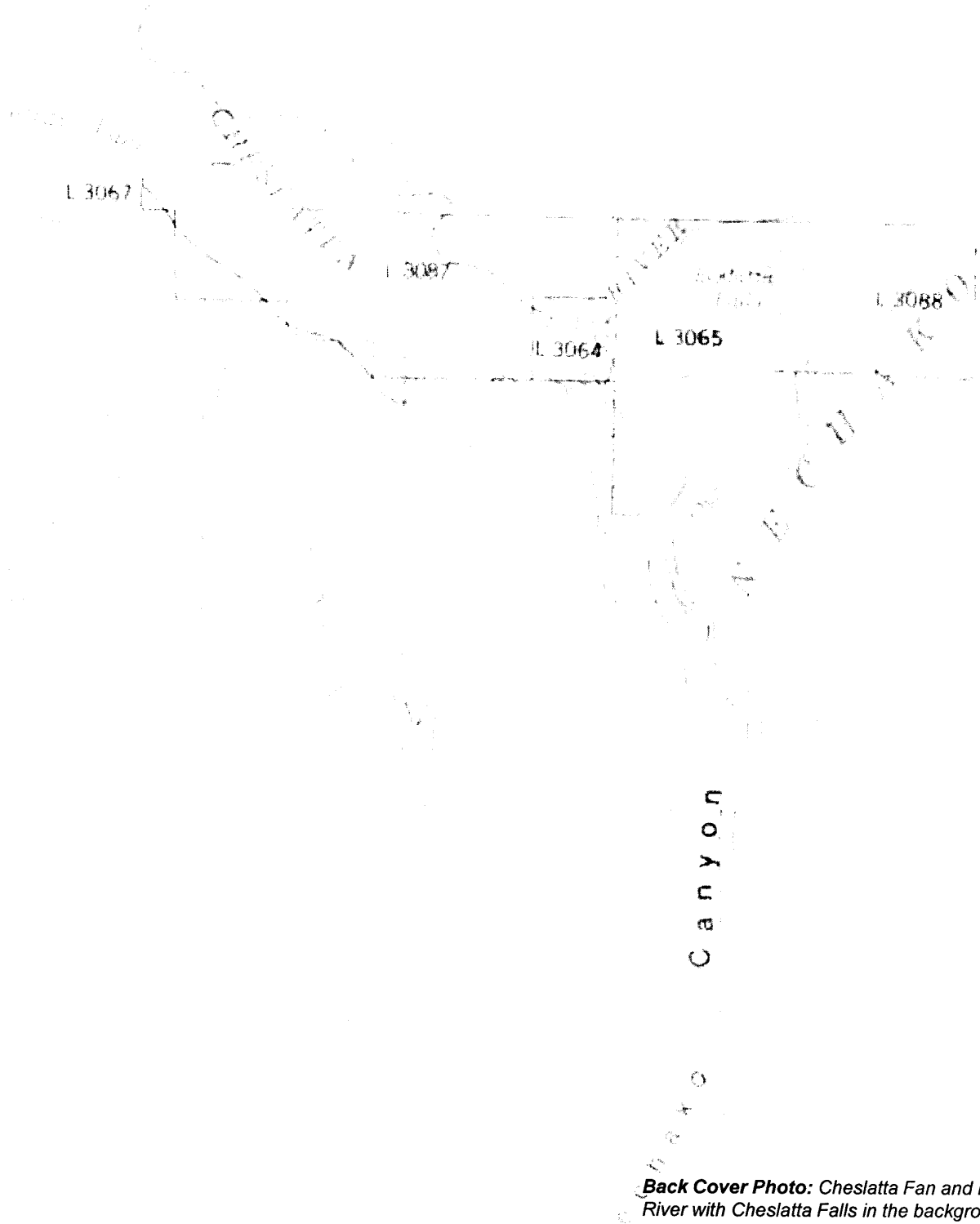
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Nechako Enhancement Society (NES). April 2008. Kenny Dam Cold Water Release Facility Interim Report (2002 – 2007).

