

**NEW GOLD RAINY RIVER MINE
APPENDIX D
ANNUAL MONITORING REPORT –
AQUATIC COMPENSATION
MONITORING**

DATE: 15 December 2023

TO: New Gold Inc.



REF: 23-3192 Aquatic Compensation Monitoring

TO:

New Gold Inc.

FROM:

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REF:

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1.0 Introduction

The Rainy River Mine (RRM) is a gold-silver mine located in northwestern Ontario in the District of Rainy River, approximately 65 km northwest of Fort Frances and 420 km west of Thunder Bay (**Figure 1**). Operations at RRM presently include an open pit and underground mining with ore processed at the Rainy River Mill, located on site. In 2013, the RRM was acquired by New Gold. An Environmental Assessment (EA) report, which included baseline conditions, was submitted in 2014. Provincial and Federal EA approvals were granted in 2015 leading to the RRM site construction.

Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel (SPDC; **Figure 2**) was constructed in early 2016 as fish habitat compensation following the Fish Habitat and Compensation Plan (AMEC 2017). SPDC water levels have varied greatly since its construction, primarily remaining below design basis, and subsequently preventing fish passage from West Creek Pond upstream to Stockpile Pond. Relatedly, fish community assessments have variably reported on meeting or failing to meet success criteria for Catch Per Unit Effort (CPUE) (Wood 2018a, Wood 2018b, Minnow 2019, Minnow 2020, Ecometrix 2021, Ecometrix 2022).

In 2023, stream flow and fish communities were sampled at the request of New Gold to obtain a further year of data related to concerns that Stockpile Pond does not function adequately and sometimes fails to provide adequate flow and consequently fish habitat within the SPDC. The objectives of the current memo are to:

- Report on an additional year of stream flow and fish community sampling undertaken in 2023; and,
- Compare 2023 results to past results.

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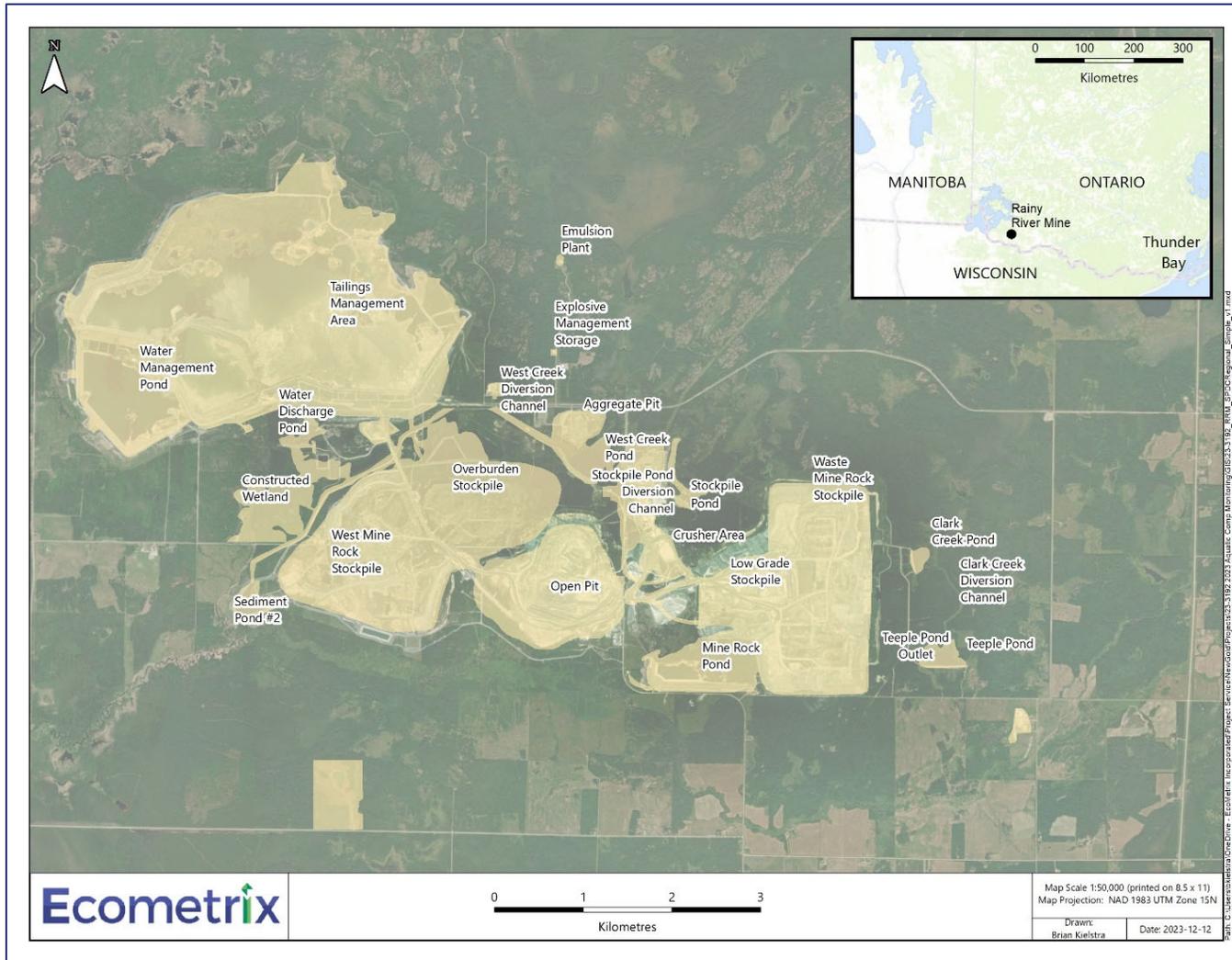


