FWCP
Fish & Wildlife
COMPENSATION PROGRAM

Annual Report

Coastal Region
2025–2026

fwcp.ca

BC Hydro

British Columbia

Fisheries and Oceans Canada | Pêches et Océans Canada

The FWCP is a partnership between BC Hydro, the Province of B.C., Fisheries and Oceans Canada, First Nations, and public interest holders to conserve and enhance fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams.

Message from our board chairs

Thank you for clicking on our 2025–2026 annual report for the Fish & Wildlife Compensation Program's (FWCP) Coastal Region.

This report includes an overview of how our regional boards allocated annual compensation project funding provided by BC Hydro across grant types (i.e. annual or year-round) and delivery mechanisms (i.e. grants, directed projects). This report also includes an overview of projects approved by our Coastal Region board and links to each project on fwcp.ca. Our annual project outcomes report will be available this fall. Be sure to subscribe or follow us on social media so you don't miss it.

Many of you may know that our primary obligation is to compensate for the impacts to fish, wildlife and their habitats resulting from construction of BC Hydro dams. That's because BC Hydro made voluntary commitments to compensate for dam impacts across the 14 watersheds that make up our Coastal Region.

Since 1999, we have been the mechanism by which BC Hydro fulfills its voluntary commitments to compensate for dam impacts in our Coastal Region.

One of the best ways we can do that is by protecting high-quality habitat. And this year we approved ~$130,000 to help fund the purchases of two land conservation projects: one is for 55 hectares in the Kanaka Bar area between Boston Bar and Lytton in the Fraser Canyon; and just over one hectare for the Murray-Carson Conservation Property near Salmon Arm in the Shuswap River Watershed.

In the Puntledge River Watershed, the Comox Valley Project Watershed Society moved closer to completing the restoration of a former sawmill site in Courtenay by removing a steel retaining wall along the shoreline. With lots of volunteer help, and long-term funding from us, the site is closer than ever to being restored to a natural area that can support salmon populations. This project is led by Project Watershed delivered in partnership with the City of Courtenay and the Komoks First Nations.

In the Campbell River Watershed, the Discovery Coast Greenways Land Trust continued restoring the ecological function of the estuary.

Our board met with project proponents to learn more about work to conserve blue-listed purple martins. These are just a few of the 28 fish & wildlife projects we approved in 2025–2026 for ~$2.34 million.

In 2024 our boards approved a project effectiveness and performance measurement strategy as recommended in our most recent audit. Following on this important strategic work to develop a logic model, we embarked on a process to update our approach to project funding in 2025–2026. We will be continuing this renewal process in 2026–2027 and will be engaging with First Nations and interest holders about new priorities for compensation funding. We're excited about these changes and look forward to sharing more with you next year.

Let us take a moment to thank public board member Laurie Kremsator, who retired from the board after nearly seven years. We'd like to welcome two new public members, Carla Corbett and Charlotte Olson, who joined during this year.

Larry Casper
Coastal Region
Board Co-chair

Ryan Stewart
Coastal Region
Board Co-chair

Cover photo: More than half a million dollars were allocated for land securement in 2025-2026 by our Coastal Region board, including $90,000 for 55 hectares of critical habitat between Boston Bar and Lytton. Photo: Nature-Based Solutions Foundation

1. Overview

Our Coastal Region was established in 1999 as a voluntary initiative by BC Hydro in response to First Nations and public interest holders to address the impacts of BC Hydro dams.

The region is made up of 14 watersheds where BC Hydro dams are located on Vancouver Island, the Lower Mainland, the Central and Sunshine Coasts, and watersheds in the Southern Interior (e.g., Bridge-Seton and Shuswap River).

The Coastal Region has received more than $53 million from BC Hydro since it started to fulfill voluntary commitments BC Hydro made to compensate for impacts to fish, wildlife, and their habitats following the construction of its dams. This has enabled the FWCP to fund approximately 30 compensation projects each year. Our Coastal Region is shown below in Figure 1.1.

Since 1998, BC Hydro has provided more than $53 million to our Coastal Region to compensate for dam impacts, funding more than 500 projects.

