

Seymour River Water Main & Boulder Installations Post-Construction Report

Recreational Canoeing Association of BC

September 23, 2006

General Summary

- Rip-rap used to reconstruct the riverbed in the upstream portion of the water main site has created a higher foot entrapment hazard. (*see photo 4*)
- The downstream portion of the water main site was successfully modified for paddling and habitat enhancement. (*see photo 3*)
- Not all of the planned work for paddling and habitat was completed this year, and may be continued next year, downstream.

Location

The boulder installations have affected only a short portion (about 100m) of the lower Seymour River between Grantham Bridge and Seymour Parkway Bridge in North Vancouver. More work was planned just downstream, but could not happen this year. It is likely to happen next year.



Photo 1- the old riverbed in 2005, upstream of water main.



Photo 2 – The old riverbed in 2005, downstream of water main

Paddling Related Summary

The modified riverbed is typical of the rest of the river run with respect to difficulty, but **there are a few new hazards to be aware of**. These hazards were created by the rip-rap chosen by the GVRD engineers to reconstruct the riverbed in the upstream portion of the work area. Unfortunately I was unable to provide much input, or supervise the work done in this upstream portion of the riverbed reconstruction. Perhaps in the future, something can be done to reduce the hazard, such as distribute some finer cobble and gravel.

The upstream work area hazards include:

- 1) Foot entrapment hazard**
- 2) Features with sharp rock protruding**
- 3) Unstable features that will likely shift with floods.**

Habitat Enhancement Summary

Although it is far too early to tell, it is looking like the new riverbed is already attracting some new wildlife. Almost every time that I have visited the site, birds have been fishing in the pools or perched on the larger boulders mid channel. How much positive impact the new riverbed will have will be difficult to quantify, but any improvement is welcome, and improvement is likely because of the featureless contour of the old riverbed.

Downstream Work Details

This is the work that was planned and supervised by paddlers. The work was done in a hurry, but there should be some nice eddies, and possibly some waves in this area. The features are constructed with round rock, similar to typical rocks found in the Seymour. Volunteers filled the gaps between the boulders with cobble to any reduce entrapment hazards. **The features should be safe, but please paddle with caution. They could shift during high water events.**



Photo 3 – Boulders installed in September 2006, downstream of water main.

Upstream Work Details

As you can see in photo 4 below, when the upstream portion of the riverbed was reconstructed, they created some boulder clusters, depressions and channelization. What you can't see in the photo is how angular the rip-rap is. Some of the boulders have very sharp edges. It is likely that much of it will shift with the floods this winter. Be very cautious of the foot entrapment hazard and the possibility of hitting the sharp edges in or out of your boat.

The upstream reconstruction was unsupervised by paddlers, and unfortunately there was a lack of rounded boulders leftover by the time they got around to doing this portion of the project. On the positive side, once the boulders shift and stabilize, this area should be better for paddling and habitat than the riverbed was before the water main project.



Photo 4 – Contouring of riverbed in upstream portion of work area, September 2006.

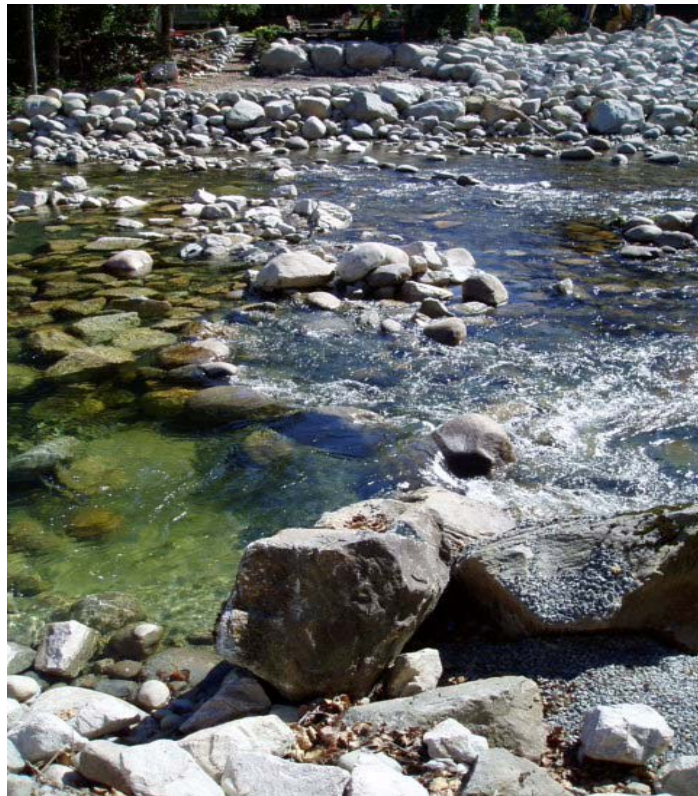


Photo 5 – Pool and contouring at storm drain, river right.