

## Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society Board of Directors 2023

In 1997, a group of committed and talented people came together from across a broad spectrum of interests, including businesspeople, academics, environmentalists, First Nations, the sport and commercial fisheries, the marine industry, and all levels of government. Under the leadership of Rick Hansen, they formed the Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society (FRSCS), contributing their expertise to ensure that the sturgeon population in the Fraser River is strong, healthy, and sustainable well into the future.

*FRSCS Vision is that: "White Sturgeon are wild, healthy, and naturally sustaining throughout the Fraser River watershed."*

By engaging the expertise and leadership of the team, the FRSCS set an aggressive course to gather and interpret information to accurately assess the status of lower Fraser River White Sturgeon, the potential threats to its viability, and to conduct research in support of a long-term stock recovery strategy. The FRSCS worked closely with the Provincial Government to initiate the development of a watershed-wide Fraser River White Sturgeon Conservation Plan that was subsequently reviewed by a multi-sector working group and implemented following extensive public consultation.

To date, the results of FRSCS research are disseminated through annual, peer-evaluated reports, and have led to increased public understanding of Fraser River sturgeon, and more-effective use of resources in sturgeon conservation. By implementing a targeted public relations strategy, and delivering educational programs, seminars, and workshops, the FRSCS has consistently supported actions on issues critical to sturgeon survival. As a result of presentations delivered at both national and international conferences, the science and technical capability and credibility of the FRSCS has been established and acknowledged by many of the world's leading authorities in sturgeon science, population modelling, and management.

The FRSCS Board of Directors oversees organizational and financial operations, and provides guidance and direction to the administration with strong support from its Advisors. The Directors and Advisors represent a diverse range of groups in the community that have a shared and vested interest in the survival of sturgeon. FRSCS collaborators include individuals and groups from science, business, public figures, biology, Indigenous and First Nations communities, commercial and First Nations fishers, and the recreational fishery, as well as accounting and law expertise.

*The Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society is a not-for-profit organization dedicated to the conservation and restoration of wild Fraser River white sturgeon.*

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***Mr. Rick Hansen***

***Founder, Honorary Chair***

Rick Hansen is the Founder of the Rick Hansen Foundation and a passionate supporter of people with disabilities in Canada and throughout the world. Rick is best known as the “Man In Motion” for his epic 26-month, 34 country, 40,000 km wheelchair trip around the world to make the world inclusive for people with disabilities and to find a cure for paralysis.

Since the end of the Man In Motion World Tour in 1987, Rick has dedicated his life to creating a world that is accessible and inclusive for all by removing barriers for people with disabilities through the Rick Hansen Foundation. Rick and his team at the Foundation are dedicated to raising awareness, changing attitudes, helping create accessible spaces, and liberating the amazing potential of people with disabilities.



A long-time conservationist for salmon and White Sturgeon, Rick created the Fraser River Sturgeon Conservation Society in 1997 and was founding chair of the Board of Directors. Rick continues to provide leadership, strategy, and inspiration to the Board of Directors to help accelerate the pace of recovery for sturgeon and protect this species for future generations.

***Mr. Robert Reyerse***

***Chair***

After graduating from the University of BC with a Bachelor of Commerce in Accounting & Management Information Systems, Robert began his career as a CA with Touche Ross in Vancouver, with the objective of joining a global management consulting firm. After nearly 10 years with Deloitte's Consulting in both Toronto and Vancouver he began several independent consulting engagements with the ABN AMRO Bank in Amsterdam.



Subsequently seeking a more relaxed lifestyle, he moved his family to Harrison Hot Springs. In Harrison he has taken on a number of roles including President of the Chamber of Commerce, Chair of Economic Development and in 2011 Executive Director of Tourism Harrison. During this time Robert worked closely with a number of local angling guides and was eventually convinced to take on the part time position of Executive Director of the Fraser Valley Angling Guides association.

