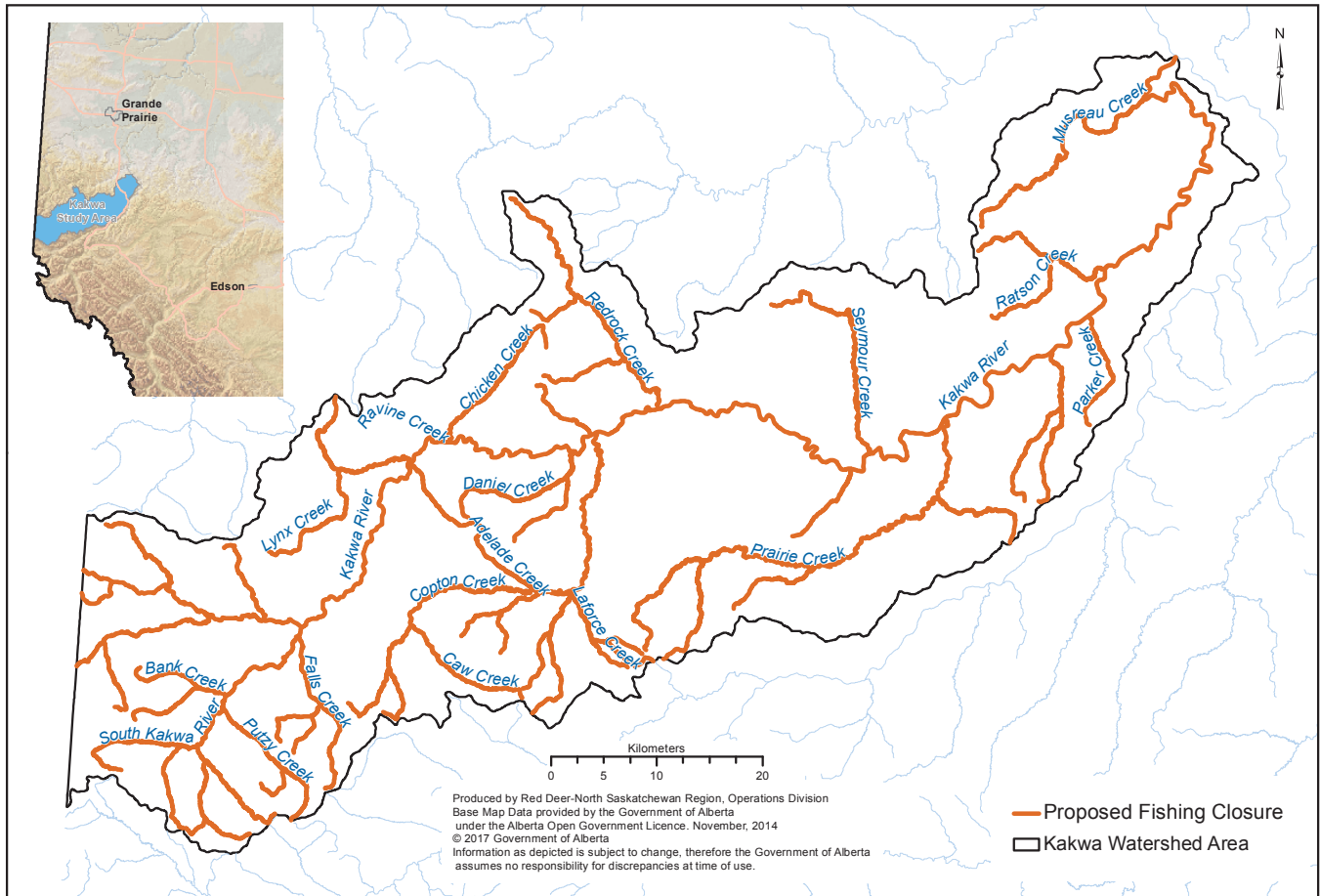


NORTH CENTRAL NATIVE TROUT RECOVERY PROGRAM



The North Central Native Trout Recovery Program is a long term initiative to recover native trout and whitefish in the central and northern East Slopes of Alberta. During the Program, management actions will be implemented in focal watersheds, with successful management actions applied in subsequent watersheds over time. The Program is part of an integrated provincial Fisheries Management approach, which means it is linked to the Provincial bull trout and Athabasca rainbow trout recovery planning processes, whirling disease and invasive species management, and the provincial Roadway Watercourse Crossings Remediation program.