SNC Lavalin (SNC). May 2009. Water Release Facility at Kenny Dam. Alternative Concept Layout, Construction Planning and Cost, prepared for Nechako Enhancement Society.

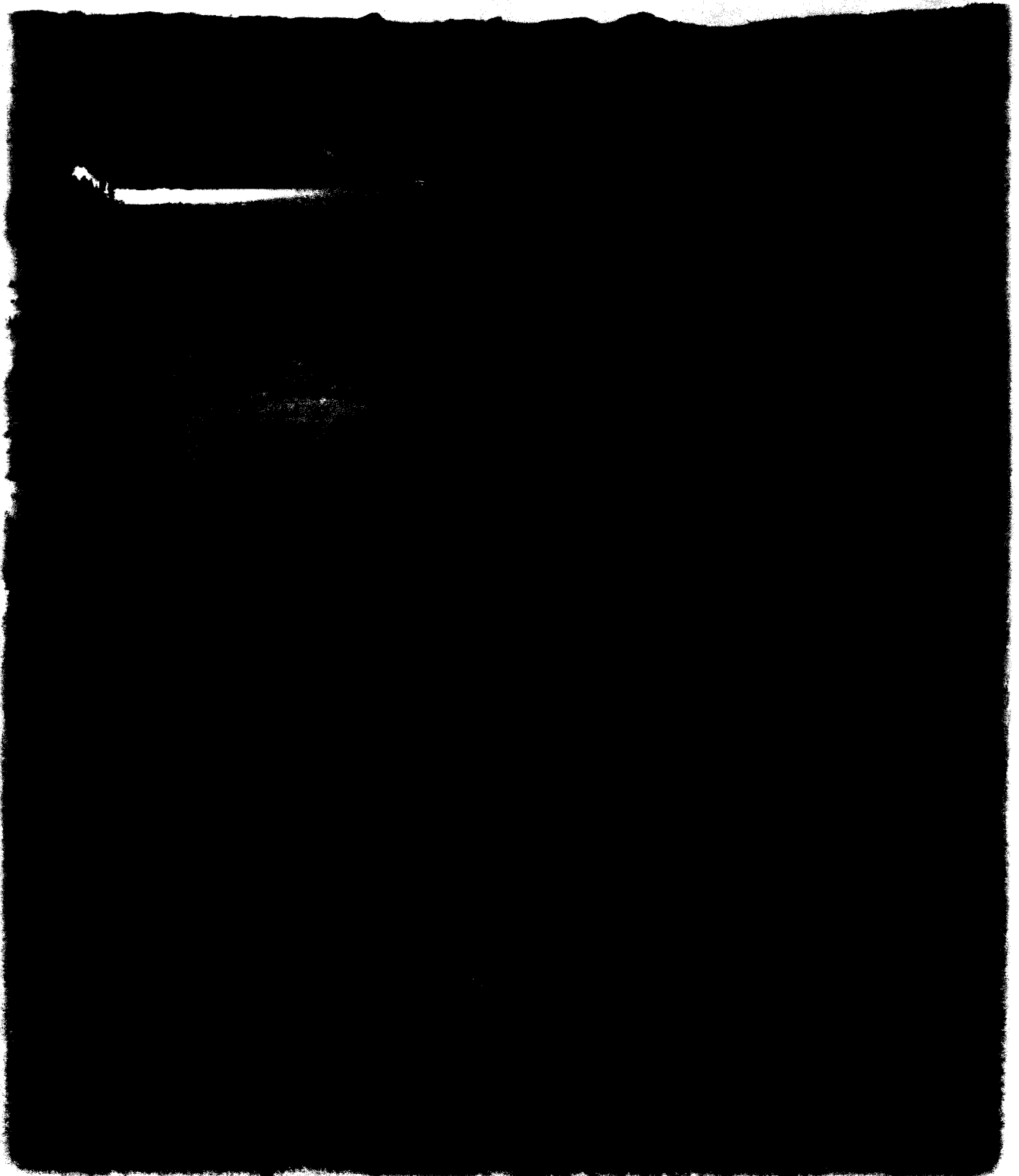
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**Back Cover Photo:** Cheslatta Fan and Nechako River with Cheslatta Falls in the background

