

(no subject)

Joy Wade <joywadefundyaqua@gmail.com>
To: Jill Thompson <jill@cowichanwatershedboard.ca>

11 October 2023 at 08:56

Hi Jill,

Just letting you know that Paul Grant (DFO Science, Species at Risk) and I were out in Cowichan Lake just before the pumps were turned on and found a recently deceased female lamprey with eggs in an isolated pool at the mouth of Robertson River.

Although the need to pump water out of Cowichan Lake is a significant concern for Cowichan lamprey, the more significant issue is the drying up of critical habitat over the spawning period during "normal" operations in our changing climate.

In years such as this, by the time pumping is needed, lamprey have already been stranded. This situation is exacerbated by other threats such as overaccumulation of gravel and sand from tributaries.

For example, on September 18th, 2023-prior to the pumps being turned on, we went to the mouth of Robertson River to assess the amount of known spawning habitat available for lamprey. The entire alluvial fan was perched above the surface of the water and had been for many months. In one pool, disconnected from any surface stream flow, a dead gravid Cowichan lamprey was found (see photo attached). Eggs were clearly visible and the body was decomposing. The fish had likely only been dead for a few days. This is concerning because this means at the end of September, lamprey in spawning condition can be found, also, that this individual had been isolated in this pool for likely many months given the position of the pool on the alluvial fan and height of the fan from the water's surface. For whatever reason, perhaps lack of environmental cues, this female did not spawn.

Joy Wade (Fundy Aqua Services Inc.)

Paul Grant (DFO- Science, Species at Risk)

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Joy Wade
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2 attachments



Dead female Sept 18 2023 Robertson.jpg
783K



Dead female sept 18 2023 robertson b.jpg
866K