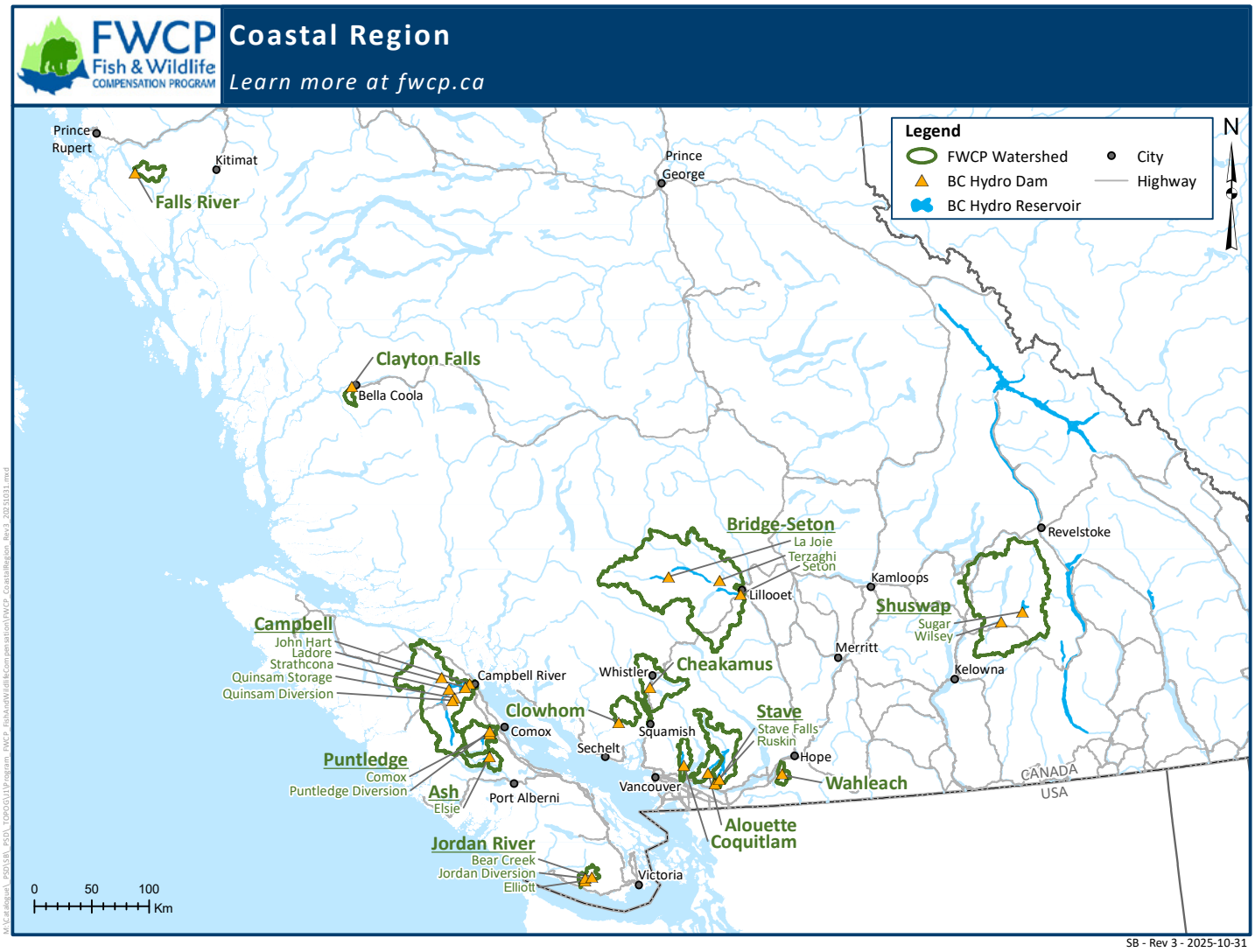

Figure 1.1: Map of our Coastal Region

2. Our strategic approach

While the FWCP operates in watersheds that have been altered by hydroelectric development, our vision recognizes that an effective program can support the maintenance of healthy fish and wildlife populations that will meet its conservation objectives. Actions focused on conserving and, where possible, restoring ecosystem function will help species be more resilient to emerging pressures, such as climate change, and the cumulative effects of other overlapping resource developments. We take a forward-looking, ecosystem-based approach that defines the desired outcomes and takes actions to restore, enhance, and conserve priority species and their habitats, in alignment with our strategic approach. More details on our three strategic objectives can be found in our governance manual.