Figure 1: Site overview of New Gold's Rainy River Mine.

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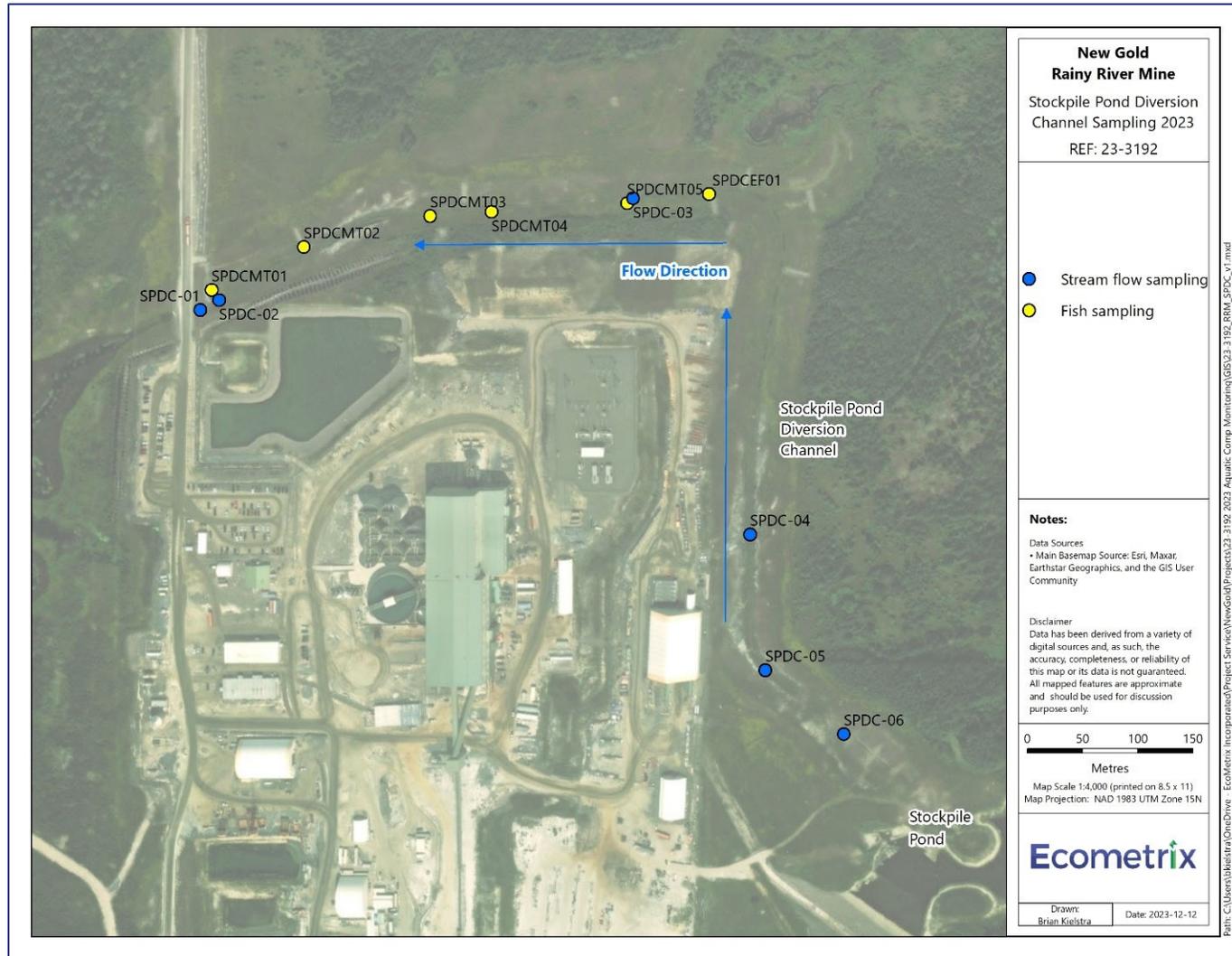


