



PROTOCOL FOR RELEASE OF ENVIRONMENTAL DATA BP CANADA MIST MOUNTAIN PROJECT

Data are being collected on several environmental indicators, which include wildlife species, fish and fish habitat, vegetation, water and groundwater. Data are obtained from public and private sources, and from direct sampling in the study area. The mix of data types means that some data made available to the authors of the reports cannot be reported directly due to professional courtesy (where other authors have not yet published primary research), privacy (where other companies have shared proprietary data), or conservation (where data release may lead to an increased exposure of the species to poaching, hunting or fishing). In these cases, with permission of the data owner, the results and interpretation of data are included in the author's reports while the raw data point may be withheld or released in a less direct way.

1.0 PRIVATE AND UNPUBLISHED DATA

Standards for using information from another source generally reflect common courtesy to the issuer of that information. Any information obtained from another source will be given full credit in a report. Information collected in the public domain (e.g., peer reviewed journal articles, government reports, etc.) is freely available for incorporation to another report. It is open to peer scrutiny and the data may be publicly critiqued; this is a generally accepted process in the scientific community. However, sensitivity should be used when considering unpublished data provided by another source.

Unpublished data are usually provided as a courtesy or in exchange for other information. Clear expectations on the use of these data are required by both parties prior to using it. This type of data may reveal proprietary information about another company; therefore, it should not be published without consent. Some unpublished data may be intended to be used in a thesis project or other similar research. As with other unpublished information, expectations on the use of the data and consent need to be obtained prior to using it. Reporting unpublished data

without consent is inappropriate. Unpublished data can be included and used implicitly by including it within a summary of a larger data set.

Use of unpublished information will be limited to visual presentation of data, to the extent that permission has been obtained for its use, and only if it can be verified or reasonably surmised that the information is accurate. Sensitive or potentially controversial information in particular will not be relayed if there is uncertainty about quality assurance and control. Similarly, unpublished conclusions, interpretations, inferences or speculations will be avoided or used with extreme caution. Unlike published information, unpublished information may not have been vetted or peer reviewed, and observations are often preliminary or anecdotal in nature. The public, particularly the lay public, may not perceive this distinction if the source is a scientific study. If useful and appropriate, unpublished information can be cited as a 'personal communication' for which scientific rigour is less likely to be assumed, but this too should be done with caution.

2.0 PROTOCOLS FOR RELEASE OF FISHERIES REPORTS

Information provided in most fish and fish habitat reports is not considered sensitive material. However, some issues should be considered when using scientific information.

The main issues of concern in releasing fisheries reports to the public are associated with standards used in the scientific community when using someone else's unpublished data and with the conservation of fisheries resources. In British Columbia, the government requires that all fisheries capture data that is collected under a Fish Research License is reported to the Fisheries Information Summary System (FISS).

Conservation issues associated with the release of fisheries reports revolve around providing the public with information on the location of sport fish populations. These data should be included in fisheries reports, even if they are made available to the public. However, discretion should be used when presenting fisheries capture information. A report should provide information without increasing easy access to sportfish populations. Many of the local seasoned sport fishermen will likely know where most fish populations are; however, this type of information may inadvertently encourage additional pressure on sportfish.



Photos of mature sportfish presented with a sampling location map may attract the attention of the public. Other presentation forms should be considered. Fish capture information could be presented in tables with capture locations presented in Universal Transverse Mercator coordinates or legal land descriptions. Pictures of sportfish could also be presented in Appendices away from capture sites. Taking steps of this nature will help prevent the report from appearing to “advertise” good fishing locations.

Unpublished data on fish and fish habitat, which has been made available to the authors, is included in the fish report in a summary format (with consent), such that it cannot be separated from the whole data set. Data gathered from private sources or unpublished so far, has been used with consent.

3.0 PROTOCOLS FOR RELEASE OF WILDLIFE DATA

The scientific community carrying out wildlife studies is concerned that the release of site specific wildlife data could assist poachers and increase the intensity of hunting at specific sites. Specific data that have been collected related to goshawk nest sites, mineral licks, bear dens, hibernacula, and grizzly bear telemetry data will be interpreted and analyzed. However, the specific site of data collection will not be reported. That is, data will be represented in figures and maps without providing specific site collection data. The rationale for managing sensitive wildlife site information is driven by conservation concerns.

Additionally, the data management concerns related to private and unpublished data also apply to some wildlife-related data. Where other companies or studies have supplied data, it will be treated with professional courtesy and scientific scrutiny.

4.0 PROTOCOLS FOR RELEASE OF RARE VEGETATION DATA

A similar approach to wildlife and fish data release is applied. If a rare plant or ecosystem is documented, the occurrence information is passed to the British Columbia Conservation Data Centre where it is entered into a database, which can be accessed online and searched. Although the occurrence data are then in the public domain, the reporting of that occurrence is represented on any figures or maps compiled by Matrix as large circles within which observations have been recorded. The exact observation point is not revealed.



5.0 PROTOCOLS FOR RELEASE OF DOMESTIC WELL TESTING RESULTS

Information relating to the domestic well sampling program will be released, including analytical results. Information identifying the well location will be removed to protect the privacy of residents.

6.0 PROTOCOLS FOR RELEASE OF SNOW SAFETY INFORMATION

General information relating to the avalanche mapping and snow safety program will be released. Mapping details will not be released to prevent inappropriate use of snow avalanche path information by recreationalists.

7.0 PROTOCOLS FOR RELEASE OF PRE-DISTURBANCE ASSESSMENT REPORTS

Information collected during the pre-disturbance assessment investigations will be incorporated into discipline-specific reports. The individual (site specific) pre-disturbance information will not be released. The rationale for managing sensitive site specific wildlife and vegetation information is driven by conservation concerns.