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Table 2-1 Work Plan and Budget

## Kenney Dam Water Release Facility and Associated Works

|   | Activity   | Revised Budget Estimate (\$M) |
|---|--|-------------------------------|
| <b>Year 9 (SNC Year 1) - WRF Preliminary Engineering and Costing</b>  |  |                               |
|   | NEEF Management Committee Operating Fund   | \$0.250                       |
|   | Complete joint venture agreement between Province and RTA  | \$0.250                       |
|   | Develop a Nechako Environmental Conservation Program management structure  | \$0.250                       |
| SNC   | Preliminary Engineering of WRF, SLS & costing & construction plan including verification of flip bucket spillway design for TGP criteria (20 months) | \$3.899                       |
| SNC(p 1-1)  | Contingency (30%)  | \$1.170                       |
|   | Geotechnical Drilling in the Cheslatta Fan   | \$0.076                       |
|   | Re-run sediment model with geotech data  | \$0.060                       |
|   | Cheslatta Fan Preliminary Engineering and Costing  | \$0.250                       |
|   | Cheslatta Lake & River System Flow Regimes   | \$0.150                       |
|   | Develop consultation plan for EA process   | \$0.500                       |
|   | Complete temperature and flow modelling for WRF releases - DFO and Triton  | \$0.010                       |
|   | Complete package in preparation for entry to EA process  | \$0.040                       |
|   | Project Manager  | \$0.125                       |
|   | Sub-Total (Cash)   | \$7.030                       |
|   | Provincial and RTA in-kind contributions (1 FTE each)  | \$0.300                       |
| <b>Total Year - WRF Preliminary Engineering &amp; Costing &amp; in-kind staff support</b>   |  | <b>\$7.330</b>                |
| <b>Year 10 (SNC Year 2) - Environmental Assessment Process &amp; Permitting &amp; Mobilization</b>  |  |                               |
|   | Enter EA Process including consultation (18 months)  | \$2.500                       |
|   | Project Manager  | \$0.250                       |
|   | Project Office   | \$0.150                       |
|   | Office Operating Expenses  | \$0.020                       |
| SNC   | Start-up (camp establishment & start-up)   | \$16.600                      |
| SNC   | Contingency (30%)  | \$4.980                       |
| SNC memo  | Detailed Engineering   | \$6.880                       |
|   | Sub-Total (Cash)   | \$31.380                      |
|   | Provincial and RTA in-kind contributions (equivalent to 1FTE each)   | \$0.300                       |
| <b>Total Year 10 - WRF Environmental Assessment Process &amp; Permitting &amp; in-kind staff contribution</b>   |  | <b>\$31.680</b>               |
| <b>Year 11 (SNC Year 3) - Complete EA Process &amp; Permitting &amp; Commence Construction</b>  |  |                               |
|   | Complete EA process including consultation   | \$1.000                       |
|   | Project Manager  | \$0.250                       |
| SNC   | Civil works  | \$55.000                      |
| SNC   | Contingency (30%)  | \$16.500                      |
|   | Sub-Total (Cash)   | \$72.750                      |
|   | Provincial and RTA in-kind contributions (equivalent to 1FTE each)   | \$0.300                       |
| <b>Total Year 11 - WRF Complete Environmental Assessment process &amp; in-kind staff contribution</b>   |  | <b>\$73.050</b>               |
| <b>Year 12 (SNC Year 4) - WRF Construction</b>  |  |                               |
| SNC   | Structures (bridge, spillway, flipbucket, powerhouse shell, liner, valves etc)   | \$65.000                      |
| SNC   | Contingency (30%)  | \$19.500                      |
|   | Sub-Total (Cash)   | \$84.500                      |
|   | Provincial and RTA in-kind contributions (equivalent to 1FTE each)   | \$0.300                       |
| <b>Total Year 12 - WRF Construction</b>   |  | <b>\$84.800</b>               |
| <b>Year 13 (SNC Year 5) - WRF Mechanical &amp; Electrical, SLS Modifications, Cheslatta Fan Channel</b>   |  |                               |
| SNC   | Mechanical & electrical  | \$10.000                      |
| SNC   | Contingency (30%)  | \$3.000                       |
| SNC   | Skins Lake Spillway Modification   | \$22.066                      |
|   | Cheslatta Fan - armoured channel   | \$10.000                      |
| RTA   | Owners Costs: Commissioning/Start-up (5% of \$172M)  | \$8.600                       |
|   | Sub-Total (Cash)   | \$53.666                      |
|   | Provincial and RTA in-kind contributions (equivalent to 1FTE each)   | \$0.300                       |
| <b>Total Year 13 - Mechanical &amp; Electrical, SLS Modifications, Cheslatta Fan Channel</b>  |  | <b>\$53.966</b>               |
| <b>WRF Total Cash</b>   |  | <b>\$249.326</b>              |
| <b>WRF Total In-Kind support (RTA and BC Government)</b>  |  | <b>\$1.500</b>                |
| <b>Total Year 9 - 13 (Cash + In-Kind)</b>   |  | <b>\$250.826</b>              |
| <b>WRF Scope Change Contingency</b>   |  |                               |
| SNC   | Scope Change (5% contingency on \$172M)  | \$8.600                       |
| <b>Total - Scope Change Contingency</b>   |  | <b>\$8.600</b>                |
| <b>TOTAL (WRF &amp; ASSOCIATED WORKS)</b>   |  | <b>\$259.426</b>              |
| <b>Reference:</b>   |  |                               |
| SNC Lavalin, May 2009. Water Release Facility At Kenney Dam: Alternative Concept Layout, Construction Planning and Cost. Prepared For: Nechako Enhancement Society. |  |                               |