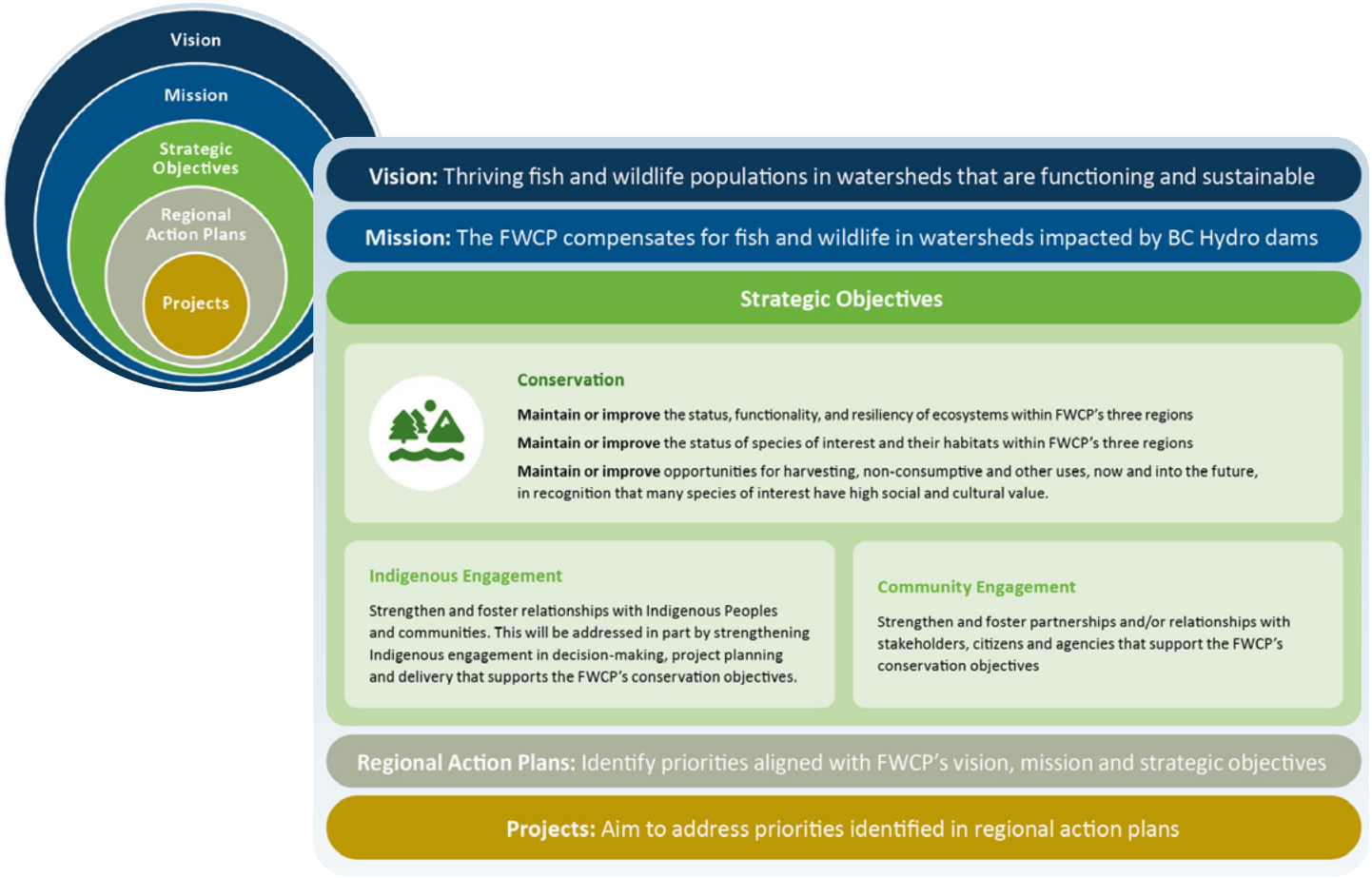

Figure 2.1: Strategic framework. The projects we fund align with our regional action plans, reflect our strategic objectives, and advance our mission and vision.

Our regional action plans guide FWCP investments in fish and wildlife compensation projects. They are referenced annually by our regional boards to track progress toward implementation, set priorities, and guide decision-making in setting out and approving the annual operating plan for each region. Actions in our action plans are eligible for FWCP funding and align with our vision, mission, and geographic scope.

In our Coastal Region, we have 14 watershed-based action plans, and all F26 projects approved for funding by our Coastal Region board align with priority actions identified in the action plans.

UPDATE: EVALUATION AND FINANCIAL AUDIT

In 2019, an independent third-party evaluation and financial audit was completed, as required by our Governance Manual. The auditor made nine recommendations to refine, support, and strengthen our approach to conserving and enhancing fish and wildlife in watersheds impacted by BC Hydro dams. The recommendations have been substantially completed and the FWCP has reported to the Comptroller of Water Rights and the steering committee—as per the FWCP's governance manual.

Our Coastal Region board has approved more than $1 million in the past six years to help purchase and restore a former sawmill site on the Courtenay River. The last panel of a steel retaining wall at Kus-kus-sum was removed in February 2026. The project is led by by Project Watershed, in partnership with the K'ómoks First Nation and the City of Courtenay. 2026. Photo: C. Doucet

A Community Engagement Grant went to support a workshop for arborists learning about creating wildlife trees, helping at-risk species such as the western screech. Photo: I. Routley

3. Financial report

APPROVED BUDGET AND EXPENDITURES

Our Coastal Region board allocates annual funding toward fish and wildlife compensation projects, First Nations engagement, and other activities as outlined below. These allocations form the annual operating plan. Any unallocated funds are carried forward as uncommitted available funds for future spending.

BC Hydro provided $2,614,050 to the FWCP to fulfill BC Hydro's voluntary commitment to address the impacts of dam construction. Our board approved a budget of $2,701,165, utilizing unspent surplus funds from previous years.

Figure 3.1 shows a total of approximately $4.76 million available to our Coastal Region as of April 1, 2025. This includes the approved budget of approximately $2.7 million, the uncommitted available funds of approximately $105,000, and the remaining prior-year funding commitments from F25 to F22 of just under $2 million, as shown below.

