

Jerry Buron



July 1, 2018

TED ARMSTRONG
AREA DIRECTOR, CARIBOO REGIONAL DISTRICT
102-410 KINCHANT STREET
QUESNEL, BC V2J2R5
CANADA

RE: Dragon Lake Fishery

Dear Mr. Armstrong:

I'm sending you a copy of a report I created regarding a serious concern addressing Dragon Lake and the lake's infestation of goldfish. The original has been sent to Mike Ramsay, Director of Fisheries Province of British Columbia.

As Area Director Cariboo Regional District I believe it is important of you to consider this report and the effects that it may have on the City of Quesnel and surrounding area. I understand that Dragon Lake is not within the city of Quesnel, however, it is close enough to have significant consequences for Quesnel and vicinity.

If I can be of further help please feel free to contact me. I've included my contact information below:

Jerry Buron



Any help you can bring upon what I and others feel is a critical situation would be appreciated.

Jerry Buron



Cariboo Regional District
File No.400-01.....

JUL 11 2018

Referred To ...*cho Dir Armstrong*...
NERDC.....

Dragon Lake – Requiem?

Readers, I'd like to introduce myself. I am Jerry Buron, residing at

I have been fishing Dragon Lake at least once, and in most years, twice yearly (Spring & Fall). I am an avid fly-fishing angler who is very concerned with the condition of Dragon Lake, near Quesnel, BC.

Those who know me know that I keep extensive records in a relational data base of every day I fish. These records are helpful to me as an angler and also are an indication of fishing conditions from which to make predictions and have continuing knowledge of areas fished. Below is one such record of a day's fishing at Dragon Lake.

- ❖ Evidence seems to suggest that there are indications that goldfish are negatively affecting Dragon Lake. Consider the following:
 - ✓ Egg harvest – is it down, or the same as previous years?
 - ✓ Insect population – Is it or has it been affected adversely by the infestation of goldfish?
 - ✓ What is the “growth rate” of fish currently and how does it compare historically in Dragon Lake?
 - ✓ Has the size and condition of the “brood-stock” remained the same in recent years?

I've kept, for nearly twenty years, records of fishing Dragon Lake. It shows evidences of what I see that has changed in recent years.

Fishing Log Data Entry

Date	5/20/2006	Day Wk	Sat	Water Temp	60	Place Fished	Dragon Lake	Fish Landed	24
Time Caught	7:30 am - 3:30 pm			Hatches	Chironomids & mayflies				
Area Fished	North Bay (24)			Weather Conditions	Overcast most of the day with breeze out of the southeast in the morning then the northwest in afternoon. Several brief rain showers.				
Succ. Tech	Floating line w indicator 17-size 10 olive copper rib chironomid @ 22-17 6-size 10 chromers @ 22-17 1-size 12 chromer @ 22-17			Size Wtg.	Largest at 24" several between 20" & 23"				
Days Thoughts	Last day of fishing for the Spring 2006 Dragon Lake fishing trip. It has been a good trip with sufficient numbers of larger fish.								

Record: 381 of 957 Unfiltered 5/20/2006

I'm writing to express a serious concern about the Dragon Lake fishery. I have many questions that I'm wondering who if anyone is concerned with the answers. A sampling of which include:

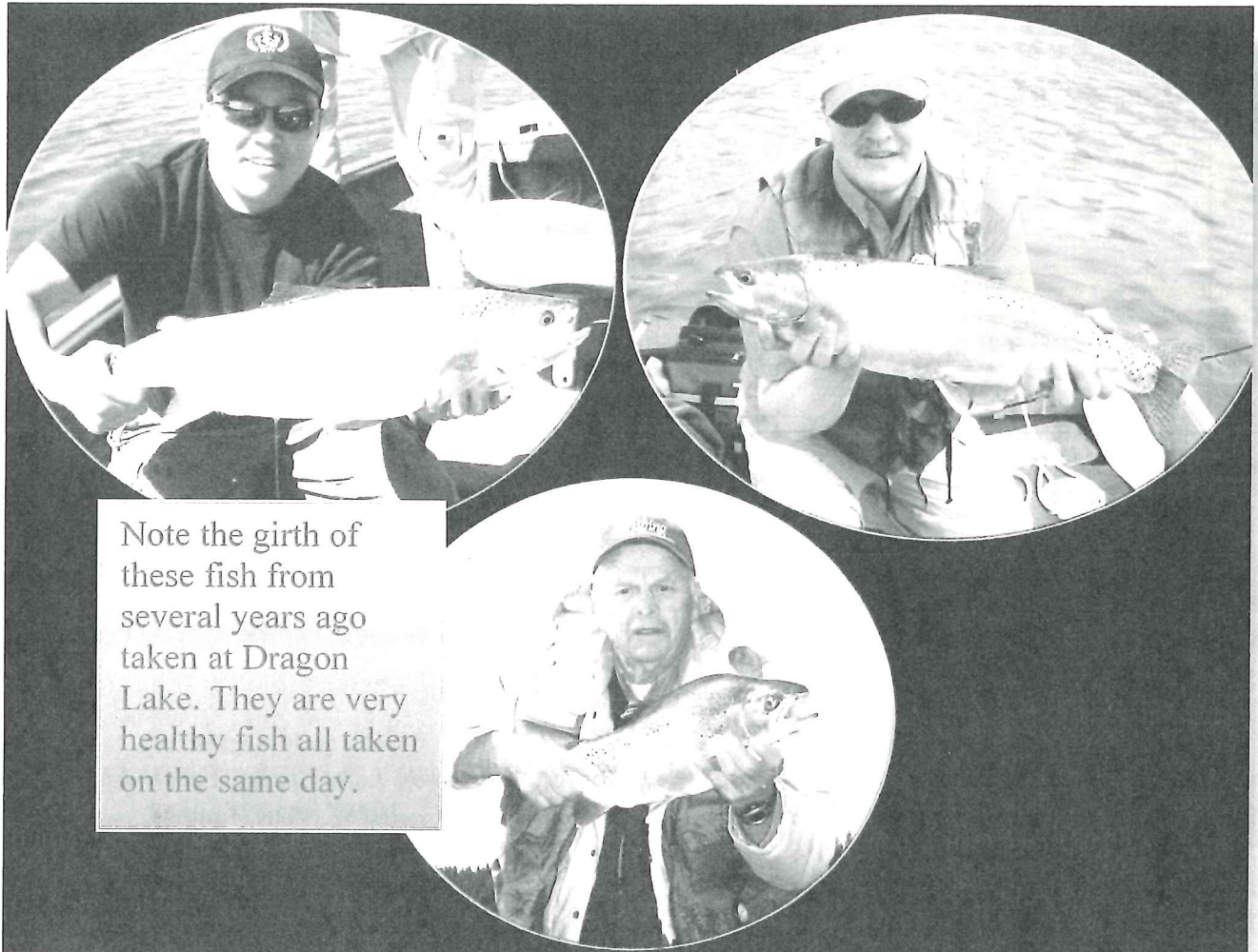
- ❖ Has the infestation of goldfish (carp) affected the balance of this fishery?
- ❖ If not what is the evidence to their affect?

Size of fish is significantly decreasing. (See chart entitled "*Dragon Lake Spring Yearly Fish Catch Records 2008 – 2018*" on next page)

Dragon Lake Spring Yearly Fish Catch Records 2008 - 2018

Fish Size	2018	2017	2016	2015	2014	2013	2012	2010	2009	2008
13 Inches	24	35	28	2	19	24	4	24	4	8
14 Inches	21	43	17	1	15	20	1	7	8	11
15 Inches	3	25	14	3	10	14	7	6	2	14
16 Inches	9	32	14	7	21	38	13	18	11	16
17 Inches	10	27	8	17	36	21	14	11	11	24
18 Inches	22	18	3	23	34	15	35	13	10	28
19 Inches	4	4	2	11	14	17	5	9	1	19
20 Inches	17	7	5	13	21	25	5	5	5	15
21 Inches	2	3	2	7	5	12	1	11	14	9
22 Inches	5	7	2	6	3	3	7	7	7	5
23 Inches	3	7	2	7	1	2	2	8	5	1
24 Inches	1	2	2	5	5	9	10	5	2	0
25 Inches	0	2	0	5	2	4	1	6	4	0
26 Inches	1	2	0	0	1	5	3	2	2	0
27 Inches	0	0	0	0	0	1	1	1	1	0
28 Inches	0	0	0	0	0	1	0	0	1	0
Totals >	122	214	99	107	187	211	109	133	88	150