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Table 2-1 Work Plan and Budget (continued)

**Kenney Dam Water Release Facility and Associated Works****SUMMARY:**

| <b>Year</b>                                 | <b>Activities</b>   | <b>Budget Estimate (\$M)</b> |
|---|---|------------------------------|
| 1   | WRF & SLS Preliminary Engineering and Costing, Complete Preparation for Environmental Assessment Review | \$7.330                      |
| 2   | Environmental Assessment and Permitting & Mobilization  | \$31.680                     |
| 3   | Complete Environmental Assessment and Permitting & Commence Construction                                | \$73.050                     |
| 4   | Water Release Facility Construction   | \$84.800                     |
| 5   | Water Release Facility Mechanical and Electrical, SLS Modifications, Cheslatta Fan Channel              | \$53.966                     |
|   | Scope Change Contingency  | \$8.600                      |
| <b>TOTAL For WRF &amp; Associated Works</b> |   | <b>\$259.426</b>             |



**Executive Summary**  
**Work Completed Towards a Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam**  
**2001 - 2009**

November 24, 2009

Construction of a Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam has been the subject of much discussion, investigation and study since it was first put forward by the International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission in the early 1950s.

In 1997 an agreement was reached between Alcan and the Province of British Columbia on the establishment and administration of the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund. The 1997 Alcan/BC Settlement Agreement (the Agreement) established that funding contributed "by another person" into the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund (NEEF) requires Rio Tinto Alcan (formerly Alcan) to match the contribution within 7 days. The aggregate and cumulative maximum of Rio Tinto Alcan's contribution to the Fund is CAD\$50,000,000 including eligible NEEF Management Committee contributions.