***Mr. Sead Hamzagic***

***Director***

Sead Hamzagic is a chartered professional accountant with 37 years of public practice and financial management experience. He is well versed in reporting requirements for public companies, private companies, and charities. He has and continues to serve as CFO for several TSX Venture Exchange, Canadian Securities Exchange (CSE), and private companies and a board member and treasurer for the British Columbia Sports Hall of Fame and Museum Foundation since September 2009.



**Mr. Douglas Mason**

**Director**

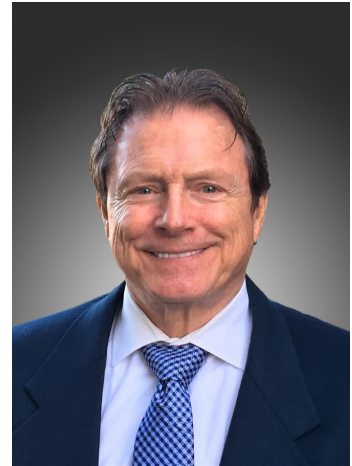
Douglas is currently CEO of Waterfront Capital Partners Inc, and Magnum Goldcorp Inc.

From 2015 through 2019, Douglas served as a Director of Naturally Splendid Enterprises Ltd., a hemp processing and natural food manufacturer, and served as the Company's CEO for a 2-year period from 2017 through 2019.

From 1988 through 2005, Douglas served as President & Chief Executive Officer and as a director of Clearly Canadian Beverage Corporation, a producer of premium beverage products. During his 20 years in the beverage industry, Douglas built a reputation for innovation and has been credited as being one of the pioneers of the New Age Beverage category.

Douglas is past Deputy chair of the Collingwood School Board of Trustees and a past Chair of the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame and Museum and of the B.C. Sports Hall of Fame Foundation and remains an active member of the Foundation. He is also an active supporter and recruiter of participants for fund raising events for the Rick Hansen Institute.

Douglas graduated from North Vancouver Senior Secondary and has been a North Shore resident for all his life. He and his wife, Carla, reside in West Vancouver with their son Lucas.



**Mr. Ryan Jones**

**Director**

Ryan Jones is a Maple Ridge, BC born and raised local. He and his wife, Michelle are proud parents of two wonderful humans: Tyler age 17 and Maverick age 1. Mr. Jones is a passionate outdoor enthusiast who enjoys hunting and angling. His love for the outdoors has taught him the importance of speaking up for those that don't have a voice and sees the study and practice of conservation as the vehicle to accomplish an ethical and sustainable practice of wildlife and fisheries management. Speaking of vehicles, Mr. Jones is a 3rd generation auto dealer with his family at Marv Jones Honda.

These experiences have provided valuable experience in managing teams, building long term mutually beneficial relationships, and insights into government relations and politics through work on various industry associations and boards.



**Ms. Caroline Roberts****Director**

Caroline Roberts is an associate lawyer at a well-known Vancouver law firm Callison & Hanna, who specialize exclusively in Indigenous Law. Her law practice focus is on strategic consultation and accommodation processes, resolving historic grievances through the federal Specific Claims Process including negotiated settlement, hearings and appeals and implementing treaty related measures. Caroline graduated with a specialization in Aboriginal Law from the Allard School of Law at the University of British Columbia ("UBC").



Prior to law school, she earned a Bachelor of Arts with a Major in Indigenous Studies from UBC. Caroline contributed to LexisNexis' most recent legal textbook entitled "Legal Issues on Indigenous Economic Development" by researching and writing various chapters on the topics of financing and taxation. Caroline has delivered guest lectures at UBC's Allard Hall on Indigenous Economic Development and at the Pacific Business and Law Institute on Specific Claims.

Caroline is thrilled to have the opportunity to apply her education and experience to work with First Nations in matters of governance, economic development, and the evaluation and negotiations of various matters. Caroline brings a unique perspective to her work, which includes respect and appreciation for the diversity of Indigenous peoples and cultures throughout British Columbia, Canada and the world.