Figure 2: Stream flow and fish sampling locations on Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel.

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2.0 Methods

Stream flow was assessed on May 7th and July 23rd, 2023, to examine high flow and low flow conditions in SPDC. Water velocity and depth measurements were taken at each of six pre-established locations (SPDC-01 – SPDC-06; **Figure 2**). The fish community was assessed from July 23rd to July 24th with similar low flow timing to past studies. The fish community was sampled using backpack electrofishing (SPDCMT01 location to SPDCEF01; **Figure 2**) and overnight minnow traps (SPDCMT01 – SPDCMT05; **Figure 2**) at locations with suitable depth. Detailed survey data and locations are provided in **Appendix A Detailed Survey Data**.

2.1 Stream Flow Measurements

Depth and water velocity were measured at points along wetted channel cross-sections at each pre-established location, when possible. Depth was measured to the nearest centimetre using a graduated wading rod attached to the flow meter and velocity was measured with a SonTek FlowTracker2 Acoustic Doppler Velocimeter (ADV®) portable velocity meter (SonTek a Xylem Brand, San Diego, CA). Flow measurements targeted a variety of habitats including pool, riffle, and run/flat areas of the outlet channel.

2.2 Fish Community Assessment

The fish community was sampled using backpack electrofisher and overnight baited minnow trap efforts with the amount of effort prescribed in past studies (minnow traps: 250 hours; electrofishing: 1,000 seconds). The backpack electrofishing unit was adjusted to appropriate voltage, frequency, and duty cycle settings based on target fish size, water conductivity, and temperature to minimize the risk of harm to fish. Minnow traps were baited with dry dog food prior to deployment. A variety of habitats within the channel were targeted according to species preference (Scott and Crossman 1998). All captured fish were carefully handled, identified to species, and enumerated based on effort type.