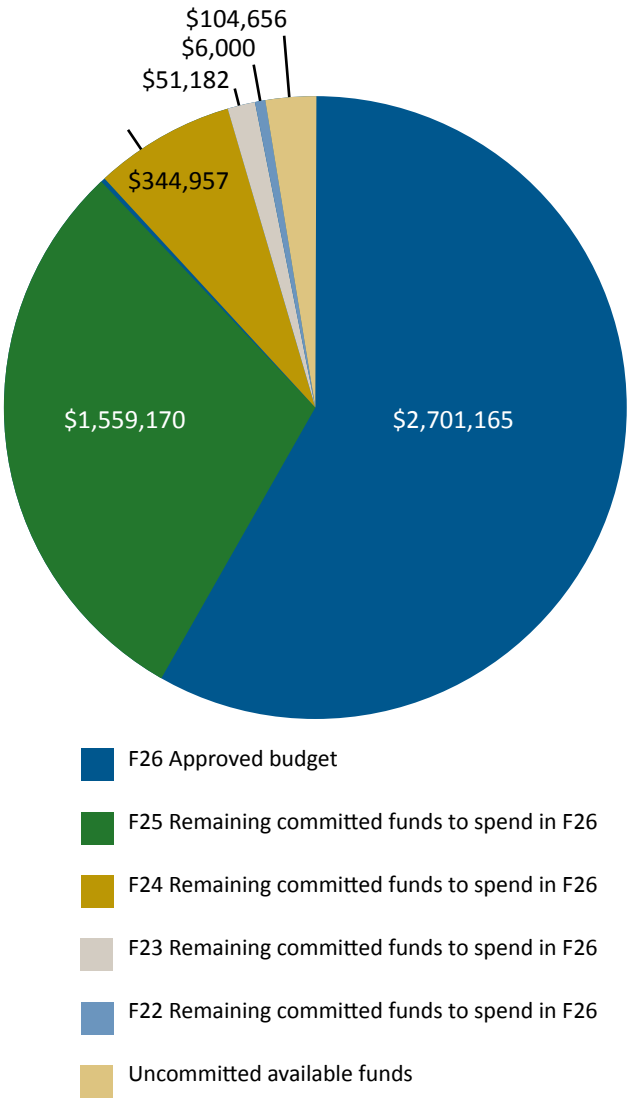

Figure 3.1: FWCP Coastal Region financial summary on April 1, 2025

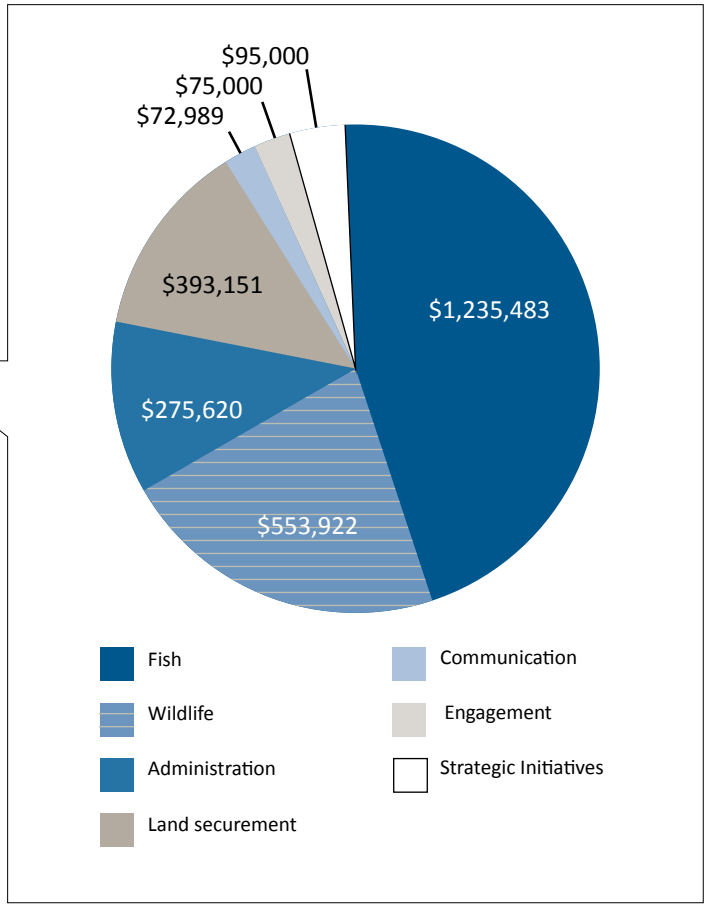

Figure 3.2: Allocation of the approved Coastal Region budget of $2,701,165 as of April 1, 2025

Figure 3.2 illustrates the approved budget for F26 as of April 1, 2025. Funding for fish projects accounted for nearly 46% of the budget, wildlife projects 20%, and land securement 15%. Administrative costs, including safety and professional development training, accounted for just over 10% of the budget and strategic initiatives, including implementing the logic model and funding to support renewing our project funding approach, accounted for approximately 4%.

Coastal Region expenditures up to the end of the fiscal year (March 31, 2026) are shown in Table 3.1. This reflects a snapshot of actual and planned payments made related to this year's finances. Funding allocated each year may not be fully expended by year-end, and as shown in Table 3.1, F26 funds not yet expended by March 31, 2026, are labelled as planned payments.