Caroline is a member of the Wei WaiKum First Nation near Campbell River, BC.

**Ms. Mary Sue Atkinson****Director, Chair of Communications and Outreach Committee**

Mary Sue has been on the Board since 1999 and remains the longest standing Director on the Board currently. She is a long time conservationist and is very active with our board helping with our media opportunities, finding new granting and funding opportunities and is also a long time donor of the Society. She is active in issues related to both sturgeon and salmon and recently won the Queen's Jubilee Award for Volunteerism.

**Mr. John Rissling****Director, Chair of Resource Development Committee**

John has been a volunteer tagger for almost 20 years, and a member of the FRSCS Board of Directors for the last six years. John has an extensive background in business having spent 40 years in the construction sector, as owner of Rissling Services. He is the chair of our Fundraising committee and leads the FRSCS Sturgeon Conservation Challenge Event and Gala Awards Dinner. John is a long-time donor to the FRSCS.





**Mr. Jason Hwang**  
**Director**

Jason started his career as a Habitat Biologist at Fisheries and Oceans Canada for the BC Interior North region. He reviewed development projects to assess their impact on fish habitat as well as engaged in community outreach. Jason was also the lead on the Nechako Fisheries Conservation Program Technical Committee where they assessed Alcan's flow releases in the Nechako River to lessen the impact on salmon.



In 1999, Jason was promoted to Area Manager, Ecosystem Management Branch for the BC Interior. He managed the habitat program as well as the Salmonid Enhancement Program, which consisted of thirty-five staff and a \$4M budget. He built relationships across stakeholders in industry, NGO's, government, First Nations and the public to increase awareness and buy-in for habitat conservation and restoration.

In 2012, Jason changed roles to represent DFO's Pacific region in the national context during changes to the Fisheries Act. Jason gathered input and feedback to help create a new Fisheries Protection Policy and regulatory framework. He also served as the link between DFO and the provincial/local governments of BC and the Yukon. He acted as a subject matter expert and advised the policy writers of key issues and considerations.

In 2015, Jason moved into the Regional Manager, Salmon Enhancement Program for the Pacific Region position. He managed a budget of \$9M, forty-five staff and more than 10,000 volunteers. He worked with PSF as well as other NGO's and stakeholders to build strong partnerships and enable salmon habitat restoration and increase community involvement.

Jason earned a Bachelor of Science in Biology from Simon Fraser University in 1994. He also earned a Technical Diploma in Fisheries, Wildlife & Recreation from the British Columbia Institute of Technology in 1991.

**Mr. Tony Nootebos**  
**Advisor, Conservation and Recreational Fishing**

Tony has been a Fraser Valley guide for over 27 years. Early in his career, Tony recognized conservation was vital in keeping fisheries resources available to everyone. He quickly became an industry leader and helped set the example as to how industry and community can work hand in hand towards fish conservation.



In 1999, he began volunteering for the Monitoring and Assessment Tagging program. He demonstrated leadership by setting the mandate that his team of guides sample every Sturgeon encountered to support the FRSCS conservation effort. Thanks to that directive, Tony and his team have supplied over 50% of the samples in the database to date.

A former Director for the Fraser Valley Angling Guide Association (FVAGA), Tony stepped down from this role to redirect his energy towards building positive and collaborative relationships across all fishing sectors within British Columbia. Over the course of his extensive career and continued leadership, Tony also works with Salmon conservation, helping to deliver numerous research and First Nations community fishing initiatives. For example, in 2010-2012 he worked closely with the Okanagan Nation Alliance, under the leadership and direction of Howie Wright, to develop a troll harvest fishery in Osoyoos Lake. This included training of 10 Alliance members to become even more efficient in utilising sport fishing methods to harvest for the community while at the same time gaining maximum value per fish.

Mr. Nootebos remains the sole owner of BC Sportfishing Group and now dedicates much of his time to his role as Consultant for the Office of Rick Hansen, focusing on White Sturgeon and Salmon conservation efforts.