As an outcome of the Agreement, the tripartite Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund Management Committee (NEEF-MC) was

formed and mandated to "...review, assess and report on options that may be available for the downstream enhancement of the Nechako watershed area." Between 1997 and the submission of its final report in 2001 the NEEF-MC consulted with a large number of stakeholders and considered a number of options for downstream enhancement before reaching their decision that the best use of NEEF would be to construct a Cold Water Release Facility (CWRF) at Kenney Dam. This was based on the assumption that the colder water released from Kenney Dam would result in "freed-up" flows; that is, water previously required to meet temperature requirements for migrating salmon in July and August would no longer be needed because the CWRF would release colder water. That excess water would therefore be available for re-distribution to other times of the year to create a more natural flow regime in the Nechako River.

In August 2001, a delegation from the Nechako Watershed Council (NWC)<sup>1</sup> met with provincial ministers, Members of the Legislative Assembly and senior provincial staff, to commend the NEEF MC's decision to build a Cold Water Release Facility (CWRF) at Kenney Dam, and offer support and assistance to implement that decision. One outcome of these meetings was a request that the NWC draft a work plan outlining the activities and costs required for construction of the CWRF. In 2002 the work plan, prepared cooperatively by the NWC, the Province of British Columbia and Alcan, was submitted by the NWC to Alcan and the BC Government. The work plan describes the activities required to culminate in construction and commissioning of a CWRF at Kenney Dam. The government and Alcan agreed to implement the work plan and in the spring of 2002, the Nechako Enhancement Society (NES), a not for profit society with members from the Province of British Columbia and Rio Tinto Alcan, was established to serve as a vehicle for funding and implementing work plan activities.

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<sup>1</sup> The 1997 BC/Alcan Agreement specified that the Nechako Watershed Council be formed "in order to provide advice to the Management Committee on the uses and priorities of the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund". Formed in June 1998, the Nechako Watershed Council's (NWC) purpose is to "enhance the long-term health and viability of the Nechako Watershed with consideration for all interests, and to provide a forum to address water management and related issues in the Watershed and to work toward cooperative resolution of these issues". The NWC consists of 26 groups, including industry, community, business, First Nations, local government, non-government and government representatives.

By 2008, seven years of work outlined in the NWC work plan had been undertaken, at a cost of \$1.48M, to address technical issues of uncertainty, identify regulatory criteria for permitting and to determine the benefits, risks and costs of a Cold Water Release Facility. Much of this work, involved close collaboration with both federal (DFO) and provincial (MOE) regulators, and has removed previous uncertainties on a number of technical matters and clarified regulatory criteria that would need to be met if construction and operation of a CWRF were to proceed. The rehabilitation of the Murray Cheslatta Lake and River system was confirmed as the most significant benefit to be realized with the construction of a CWRF at Kenney Dam. Rehabilitation is contingent on a water release facility at Kenney Dam to re-route the large summer temperature management flows, and flood flows, and re-profiling of the hydrograph in the Cheslatta system. Some additional Nechako River downstream benefits have been identified. However most of the Nechako River downstream benefits are flow dependent and thus will be affected by temperature criteria and how much "freed up" flow is subsequently available.

In April 2008, the NES presented to the NWC, a factual summary of all the technical issues, risks and uncertainties (construction of deep water intake and Cheslatta Fan sediment transport) that remain for a CWRF.<sup>2</sup> Included was a

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<sup>2</sup> Kenney Dam Cold Water Release Facility. Interim Report (2002 – 2007). Nechako Enhancement Society. April 2008.

discussion of the fact that ongoing work by DFO suggests that there may be a requirement to define new temperature criteria for that portion of the Nechako River downstream of the Stuart River confluence and that this in turn may result in little or no freed up water being available for downstream enhancement. Also discussed were the results of an updated cost estimate which showed that the estimated costs of construction had almost doubled compared to the 2001 NEEF Management Committee estimate. At a subsequent, June 2008 NWC meeting, the NWC concluded that because of the engineering risks, lack of "freed-up" flows and escalating cost, a CWRF was no longer the preferred option. A surface WRF would result in similar flow releases, fewer engineering risks and lower costs and would allow the primary benefit of rehabilitation of the Cheslatta River and Lake System, but "freed-up" flows for downstream environmental enhancement would be minimal, if any. Therefore, the NWC directed the NES to obtain a detailed cost estimate for a simplified surface Water Release Facility (WRF) at Kenny Dam.