Fish were measured for fork and/or total length using an appropriately sized measuring board, and for round body weight using an Ohaus® Scout® Pro analytical balance (Model SP601). An external examination was conducted on all fish retained for measurements. Detailed observations were made on any features of the fish which did not appear normal (i.e., wounds, tumors, parasites, fin fraying, gill parasites, or lesions). All captured fish were released near the location of capture, with fish measurements recorded on waterproof field data collection sheets. Note that electrofishing is the most effective and quantitative method for determining fish species diversity followed by minnow traps. Electrofishing is an active method while minnow traps are passive. Some species are not prone to effective capture in minnow traps based on

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their habitat usage and behaviour (Jackson and Harvey 1997). Consequently, when discussing catches results are presented from most to least quantitative.

3.0 Annual Compensation Monitoring Results

3.1 Stream Flow Measurements

In early May 2023, SPDC had an overall mean depth of 0.14 ± 0.043 m (1 SD) and an overall mean velocity of 0.0516 ± 0.0435 m/s. SPDC-06 had no measurable flow (**Table 1**).

In July 2023, SPDC had an overall mean depth of 0.13 m \pm 0.031 m and mean flow of 0.0004 ± 0.0004 m/s. Four stations (SPDC-03 –SPDC-06) had no measurable flow.

Data from 2021-2023 are provided for reference in **Table 1**. Year-to-year comparisons of recent flow conditions are difficult since 2021 was an extreme dry year, 2022 was an extreme wet year, and 2023 appeared to have relatively average conditions but rapid drying considering a decade of trends in a nearby Water Survey of Canada station (**Figure 3**). Nevertheless, the absence of water at SPDC-06 (the upper reach closest to the Stockpile Pond) in May 2023, the shallow, low-flow water in SPDC-03 – SPDC-05 in July 2023, and the absence of water in SPDC-06 in July 2023 suggest that the Stockpile Pond does not adequately support continuous flow and fish passage in SPDC.

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Table 1: Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel stream flow measurements in May and July, 2021–2023.

Year	Monitoring Station	May				July			
		Depth (m)		Flow (m/s)		Depth (m)		Flow (m/s)	
		Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD	Mean	SD
2021 May	SPDC Culvert	0.04	0.03	0.0150	0.0232	0	0	0	0
	SPDC-01	0.18	0.09	0.0010	0.0150	0	0	0	0
	SPDC-02	0.04	0.01	0.0270	0.0311	0	0	0	0
	SPDC-03	0.03	0.01	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SPDC-04	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	SPDC-05	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2021 Overall Mean	0.05	0.016	0.0072	0.007	0.00	0.000	0.0000	0.000
2022 May	SPDC-01	0.13	0.06	0.1200	0.1740	*	*	*	*
	SPDC-02	0.22	0.14	0.0270	0.0940	*	*	*	*
	SPDC-03	0.09	0.06	0.3850	0.4750	*	*	*	*
	SPDC-04	0.14	0.08	0.1020	0.1270	*	*	*	*
	SPDC-05	0.24	0.18	0.0270	0.0290	*	*	*	*
	SPDC-06	0.15	0.12	-0.0080	0.0330	*	*	*	*
	2022 Overall Mean	0.16	0.047	0.11	0.089	*	*	*	*
2023 May	SPDC-01	0.20	0.09	0.0067	0.0118	0.21	0.0782	0.0016	0.0026
	SPDC-02	0.31	0.17	0.0034	0.0085	0.34	0.1680	0.0005	0.0007
	SPDC-03	0.06	0.04	0.2445	0.2489	0.05	0	0	0
	SPDC-04	0.10	0.07	0.0422	0.0749	0.05	0	0	0
	SPDC-05	0.17	0.16	0.0127	0.0189	0.15	0	0	0
	SPDC-06	0	0	0	0	0	0	0	0
	2023 Overall Mean	0.14	0.043	0.0516	0.0435	0.13	0.031	0.0004	0.0004

Notes:

"Overall" values are the mean value of the mean station values. For SD, the overall mean SD was calculated as: $(\sqrt{SD_1^2 + SD_2^2 \dots \text{etc.}}) / \text{number of sites}$. 0's were used for sites with no flow indicating no depth and no velocity. Cells with "*" indicate that no samples were taken because of unrepresentative high flow conditions during that time.

