

Minister of
Fisheries and Oceans



Ministre des
Pêches et des Océans

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

Chief Petty Officer (2nd class) Thomas G. Cole, CD (Retired)
President
Royal Canadian Navy Anglers Association
< ttbc@shaw.ca >

DEC 12 2017

Dear Chief Petty Officer Cole:

Thank you for your correspondence of October 18, 2017, regarding Chinook salmon net pen projects.

Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) shares your concern for marine mammals and takes their conservation and protection very seriously. Whales are protected by the *Marine Mammal Regulations* under the *Fisheries Act*. Killer whales are also protected under the *Species at Risk Act* (SARA), with Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) listed as Endangered and Northern Resident Killer Whales listed as Threatened. Listed species are a high priority for the Government of Canada.

As required under SARA, a Recovery Strategy (*Recovery Strategy for the Northern and Southern Resident Killer Whales*) and an Action Plan (*Action Plan for Northern and Southern Resident Killer Whale (*Orcinus orca*) in Canada*) have been completed.

The Recovery Strategy identifies key threats (reduced prey availability, disturbance, and contaminants) and the strategic approach to mitigating these threats to the population and known critical habitat. It also includes further studies to identify additional areas of critical habitat.

The Action Plan identifies the specific recovery measures required to implement the strategic direction identified in the Recovery Strategy. A total of 98 recovery measures are identified in the Action Plan, and 34 of these address the threat of reduced prey availability. The Department is currently working on an implementation plan for some recovery measures, while numerous activities are currently proposed and underway for others. Actions to abate the identified threats include research, management, education, and outreach-based activities. Activities by the Department and other groups (e.g. the Port of Vancouver's ECHO program) to recover SRKW have been, and will continue to be, undertaken in alignment with the recovery approach outlined in these documents.

In addition, as part of the Oceans Protection Plan, DFO is committed to additional actions to address threats to marine mammals, including SRKW. Specifically, five new recovery actions were identified in the 2017 Science Based Whale Review. One of these new measures is specifically related to abating the threat of reduced prey availability.

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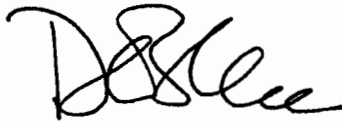
Canada

DFO recognizes that SRKW feed primarily on Chinook salmon and that the abundance of Chinook salmon can be increased through the use of hatcheries and net pen release sites. DFO's Salmonid Enhancement Program currently employs net pen release strategies in several locations in Southern British Columbia, including in West Vancouver, Sooke, Port Renfrew, and Port Alberni, to increase the terminal abundance of Chinook salmon. The Department is working with volunteer groups on southern Vancouver Island net pen and hatchery projects that produce Chinook salmon.

DFO is considering various options to increase prey availability for SRKW in addition to current work. Hatchery and net pen fish production is one of the options being contemplated. Any work must be considered in the context of Chinook salmon fishery and conservation objectives, as hatchery production can potentially have an effect on nearby wild salmon populations and fisheries. Hatchery production planning, including net pen projects, is conducted through the annual Integrated Fishery Management Planning process, which is soon to begin. Specific project enquiries should be directed through the local DFO Community Advisor in your area.

Thank you for taking the time to write about this important matter.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read 'D. LeBlanc', written in a cursive style.

Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., Q.C., M.P.
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

c.c.: Mr. Terry Beech, M.P.
Burnaby North-Seymour

Bob Gallagher Port Renfrew Salmonid Group gallaughers1@shaw.ca

Minister; we can help towards this recovery faster than any other group; give us the funding; give us the okay; give us the resources we ask for and we will go into action... I guarantee the volunteers await your okay and eagerly want the CHANCE TO HELP IN THIS RECOVERY PROCESS. We are the not seen volunteers who clean streams;;do habitat reconstruction; run counting fences; do creel work; and also run salmonids in the classroom to educate our young people about stream stewardship and the importance of the environment as it affects our lives and the creatures we share with it! We appreciate the importance of this work and are available for consultation at your discretion.

Yours sincerely;



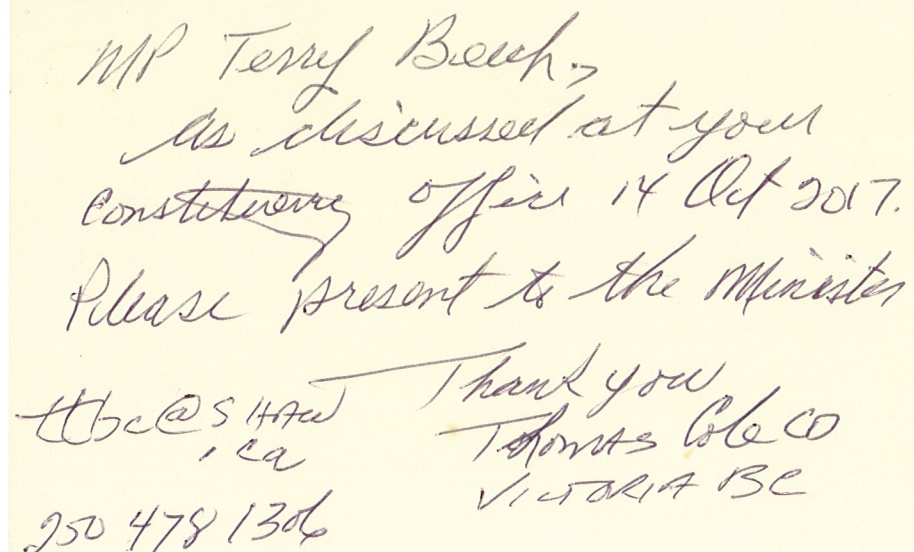
Thomas G. Cole CD (chief petty officer ret'd RCN) (still serving thru community involvement)

President Royal Canadian Navy Anglers Association (RCNAA)

President Amalgamated Conservation Society (ACS)

Sport Fish Advisory Board

WE; THE VOLUNTEERS CAN AND WILL CREATE CHINOOK FOR THE ORCA'S we eagerly **await positive direction** and **funding** from government.



MP Terry Beech
As discussed at your
constituent office 14 Oct 2017.
Please present to the Minister
tbc@shaw.ca
250 478 1306
Thank you
Thomas Cole CD
VICTORIA BC