At a July 2009 NWC meeting the NES tabled and discussed the results of the completed SNC Lavalin Report which provided a modified surface WRF design, detailed cost estimate (including 30% contingency) and construction schedule for a WRF at Kenny Dam. To proceed with further engineering, the environmental assessment and construction of a WRF, the estimated cost is \$223.6M plus an estimated \$35.8M for a partially armoured channel

through the Cheslatta Fan and modifications required to the Skins Lake Spillway to accommodate the lower flows into the Cheslatta River and Lake system. The project spans a 5-year period (see Table 1). This \$259.4M estimate does not include the unknown costs for: Water for commissioning the WRF; commissioning and post-commissioning environmental monitoring and Cheslatta River and Lake System rehabilitation.

The NWC has completed all of the activities in the 2002 NWC Work Plan to the point where key decisions must be made before additional work proceeds. Those decisions include:

1. The NEEF Management Committee decision is "binding on the parties", subject to the financial arrangements and other terms described in the 1997 Agreement. Their decision in 2001 was a Cold Water Release Facility. To change the decision, the NEEF Management Committee must be reconvened.

If the NEEF Management Committee decision is a Water Release Facility then,

2. A project proponent is required.
3. Funding must be secured. According to the 1997 BC/Alcan Agreement, RTA's commitment is up to \$50M (minus eligible expenses already expended as detailed in Schedule 4 of the 1997 Agreement) in matching funds contributed to NEEF by "another person".

**Nechako Watershed Council  
Executive Summary**

Table 1. Summary of activities and budget required over 5 years to construct and commission a water release facility at Kenney Dam.

| <b>Year</b>  | <b>Activities</b>  | <b>Budget Estimate (\$M)</b> |
|--------------|--|------------------------------|
| 1            | WRF Preliminary Engineering and Costing and Complete Preparation for Environmental Assessment Review       | \$7.330                      |
| 2            | Environmental Assessment Process and Permitting  | \$31.680                     |
| 3            | Complete Environmental Assessment and Permitting   | \$73.050                     |
| 4            | Water Release Facility Construction  | \$84.800                     |
| 5            | Water Release Facility Mechanical and Electrical, Cheslatta Fan Channel, Skins Lake Spillway Modifications | \$53.966                     |
|              | Scope Change Contingency   | \$8.600                      |
| <b>TOTAL</b> |  | <b>\$259.426</b>             |



## 24 November 2009

**...see over for PHASE 3**

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## Years 9 - 13

|   | STATUS   | ACTIVITY  |
|---|--|---|
| Year Nine<br>Budget Estimate<br>\$7.330M                    | <b>PRELIMINARY ENGINEERING &amp; COSTING</b>                                     |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Identify Project Proponent  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | WRF & SLS Preliminary Engineering and Costing                                   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Cheslatta Fan Preliminary Engineering and Costing                               |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Cheslatta Lake and River System Flow Regimes                                    |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Prepare Package for Entry to Environmental Assessment Process                   |
| Year Ten<br>Budget Estimate<br>\$31.680M                    | <b>ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT PROCESS, PERMITTING &amp; MOBILIZATION</b>           |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Enter Environmental Assessment Process, including consultation (18 months)      |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Detailed Engineering  |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Construction camp establishment   |
| Year Eleven<br>Budget Estimate<br>\$73.050M                 | <b>COMPLETE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT, PERMITTING &amp; COMMENCE CONSTRUCTION</b> |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Complete EA process, including consultation                                     |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Begin Civil Works   |
| Year Twelve<br>Budget Estimate<br>\$84.800M                 | <b>WRF CONSTRUCTION</b>  |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Structures (bridge, spillway, flipbucket, powerhouse shell, liner, valves, etc) |
| Year Thirteen<br>Budget Estimate<br>\$53.966M               | <b>WRF MECHANICAL AND ELECTRICAL, SLS, CHESLATTA FAN</b>                         |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Mechanical and electrical installations   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Skins Lake Spillway modifications   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Cheslatta Fan Pilot Channel with Selected Armouring                             |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Commissioning   |
| Budget Estimate<br>\$8.600M                                 | <b>OTHER COSTS</b>   |   |
|   | <input type="checkbox"/>   | Scope Change WRF & SLS (5% contingency on \$172M)                               |
| <b>Total Year 9 - 13<br/>Budget Estimate<br/>\$259.426M</b> |  |   |