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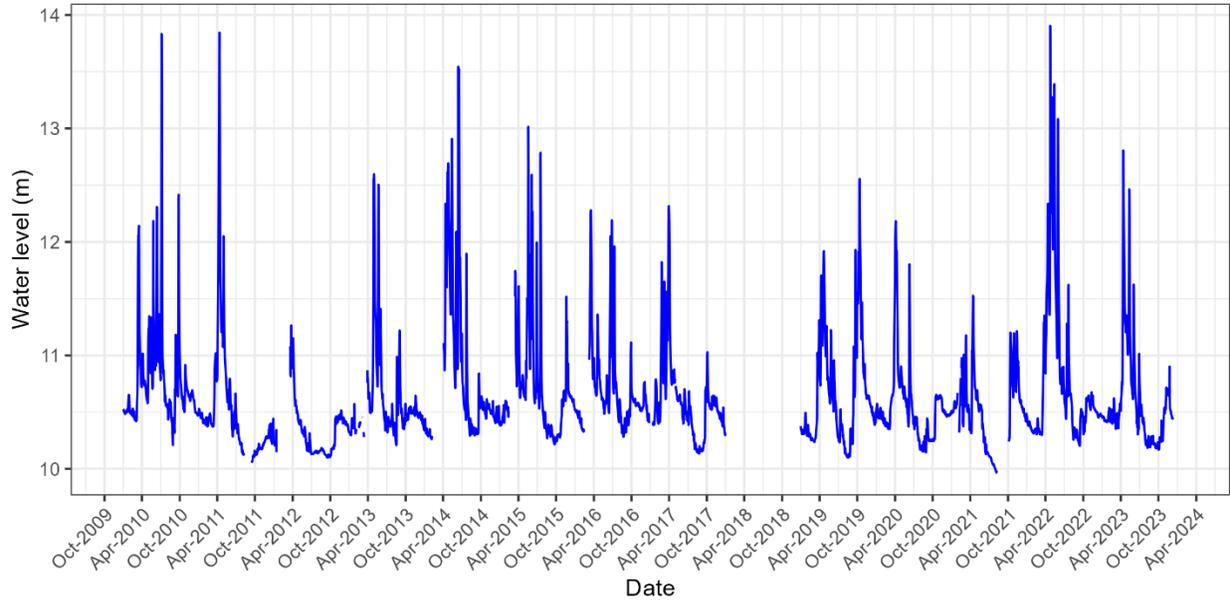


Figure 3 Water level data for January 2010 – December 2023 from nearby Water Survey of Canada Station 05PC023 Pinewood River at Highway No. 617.

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3.2 Fish Community Assessment

There were 20.14 fish captured per 1,000 seconds of electrofishing effort and 0.027 fish captured per minnow trap hour. These rates were below previous years and below Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO) success criteria of 44 fish per 1,000 seconds and 2 fish per minnow trap hour, respectively (**Table 2** and **Table 3**).

The success criteria for the number of species (>9) at SPDC was not achieved in 2023. It was achieved in 2022 during the high flow year but not in 2021 during the dry year (**Table 3**). Fifteen species have been identified across the three years included in this report (listed in alphabetical order): Brassy Minnow (*Hybognathus hankinsoni*), Brook Stickleback (*Culaea inconstans*), Brown Bullhead (*Ameiurus nebulosus*), Central Mudminnow (*Umbra limi*), Common Shiner (*Luxilus cornutus*), Creek Chub (*Semotilus atromaculatus*), Fathead minnow (*Pimephales promelas*), Finescale Dace (*Chrosomus neogaeus*), Johnny Darter (*Etheostoma nigrum*), Northern Pike (*Esox lucius*), Northern Redbelly Dace (*Chrosomus eos*), Pearl Dace (*Margariscus nachtriebi*), and White Sucker (*Catostomus commersonii*). Of those, six species were observed in 2023; (listed in order of abundance) Creek Chub, Central Mudminnow, Northern Pike, Brook Stickleback, Johnny Darter, and Common Shiner (**Table 4**). All species caught in 2023 have been caught in previous years except for Northern Pike which was caught for the first time in 2023.