Occasionally, compensation projects come in under budget (unspent funds in Table 3.1). Funds not spent during the fiscal year will be carried forward as unspent surplus budget and made available for new spending in future fiscal years. Funds identified as land securement are approved for a reserve fund that, if remain unspent, are carried forward and made available for future land securement projects.

Table 3.1: F26 budget status as of March 31, 2026

Fund category	F26 approved budget	Paid up to March 31, 2026	Remaining	Variance[1]	Planned Payments[2]
Fish	$1,235,483	$524,942	$710,541	$12,886	$697,654
Wildlife	$553,922	$282,732	$271,190	($8,560)	$279,750
Administration	$275,620	$252,446	$23,174	$19,174	$4,000
Land securement	$393,151	$53,014	$340,137	$0	$340,137
Communications	$72,989	$62,085	$10,904	$0	$10,904
Engagement	$75,000	$15,577	$59,423	$45,051	$14,373
Strategic Initiatives	$95,000	$81,486	$13,514	($31,214)	$44,729
TOTAL	$2,701,165	$1,272,282	$1,428,884	$37,336	$1,391,547

Note 1: Variance is carried forward and available for the next fiscal year. In the instance of a negative amount, the money was taken from previously uncommitted funds and added to the line item, making them committed and increasing the expected spend/planned payment. If the number is positive, it means that the money is released from this line item and returned to uncommitted funds.

Note 2: Planned payments represent expected invoices for approved ongoing compensation projects that have not yet submitted final reports by March 31, 2026.

At the end of this reporting period, approximately $1.27 million of the annual budget had been spent, and approximately $1.39 million[1] remained as an F26 commitment to spend in F27.

In addition to the planned payments of $1.39 million, the balance of prior-year funding commitments anticipated to be spent in F27 was nearly $300,000 from F25 to F22, with approximately $654,000 available in uncommitted funds (Figure 3.3).

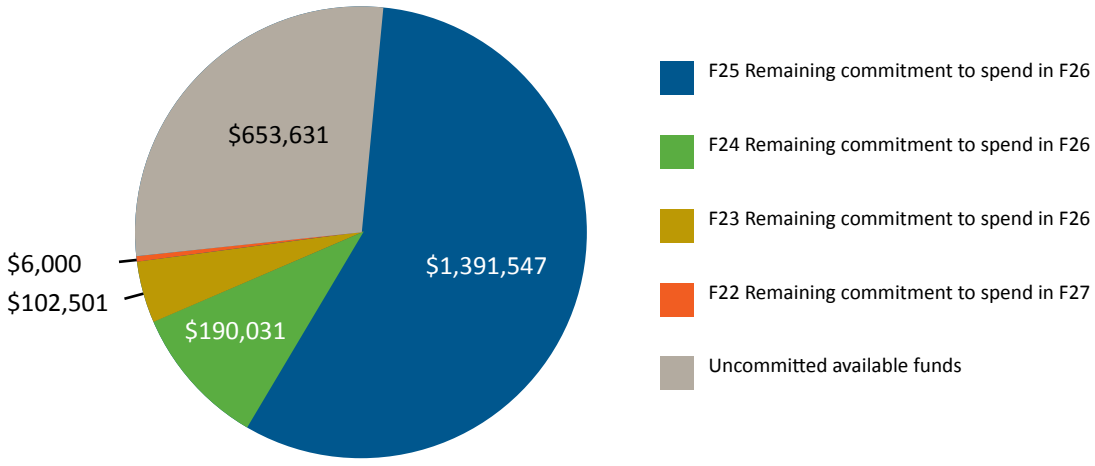

Figure 3.3: Financial summary of our Coastal Region, as of March 31, 2026 (end of fiscal year)

1. The end of fiscal F26 and the year-end deadline for project reporting are on the same day. Therefore, reports (and potentially statements of accounts) are not reviewed and accepted until after the March 31 deadline, causing them to be associated with the next fiscal (F27). Many final payments for F26 projects are processed in the first few months of F27, and unspent funds are allocated for future spending.

4. Approved project funding

This fiscal year, our three regional boards approved 91 compensation projects for a total FWCP investment of approximately $10.5 million. The total value of these projects, including leveraged funding from other organizations and in-kind resources, was more than $98 million.

Final project reports for all of the projects we fund are uploaded to Ecocat or SIWE provincial databases, and we maintain searchable spreadsheets of final project reports for each FWCP region at fwcp.ca/results-reports.html

Twenty-eight projects were approved this year for $2,337,510 in funding from our Coastal Region board.

Grant-based projects

The FWCP's annual grant intake opens each July and closes in early November. All grant applications go through a three-stage review process. For more details, visit our FAQs. Grant applicants are required to develop a project idea that aligns with one or more priority actions in any action plan and will achieve the intended outcome.