## NWC WORKPLAN PHASES

PHASE 3  
Implementation

November 27, 2009

## FREQUENTLY ASKED QUESTIONS

**1. Who is the Nechako Watershed Council and what does it do?**

The NWC is a diverse, multi-stakeholder group comprised of governments, First Nations, communities, environmental and business interests. The Nechako Watershed Council mission statement is "To enhance the long-term health and viability of the Nechako Watershed with consideration for all interests, and to provide a forum to address water management and related issues in the Watershed and to work toward cooperative resolution of these issues."

**2. Who established the Nechako Watershed Council and why?**

The Nechako Watershed Council was formed voluntarily by diverse groups with interests in the watershed. These parties came together following the signing of the 1997 BC/Alcan Settlement Agreement "in order to provide advice to the (Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund) Management Committee on the uses and priorities of the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund".

**3. Why does the Nechako Watershed Council support construction of a Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam?**

The Nechako Watershed Council undertook a thorough and comprehensive process to identify the critical issues facing the Nechako watershed. Twenty six issues were identified and after much discussion, debate and studies, the Nechako Watershed Council has concluded that the only option that allows rehabilitation of the Cheslatta River and Lake System while also meeting other interests is a Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam.

**4. Are First Nations involved?**

Yes. The Cheslatta Carrier Nation, which would benefit most directly from a Water Release Facility has participated in discussions since 1996 and is an active member of the Nechako Watershed Council. The Lheidli T'enneh First Nation is a founding member of the Council and the Carrier Sekani Tribal Council, which was actively involved in forming the Nechako Watershed Council, continues to be kept fully informed. A 1998 general assembly resolution of the BC Aboriginal Fisheries Commission supported construction of "a multi-level water release facility at the Kenney Dam to facilitate water management to support wild salmon recovery".

**5. Why is the Nechako Watershed Council recommending a surface Water Release Facility instead of the Cold Water Release Facility?**

Initially the Nechako Watershed Council recommended a Cold Water Release Facility however such a structure requires a deep water intake that is expensive and has some potential engineering challenges. In addition, work by DFO showed that the anticipated benefit of being able to release smaller volumes of colder water so as to redistribute water releases for the benefit of other users could not be realized because the smaller volumes of water would warm up faster, putting fish at risk. Therefore a Cold Water Release Facility was not worth the cost and risk.

November 27, 2009

**6. What are the benefits of a Water Release Facility at Kenney Dam?**

The main benefits of the water release facility include:

- Rehabilitation of Cheslatta Watershed. A WRF is the only opportunity to reduce the high summer flows and flood flows that currently go through the Cheslatta River and Lake System, allowing rehabilitation of that watershed and an opportunity for economic development by the Cheslatta Carrier Nation and others.
- Increased efficiency of Cooling Flows. As flows will be released from the reservoir directly into the Nechako River, in the summer when cooling flows are needed for salmon, the water will have less time to warm up so there should be more efficient use of flows.
- Creation of fish habitat in the Nechako Canyon. Nine kilometres of habitat will be restored with the return of flows from the reservoir directly into the Nechako River at Kenney Dam.