Overall, the diversity and CPUE success criteria were not met in 2023 (**Table 3**).

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Table 2: Fish capture summaries for Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel during annual compensation monitoring, 2021 – 2023.

Year	Electrofishing			Minnow Trap		
	Total Effort ^a	Total Catch	CPUE ^b	Total Effort ^a	Total Catch	CPUE ^b
2021	279	60	215.05	-	-	-
2022	1,522	207	136.00	281.5	710	2.52
2023	1,092	22	20.14	293.75	8	0.027

Notes:

^a Effort defined as: minnow trap = total trap hours, electrofishing = total seconds.

^b CPUE defined as: minnow trap = number of fish per trap hour, electrofishing = number of fish per 1000 seconds.

Table 3: Compensation results against DFO success criteria for for Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel during annual compensation monitoring, 2021–2023.

DFO Success Criteria	Target	2018 ^b	2019 ^c	2020 ^c	2021	2022	2023
Electrofishing	≥ 44 fish per 1,000 seconds	31	-	-	215	136	20.14
Minnow Trap	≥ 2 fish per trap hour	0.42	-	-	-	2.52	0.02
Diversity ^a	≥ 9 fish species	12	-	-	5	12	6

Notes:



Denotes value achieved success criterion.

"-" denotes no data available (e.g., no water in Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel).

Total species count does not include young-of-year cyprinids.

^b Previous studies conducted by Wood (Wood 2018 a, b).

^c Previous studies conducted by Minnow (Minnow 2019, 2020).

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Table 4: Species presence for Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel during annual compensation monitoring, 2021–2023.

Species	2021	2022	2023
Brassy Minnow	-	P	-
Brook Stickleback	P	P	P
Brown Bullhead	-	P	-
Central Mudminnow	P	P	P
Common Shiner	-	P	P
Creek Chub	P	P	P
Fathead Minnow	-	P	-
Finescale Dace	P	P	-
Johnny Darter	-	P	P
Northern Pike	-	-	P
Northern Redbelly Dace	-	P	-
Pearl Dace	-	P	-
White Sucker	P	P	-
YOY	-	P	-
Total Species^a	5	12	6

Notes:

■ Denotes value achieved success criterion.

"P" indicates species is present whereas "-" indicates species is not present.

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4.0 Conclusion

The key results of the 2023 stream flow and fish community assessments are as follows:

- Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel water levels have varied greatly since its construction, primarily remaining below design basis, and subsequently preventing fish passage from West Creek Pond upstream to Stockpile Pond at certain times of year;
- The abundance (i.e., CPUE) and diversity (i.e., number of fish species) did not meet in DFO success criteria in contrast to the previous high flow year of 2022 when all criteria were met; and,
- Northern Pike was caught for the first time in SPDC.

5.0 Closure

The SPDC provides adequate fish habitat and passage when sufficient water is present. The low water levels experienced during the July low flow period and lack of passage or habitat availability is not unlike other watercourses in the Pinewood River watershed. However, the duration of this low flow period in the upper portion of SPDC is prolonged due to the insufficient functioning of Stockpile Pond. Downstream of the confluence of Tributary #2 and the SPDC typically has sufficient water to maintain year-round fish habitat.