Of the 28 projects approved for the year, 20 were grant-based (10 fish and 10 wildlife), for a total of $2,098,982. The board allocated 55% of project funding for fish projects ($1,146,303) and 45% for wildlife ($952,679). As a result of financial partnerships and in-kind contributions, the total value of the projects was approximately $11.7 million. In other words, for every $1 invested by the FWCP, others contributed more than $5, greatly increasing the value of the FWCP's investment overall.

Directed projects

Approximately $239,000 was approved for eight directed projects (i.e., a project prioritized by the board), excluding funds allocated for land securement. The eight directed projects included hatchery operations, the distribution of chum salmon carcasses in the Puntledge River Watershed, and improvement of fish passage in the Coquitlam and Alouette River watersheds.

For all directed and grant-based projects, see Appendix A.

Figure 4.1 shows the split between directed project funding and grant-based project funding.

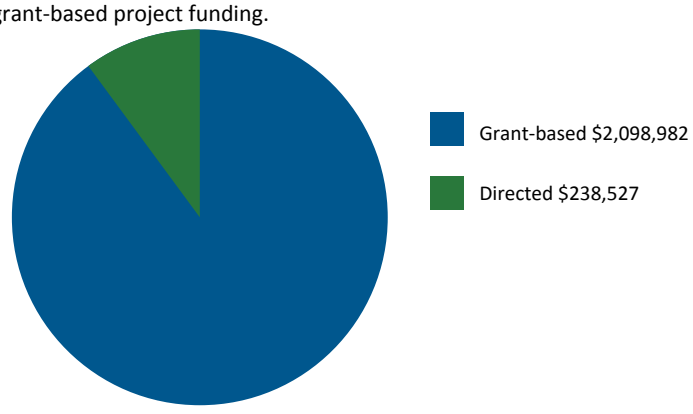

Figure 4.1: F26 directed project funding and grant-based project funding

Land securement projects

As part of directed projects, the Coastal Region board sets aside approximately 15% of its annual funding to a land securement reserve fund. In F26, the board allocated $393,151 toward the reserve fund. For F26, our Coastal Region board utilized unspent funds from previous years and allocated $530,378 towards three land securement purchases:

- Puntledge River Timber Reservation (Phase 3)—100 hectares: $400,000 to Comox Valley Land Trust
- Kanaka Bar (Jackass and Across-the-River conservation properties)—55 hectares: approximately $90,000 to Nature-Based Solutions Foundation.
- Nearly $40,300 was allocated for a land purchase in the Shuswap River Watershed that has not been publicly announced at the time of publication.

For more information about our land securement grant, visit fwcp.ca/funding/land-securement.html

Projects by proponent type

The Coastal Region board approved funding for a total of 28 projects: eight directed projects and 20 grant-based projects. Nearly 79% of the approved funding went toward projects led by non-government organizations, and approximately 20% went to First Nations—a fifteen-fold increase compared to two years ago. See Figure 4.2 for a breakdown of approved projects by proponent type.

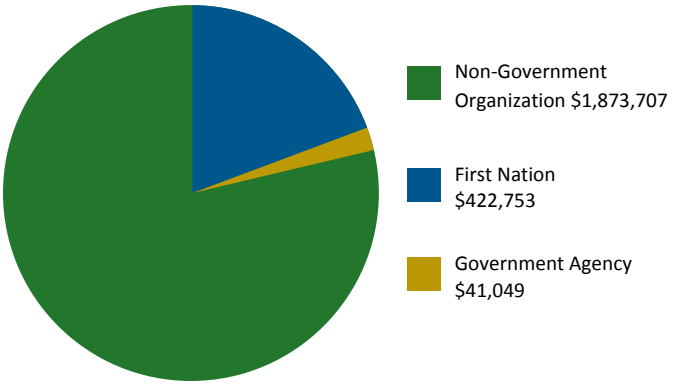

Figure 4.2: Coastal F26 approved projects by lead proponent type

Community Engagement Grant projects

The goal of the Community Engagement Grant is to provide small grants of up to $1,500 to support activities that align with our strategic objectives. Groups can apply for a Community Engagement Grant at any time during the year, while funds are available.

A total annual budget of $15,000—a 50% increase over the previous year—was set aside for Community Engagement Grant funding. Fifteen applications were received, and 13 were approved. The full list of approved Community Engagement Grants is shown in Table 4.1.

Table 4.1: F26 Coastal Region Community Engagement Grants

Organization	Project	FWCP $s	Watershed
St'at'imc Gov't Services	Elders Gathering: Traditional Plant Use	$1,500	Bridge-Seton
Alouette River Management Society	32nd Annual Ridge Meadows River Day Event	$1,500	Alouette
BC Wildlife Federation	Support of BCWF Annual General Meeting	$250	Multiple
Hoy Scott Water shed Society	Salmon Leave Home Community Education Event	$1,500	Coquitlam
River Springs Hatchery	Community Hatchery Social Event	$1,000	Coquitlam
BC Conservation Foundation	Northern Spotted Owl Outreach & First Nations BBQ	$1,500	Bridge-Seton
Resilient Waters	Salmon Day 2025	$1,500	Coquitlam
Coquitlam River Watershed Society	Respectful Recreation Outreach and Education	$750	Coquitlam
Madrone Environmental Services Ltd.	Western Screech-owl Monitoring and Habitat Restoration	$1,500	Campbell River
City of Coquitlam	Salmon Come Home Event	$1,000	Coquitlam
Stream of Dreams Mural Society	Central Community Elementary Stream of Dreams	$900	Coquitlam
Adams River Society	Salute to the Sockeye	$1,200	Shuswap
Howe Sound Marine Stewardship Initiative	Herring Event	$900	Cheakamus
		TOTAL $15,000	