**7. Why is the Nechako Watershed Council concerned about sturgeon?**

The Nechako White Sturgeon population plays a key role in the ecology of the Nechako River and has contributed to human communities in the watershed for thousands of years. This important fish stock is now at serious risk of extinction and has international significance under the Canadian Species at Risk Act. The Nechako Watershed Council is supportive of, and advocates for, sturgeon population recovery. The Nechako Watershed Council mission statement is "To enhance the long-term health and viability of the Nechako Watershed with consideration for all interests, and to provide a forum to address water management and related issues in the Watershed and to work toward cooperative resolution of these issues."

**8. Will a Water Release Facility help with the sturgeon issue?**

It is unknown whether a water release facility would have any influence on sturgeon survival or recovery. The cause of the sturgeon population decline is believed to be that the young are not surviving to adulthood. The Nechako White Sturgeon Recovery Initiative is responsible for implementation of the recovery strategy which includes habitat protection, restoration and management options. The most time sensitive initiative is a white sturgeon hatchery of which the Nechako Watershed Council is fully supportive.

**9. What other options for downstream environmental enhancement has the Nechako Watershed Council considered?**

Options that have been suggested include in-stream works to improve fish habitat and spawning beds, creation of a long-term fund to support conservation and stewardship activities, improved cattle fencing, a fish hatchery, and vegetation work to improve habitat for birds (NEEF MC Report, 2001, page 6). However the Nechako Watershed Council recommends a Water Release Facility because none of these other options provide the benefit of rehabilitation of the Cheslatta Watershed and creation of nine kilometres of habitat in the Nechako Canyon.

**10. How much will it cost to build the Water Release Facility and who will pay for it?**

The water release facility and associated works are estimated to cost \$259.4M. The Nechako Watershed Council recommends that the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund be used to pay for this project. The Fund is part of the 1997 BC/Alcan Agreement in which Rio Tinto Alcan committed to contribute up to \$50M in matching funds once a contribution is made into the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund by another "person". That other 'person' is not defined in the Agreement.

**November 27, 2009**

**11. How would the Water Release Facility be funded?**

The Nechako Watershed Council has developed a work plan that spreads the work and the costs over 5 years. The Nechako Watershed Council recommends that the Nechako Environmental Enhancement Fund be a source of the funds and that the BC Government has the primary responsibility to provide the balance of the money required to construct a water release facility at Kenney Dam.

**12. Given the current economic climate, is a Water Release Facility really the best use of \$259M?**

The water release facility is, in the opinion of the Nechako Watershed Council, the best solution for environmental enhancement of the downstream Nechako Watershed. So although it is a lot of money, there are significant benefits that cannot be achieved in any other way, such as rehabilitation of the Cheslatta Watershed.

**13. How do you know that a Water Release Facility will enhance the downstream environment?**

A water release facility would provide rehabilitation opportunities in the Cheslatta River and Lake System that cannot be achieved by any other means and there will be other benefits to the Nechako Watershed including rehabilitation of the Nechako Canyon and more efficient cooling of summer flows for salmon.

**14. What will be the impact on the fish and other species within the system?**

Redirecting reservoir discharge from the Cheslatta Watershed to Kenney Dam will provide fisheries and environmental enhancement opportunities in the Cheslatta Watershed that cannot be achieved by any other means. The Cheslatta Fan in the Nechako River has a lot of sediment that could be released when the water release facility is commissioned. Mitigation measures will have to be implemented to ensure that the sediment does not deposit on sensitive habitat for salmon, sturgeon or other species.

**15. How will climate change affect this project?**

The exact impacts of climate change are unknown, however having a water release facility at Kenney Dam would allow for greater flexibility for releasing water from the reservoir. Also, with water from the reservoir being released at Kenney Dam straight into the Nechako River in the summer, there will be more efficient use of the flows to meet the temperature targets for salmon.