The results of the 2023 study are generally consistent with the calculations used for the contingency measures to construct more compensation features to account for the shortfalls of Stockpile Pond. That is, the lower 50% of the SPDC provide adequate habitat nearly year-round with the exception of extreme low flow events and the upper reach likely has a dry period that is longer than would be expected if the outlet of Stockpile Pond was functioning as designed. Modifications to the outlet of Stockpile Pond planned for the future should help attenuate the discharge and decrease the duration of the "dry period". On the positive side, when water is present the fish community in the SPDC is diverse and abundant and fish are migrating all the way from the Pinewood River into the diversion based on the finding that Northern Pike were captured in this reach for the first time in 2023.

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6.0 References

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Appendix A Detailed Survey Data

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Table A-1: Stream flow measurements in Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel in May 2023.

Station	Latitude	Longitude	Measurement	Channel Interval							
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8
SPDC-01	48.84998	-94.0035	Distance from shore (m)	0.45	0.9	1.4	1.9	2.4	2.9	3.4	3.9
			Depth (cm)	0	0.2	0.18	0.23	0.18	0.19	0.19	0.17
			Velocity (m/s)	0	0.0022	0.0001	0.0003	0.007	0.006	NA	0.0094
			Distance from shore (m)	4.4	4.9	5.4	5.9	6.4	6.9	7.4	7.75
			Depth (cm)	0.24	0.25	0.32	0.39	0.21	0.18	0.13	0.1
			Velocity (m/s)	0.0195	0.004	0.0001	0.0429	0.0004	0.0009	0.0004	NA
SPDC-02	48.85007	-94.0033	Distance from shore (m)	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	7.9
			Depth (cm)	0	0.43	0.456	0.391	0.389	0.379	0.365	0.08
			Velocity (m/s)	0	-0.0032	-0.0029	0.0168	0.0171	0	-0.001	0
SPDC-03	48.85094	-93.9982	Distance from shore (m)	0.4	0.6	0.8	1	1.2	1.4	1.6	--
			Depth (cm)	0	0.05	0.08	0.075	0.11	0.09	0.03	--
			Velocity (m/s)	0	--	0.0685	0.3898	0.5425	0.4664	0	--
SPDC-04	48.84822	-93.9967	Distance from shore (m)	0.4	0.7	1	1.3	1.6	1.9	--	--
			Depth (cm)	0	0.085	0.137	0.174	0.144	0.045	--	--
			Velocity (m/s)	0	0.0001	0.0006	0.1875	0.0053	0.0598	--	--
SPDC-05	48.84711	-93.9965	Distance from shore (m)	0.7	1.1	1.5	1.9	2.3	2.7	2.9	--
			Depth (cm)	0.02	0.062	0.313	0.361	0.338	0.097	0.02	--
			Velocity (m/s)	0	0.001	0.0003	0.0349	0.0445	0.0079	0	--
SPDC-06	48.8466	-93.9955	Distance from shore (m)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Depth (cm)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Velocity (m/s)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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Table A-2: Stream flow measurements in Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel in July 2023.

Station	Latitude	Longitude	Measurement	Channel Interval								Mean
				1	2	3	4	5	6	7	8	
SPDC-01	48.84998	-94.0035	Distance from shore (m)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	--
			Depth (cm)	0.08	0.18	0.24	0.23	0.22	0.34	0.23	0.13	0.21
			Velocity (m/s)	0.0001	0.0021	0.0015	0.0012	0.0002	0.0078	0.0002	0	0.0016
SPDC-02	48.85007	-94.0033	Distance from shore (m)	0	1	2	3	4	5	6	7	--
			Depth (cm)	0.03	0.38	0.49	0.39	0.47	0.43	0.38	0.12	0.34
			Velocity (m/s)	0	0.0002	0.0013	0.0001	0.0003	0.0019	0.0005	0	0.00054
SPDC-03	48.85094	-93.9982	Distance from shore (m)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Depth (cm)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.05
			Velocity (m/s)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0*
SPDC-04	48.84822	-93.9967	Distance from shore (m)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Depth (cm)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.05
			Velocity (m/s)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0*
SPDC-05	48.84711	-93.9965	Distance from shore (m)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Depth (cm)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0.15
			Velocity (m/s)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	0*
SPDC-06	48.8466	-93.9955	Distance from shore (m)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Depth (cm)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--
			Velocity (m/s)	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--	--

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Table A-3: Fishing effort in Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel in July 2023.