Projects by action type

Priority actions in our Coastal Region action plans are grouped into five action types:

1. research and information acquisition
2. habitat-based
3. species-based
4. monitoring and evaluation
5. land securement

This year, approximately 62% of the approved funding was allocated to habitat-based projects, and nearly 23% on land securement projects. Figure 4.3 shows the breakdown of approved funding by action type.

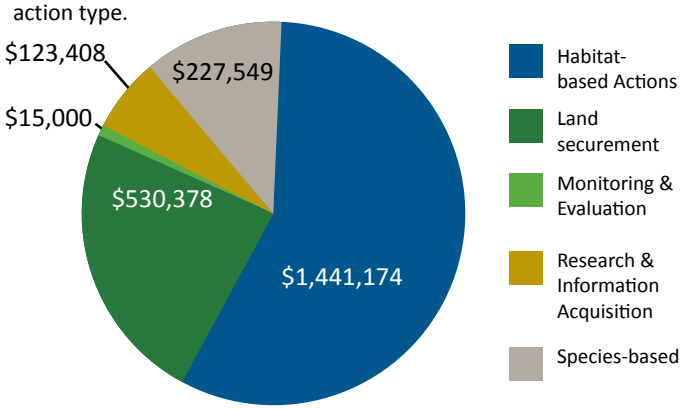

Figure 4.3: Breakdown of approved funding by action type

Projects by watershed

The approved compensation projects were distributed across the watersheds where we operate, as shown in Table 4.2.

Table 4.2: Projects approved by watershed*

By Watershed	Number of projects	FWCP $s
Alouette	1	$37,809
Bridge-Seton	6	$417,291
Campbell	3	$92,304
Cheakamus	3	$538,188
Coquitlam-Buntzen	2	$162,191
Puntledge	4	$629,399
Shuswap	4	$139,095
Multiple	5	$321,232
	28	TOTAL $2,337,510

*Does not include Community Engagement Grants

Appendix A: F26 Coastal Region projects

The table below provides a list of 2025–2026 Coastal Region fish and wildlife projects approved for funding. The funding identified may vary from the approved budget as of April 1, 2025, due to project budget changes that occurred throughout the fiscal year. Final reports for all projects are posted to the appropriate provincial databases once available. Visit fwcp.ca/results-reports.html for an updated list of all available final reports. Executive summaries and links to the final reports can also be viewed by clicking on the project numbers. Learn more about the 2025-2026 project outcomes at fwcp.ca/results-reports/annual-reports.html.