# days fished	28	19	27	18	17	18	17	16	16	15
Avg per day	4.4	11.3	3.7	5.9	11.0	11.7	6.4	8.3	5.5	10.0



Condition of fish caught and released:

In previous years fish were much “fatter” than currently. (See photo of three different fish taken circa 2012 on previous page)

and 3,000 eggs. Goldfish, on the other hand, spawn repeatedly during the year and I’m told may produce up to a million eggs per female yearly. If this is true, and once a goldfish gets to a size which is too large for a trout to consume, it’s understandable the goldfish will overwhelm the lake’s ability to produce sufficient food for both species.



Above left is a throat sample taken in 2018 of four different fish collectively!

Fish stocking in British Columbia:

A number of years ago I wrote an article, after spending one morning, visiting the egg collection site, I believe on Hallis Creek, in May of 2006. At that time I was told by Kurt Vinge and Derek Ingram, a Fish Culturist with BC Fisheries, that approximately 35% to 40% of all eggs harvested in BC came from Dragon Lake. At

Available food for trout:

As a serious angler, I will often take many “throat samples” of fish I catch. During the spring of 2018 there was a pronounced decrease in a fundamental food source. Chironomids were far less present in this year’s throat samples. Was this an anomaly or is this a trend moving forward?

I know for a fact that goldfish eat the same insects, predominantly as do rainbow trout. I know this because I hook and catch goldfish using the same flies that I catch and release rainbow trout.

If what I’m told is correct this is very alarming. Rainbow trout spawn once a year in the spring and the average female trout will produce between 2,600



Above is a throat sample taken in 2014 of one 18” fish!

that time they were harvesting approximately three million eggs which were sent to either Fraser Valley Trout Hatchery in Abbotsford, BC and about one-third to the Clearwater Hatchery in Clearwater, BC.

This spring I had the opportunity to talk with one of the men responsible for harvesting fish for egg collection one evening while fishing and he related to a friend, *"They are really struggling this year to get near their quota of fish for the Province's fish stocking program."* Why is this? Is this year an anomaly or part of a trend? Is it, or has it been affected by goldfish? And finally his comments as mentioned that their traps were *"loaded"* with goldfish!

I've also been told that those responsible for the well-being of Dragon Lake claim there is no *"significant"* problems between goldfish and trout! My response is; *"Where is the data to support this contention?"* Is it empirical evidence or is it just conjecture on their part?

Dragon Lake was once considered one of, if not the Crown Jewel Lake in the Province of British Columbia. From my perspective it is a shadow of its once preeminence. I hope I'm wrong regarding the *"death of the lake,"* however, I see no evidence to the contrary. If it's not too late to take steps to rectify this condition where do folks start? I believe that poisoning the lake is probably not an option for several reasons. However, denying there is no problem or not getting the major stakeholders involved as to addressing the problem is equally not acceptable.

This brings us to another area of serious consideration. If Dragon Lake is dying, what is the economic impact on the area of Quesnel? I for one usually travel twice a year to fly fish this once wonderful destination. Notwithstanding the considerations of your stocking program, consider the economical impact of letting Dragon Lake die as a trout fishery. There are numerous friends who converge on Dragon Lake who come from as far away as Colorado and Arizona each spring. Restaurants, service stations, retail outlets, lodging

accommodations will all be severely impacted by the loss of this fishery.

It's time for the stakeholders to act or at least explore the possibilities of ways to correct this situation.

In closing, I've been told that several in our fishing fraternity will not return next year. Some are willing to give it one more year. As for me I have an additional reason to continue fishing Dragon Lake. My wife of fifty years loved to come to Robert's Roost with me each year. She had many friends both locally and those whose husband's fished the lake. She passed away in April of 2016 and she loved the lake so much I placed her cremated ashes in Dragon Lake.

I would appreciate a response and I'm willing to share any and all data I've collected from nearly twenty years of fishing Dragon Lake.



Carolyn Buron's final resting place!

I can be reached at:

Or

Jerry Buron

Regards,

Jerry