Gear ID	Gear Type	Latitude	Longitude	Set Date	Set Time	Lift Date	Lift Time	Number of Traps	Electrofishing Seconds	Minnow Trap Hours
SPDCEF01	Electrofishing	48.85099	-93.9972	--	--	24-Jul-23	15:10	--	1092	--
SPDCMT01	Minnow Trap	48.85015	-94.0034	23-Jul-23	8:05	24-Jul-23	8:30	3	--	73.25
SPDCMT02	Minnow Trap	48.85051	-94.0022	23-Jul-23	8:10	24-Jul-23	8:40	2	--	49
SPDCMT03	Minnow Trap	48.85078	-94.0007	23-Jul-23	8:15	24-Jul-23	8:45	2	--	49
SPDCMT04	Minnow Trap	48.85082	-93.9999	23-Jul-23	8:20	24-Jul-23	8:50	3	--	73.5
SPDCMT05	Minnow Trap	48.8509	-93.9982	23-Jul-23	8:25	24-Jul-23	8:55	2	--	49

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Table A-4: Fish measurements in Stockpile Pond Diversion Channel in July 2023 ordered by Gear ID then species.

Processing Date	Gear ID	Fish Species	Total Length (cm)	Fork Length (cm)	Body weight (g)	Abnormalities	Fate (R = Returned, M = Mortality)
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Brook Stickleback	--	5.8	2.7	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Brook Stickleback	--	6.9	3.4	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Central Mudminnow	--	6.3	3.1	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Central Mudminnow	--	9.7	10.3	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Central Mudminnow	--	5.6	2.5	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Central Mudminnow	--	5.9	2.2	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Central Mudminnow	--	7.7	5.8	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Common Shiner	6.8	7.8	4.4	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Creek Chub	7.3	7.8	5.9	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Creek Chub	11.6	12.2	18.5	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Creek Chub	7.6	8.1	5.4	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Creek Chub	8.4	8.9	8.2	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Creek Chub	8.3	8.9	7.9	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Creek Chub	7.3	7.8	5.1	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Johnny Darter	--	6.5	2.4	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Johnny Darter	--	5.5	1.5	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCEF01	Northern Pike	9.2	9.9	5.2	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT02	Common Shiner	8	--	15	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT02	Creek Chub	11.9	--	20	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT02	Creek Chub	10.1	--	--	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT02	Creek Chub	11.3	--	19	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT02	Creek Chub	10.4	--	13	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT02	Creek Chub	11.9	--	19	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT05	Northern Pike	14.5	--	24	None	R
24-Jul-23	SPDCMT05	Northern Pike	15.5	--	28	None	R

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Appendix B Photographs

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SPDC-02, Facing downstream, 2023-05-07



SPDC-02, Facing downstream, 2023-07-23



SPDC-02, Facing upstream, 2023-05-07



SPDC-02, Facing upstream, 2023-07-23



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SPDCMT02, Facing upstream, 2023-07-23



SPDCMT02, Facing downstream, 2023-07-23



SPDC-05, Facing upstream, 2023-05-07



SPDC-05, Facing upstream, 2023-07-23



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SPDC-06, Facing upstream, 2023-07-23



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Stockpile Pond, Facing southeast 2023-05-07



Stockpile Pond, Facing southeast 2023-07-23



Stockpile Pond, Facing southwest, 2023-05-07



Stockpile Pond, Facing southwest, 2023-07-23