FWCP Project ID	Project Title	Proponent	FWCP $s
Fish: Grant-based			
COA-F26-F-4277	Conservation of Shuswap River Chinook through Education	Kingfisher Interpretive Centre Society	$16,500
COA-F26-F-4283	Bessette Creek Streamflow Monitoring	Okanagan Nation Alliance	$44,861
COA-F26-F-4284	Kus-kus-sum: Unpaving Paradise - Year 5	Comox Valley Project Watershed Society	$206,250
COA-F26-F-4287	Central Squamish Estuary Salmon Passage Culvert	Squamish River Watershed Society	$414,982
COA-F26-F-4294	Campbell River Spawning Gravel Site 7 Design	A-Tlegay Fisheries Society	$41,689
COA-F26-F-4295	Riparian Restoration of Little Bear Slough	The Nature Trust of British Columbia	$37,049
COA-F26-F-4300	Cheakamus Centre Off-Channel Maintenance & Enhancement	Cheakamus Foundation for Environmental Learning	$86,157
COA-F26-F-4304	Reeve Slough Salmon Habitat Reconnection Project 2025	Kwikwetlem First Nation	$150,000
COA-F26-F-4305	Gates Creek Habitat Enhancement Project	N'Quatqua Band	$111,460
COA-F26-F-4309	Bessette Creek Bank Stabilization	Okanagan Indian Band	$37,356
Wildlife: Grant-based			
COA-F26-W-4278	Translocating Vancouver Is. Marmots to Strathcona Park 2025	Marmot Recovery Foundation	$21,965
COA-F26-W-4194	Northern Spotted Owl Conservation Breeding Program	BC Conservation Foundation	$177,464
COA-F26-W-4286	Engagement of First Nations in Black Swift conservation	Birds Canada	$48,350
COA-F26-W-4290	Restoring Ecological Function in the Campbell River Estuary	Discovery Coast Greenways Land Trust	$35,615
COA-F26-W-4296	Mitigating WNS: Probiotics and Long-term Bat Monitoring	Wildlife Conservation Society Canada	$90,917
COA-F26-W-4298	Puntledge River Timber Reservation - Phase 3	Comox Valley Land Trust	$400,000
COA-F26-W-4301	Western Painted Turtle Recovery in Coastal Watersheds	Athene Ecological	$140,000
COA-F26-W-4307	Supporting Indigenous Leadership in Bat Monitoring	Wildlife Conservation Society Canada	$28,171
COA-F26-W-4345	Shulaps Bighorn Sheep Survey Trial and Project Development.	Bridge River Indian Band Xwisten	$5,000
COA-F26-W-4567	The Disappearance of Kíy7amc (porcupines) on St'at'imc Land	Splitrock Environmental Sekw el was LP	$5,197
Fish: Directed			
COA-F26-F-4280-DCA	Campbell River Gravel Post-Storm Assessment - 2025	A-Tlegay Fisheries Society	$15,000
COA-F26-F-4281-DCA	Upper Puntledge River Watershed Chum Carcass Distribution Y6	Courtenay and District Fish & Game Protective Association	$2,100
COA-F26-F-4282-DCA	Alouette Watershed Sockeye-Fish Passage Feasibility-Year 9	Alouette River Management Society	$37,809
COA-F26-F-4335-DCA	Annual Puntledge Hatchery Contribution	Department of Fisheries and Oceans	$21,049
COA-F26-F-4336-DCA	F26 Annual Contribution to the Coquitlam Hatchery	Kwikwetlem First Nation	$12,191
Wildlife: Directed			
COA-F26-W-4358-DCA	FWCP Watershed Assessment Tool Development-Phase 6	Ministry of Water, Lands and Resource Stewardship	$20,000
COA-F26-W-4528-DCA	Kanaka Bar Land Conservation	Nature-Based Solutions Foundation	$90,000
COA-F26-W-4547-DCA	Murray-Carson Conservation Property	Southern Interior Land Trust	$40,378
		TOTAL	$2,160,046

Appendix B: Coastal Region board, committees, and staff

BOARD

The board guides our work and is responsible for approving our projects and budget in our Coastal Region. In addition to funding projects through our annual grants, the board may choose to direct projects.

Ryan Stewart, Co-chair	BC Hydro
Scott Northrup	DFO
Mark Peters	Peters First Nation
Scott Barrett/Kristina Lensky	Province of B.C.
Charlotte Olson	Public
Carla Corbett	Public
Ian Routley	Public
Larry Casper, Co-chair	Tsal'alh
Brian Assu	We Wai Kai Nation

TECHNICAL COMMITTEES

The board is supported by four fish and wildlife technical committees. They act in an advisory role by providing technical reviews, evaluations, ranking of fish and wildlife grant applications, supporting the development of strategic plans, assisting in the development and oversight of directed projects, and providing advice on the effective implementation of action plans.

Lower Mainland—North Coast Fish Technical Committee

Katy Jay/Chris Hegele	BC Hydro
Murray Manson, Chair	DFO
Francesca Fogliata	First Nation
Chris Hegele/Michael Lawrence	Province of B.C.
Dana Atagi	Public

Southern Interior Fish Technical Committee

Jacqueline Chapman/Jeff Sneep	BC Hydro
Collin McGregor, Chair	DFO
Elinor McGrath	Okanagan Nation Alliance
Vacant	Province of B.C.
Dr. Brian Heise	Public

Vancouver Island Fish Technical Committee

Eva Wichmann, Chair	BC Hydro
Jenna Sutherst	DFO
Jim Lane	Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council
Mike McCulloch	Province of B.C.
David DePape	Public
Nick Biebach	At'legay Fisheries

Wildlife Technical Committee

Nina Andrascik	First Nation
Chris Beers/Michael Pavlik	BC Hydro
Catherine Denny	Province of B.C.
Paul Chytyk	Public

STEERING COMMITTEE

The steering committee (formerly the policy committee) sets our overall direction, including the governance structure and strategic framework. It also oversees periodic evaluations, approves significant changes to the FWCP, and addresses dispute resolution, when necessary, in addition to other responsibilities beyond the FWCP. For more details, refer to our governance manual.

Rian Hill, Chair
Acting Director, Environment, BC Hydro

Jasmine Pouce Coupe
Doig River First Nation (Peace Region)

Alice Cheung
Director, PSSI Secretariat, Fisheries and Oceans Canada

Mark Peters
Peters First Nations (Coastal Region)

James Mack
Assistant Deputy Minister for Water, Land and Resource Stewardship

Mark Thomas
Shuswap Band (Columbia Region)

FWCP TEAM

Coastal Region management and operations are implemented by Mark Sherrington. During this fiscal year, Mark was supported by Program Manager Margo Sadler, Indigenous and Environmental Initiatives Coordinator Shesley Callison-Hanna, and Environmental Project Coordinators Sharon Johnson and Soo Lee. Communications and community engagement for all three FWCP regions were led by Lynne Betts and Angus Glass.