### ***Mr. Karl English***

#### ***Advisor, Science and Technical Committee***

Former Chair of the FRSCS, Karl English has spent most of his career designing and implementing studies to improve the quality and quantity of information available for the management and assessment of Pacific salmon and steelhead stocks. Karl has conducted projects throughout British Columbia and in Washington State, Alaska, and the Yukon. He has designed catch monitoring programs for commercial, sport, and First Nation fisheries; directed multi-year studies to assess fish distribution, abundance, and migration behaviour in coastal waters and large river systems; and provided expert advice to First Nations, industry, NGOs, university researchers, and all levels of government.



Karl has also directed research on other fish species including: white sturgeon, arctic cisco, broad whitefish, and reviewed research and stock assessment programs associated with the fisheries in the Canadian Great Lakes. In addition Karl has extensive experience in Treaty negotiations process through his role as fisheries advisor during the negotiation of the Nisga'a Treaty and Tsawwassen Treaty.

### ***Dr. David Robichaud***

#### ***Chair, Science and Technical Committee and LGL Fisheries Ecologist & Biometrician***

Dr. Robichaud has been working with the FRSCS on Fraser River White Sturgeon populations and issues surrounding their management for 17 years. He has assisted in the development and implementation of sturgeon population models, developed methods for estimating sturgeon catch and effort estimates from angler questionnaire surveys, directed multi-year acoustic telemetry studies of sturgeon movements in the lower Fraser River, and studies to assess the relationship between juvenile sturgeon and key habitat variables on the Fraser and Columbia rivers. In addition to his extensive sturgeon work, he has conducted studies on juvenile and adult salmon in BC and Washington State and cod on Canada's east coast.



**Mr. Troy Nelson**

**Advisor, Science and Technical Committee**

Troy has worked with Fraser River White Sturgeon since 1995. He worked with provincial, federal, and First Nations authorities to establish the initial recovery planning strategies for White Sturgeon in the Fraser River watershed, and has served on the National Recovery Team for White Sturgeon in Canada. While serving as Executive Director and Director of Science for the FRSCS, he developed and managed several White Sturgeon research, monitoring, and assessment projects, several of which were delivered in conjunction with Fraser River First Nations.



Mr. Nelson currently assists White Sturgeon monitoring and assessment projects in the lower and middle Fraser, and serves as an advisor to the Nechako and Upper Fraser White Sturgeon Recovery Teams (Technical and Community Working Groups).

**Ms. Sarah Schreier**

**Executive Director**

Ms. Sarah Schreier is Executive Director of the FRSCS. For over 25 years, Ms. Schreier has provided analysis and advice to a number of organizations and sectors related to healthcare, basic research, fisheries management issues and most recently, White Sturgeon research. Ms. Schreier studied business and communications at the University of Ottawa, and Royal Rhodes University, in British Columbia, Canada.



In her role as ED, Sarah oversees the FRSCS Strategy Deliverables, and provides direction to help facilitate White Sturgeon research initiatives and management plans. Sarah provides leadership to ensure we continue to build and strengthen partnerships among key stakeholder groups and government leaders. Sarah is a frontlines resource for media on sturgeon related issues and is often invited to present the 'sturgeon story' and our science to local groups, schools, community groups, professional associations and National and International conferences.

Ms. Schreier brings extensive experience managing dynamic, long-term relationships among individuals, sectors and diverse communities to make a difference for our environment.

**Ms. Helen Giaconelli**

**Program Coordinator**

Ms. Helen Giaconelli is the Program Coordinator of the FRSCS and provides support to all our programs, coordinates our team logistics and develops systems for relationship management, communications as well as our fiduciary responsibilities. With a background in office management, accounting and bookkeeping, relationship management and complex projects, Ms. Giaconelli helps ensure the FRSCS is supported every day to meet its mandate for White Sturgeon.