KAKWA RIVER WATERSHED

The Kakwa River watershed originates in British Columbia and enters Alberta northwest of Grande Cache and flows 196km east from the mountains until the confluence with the Smoky River. The Alberta portion of the watershed is approximately 3500km² and falls within the green zone. The upper portion of the watershed is designated as a wildland park, therefore land use is limited to recreational activities. Land use outside of the park consists predominately of oil & gas and forestry with recreational activities throughout. Recreation activities consist of fishing, hunting, OHV use, horseback riding, and camping.

The Kakwa watershed provides habitat for a number of sport fish species which provides for a diverse fishery. Native sport fish species within the watershed include Arctic grayling, bull trout, and mountain whitefish. However, using information collected from standardized surveys, Arctic grayling and bull trout populations are currently considered at moderate risk of local extirpation. Based on the best available science, these species are currently limited by two key threats in the Kakwa watershed: mortality from fishing (catch & release and harvest), and poaching.

Fisheries Management Objective

The fisheries management objective for the Kakwa River watershed is to recover and maintain a sustainable fishery for Arctic grayling, bull trout and mountain whitefish. To achieve this objective, the Government of Alberta will recover fish populations by implementing management actions that address the 2 key threats identified above.

Management Actions

1. **Address fishing mortality:** A temporary fishing closure is proposed for the Kakwa River watershed on the river and tributaries from the B.C. border to the confluence of the Kakwa and Smoky rivers (see map above).
2. **Address poaching:** Fisheries Management is working with enforcement agencies to ensure fishing closures are effective.



Photo: Adrian Meinke

Arctic Grayling from the Kakwa



Photo: Cody Knack

Fishing opportunities on the Kakwa

Next Steps–2017/2018

Fish Population Assessment: Standardized electrofishing surveys will be conducted to assess current fish abundance and distribution. This information will allow Fisheries Biologists to evaluate the success of management actions and track population recovery.

Water Temperature Assessment: Water temperature will be assessed throughout the watershed to identify areas that provide thermally suitable habitat for bull trout. In other words, providing information on where bull trout should be if there were no other limiting factors.

Fisheries Management Public Survey: We want to hear from you! An online public survey will be posted to invite Albertans to comment on the proposed temporary fishing closure.

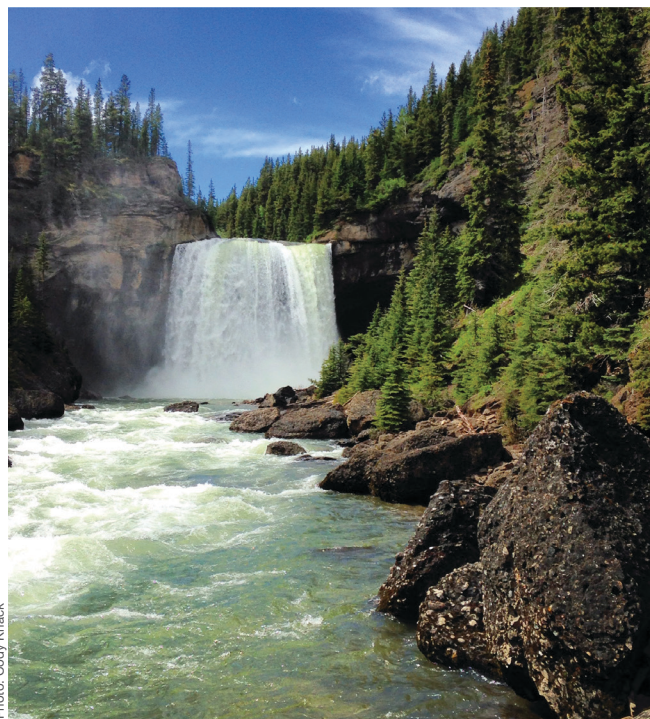


Photo: Cody Knack

Kakwa Upper falls

WEBSITE INFORMATION

Mywildalberta.ca

<http://aep.alberta.ca/fish-wildlife/default.aspx>