

February 9th, 2022

Attn: The Honourable Joyce Murray, MP
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Murray,

**Re: Public Fishery Chinook Retention Opportunities in
PFMAs 14, 17, 18, 19, 20-5 and 28 plus Fraser River**

In recent years, at critical times of the fishing season, the Department of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard (DFO) has denied the Public Fishery opportunities for retention of Chinook salmon in important Southern B.C. tidal and in-river fisheries. This, despite the Sport Fishing Advisory Board (SFAB) demonstrating the absence of Fraser River stocks of concern in their very modest fisheries proposals.

Additionally, between April 1st and July 31st there has been no retention permitted of plentiful U.S. origin adipose fin clipped hatchery Chinook.

These actions have had devastating effects on the Public Fishery, both financially and socially. Many hard-working Canadians in the public fishery and related businesses are now without a job and the fishing service infrastructure that supports angling is collapsing. The COVID-19 pandemic has simply magnified these social and economic impacts.

An SFAB salmon technical working group produced multiple Chinook retention proposals in collaboration with your department's salmon stock assessment and fisheries management staff using up-to-date DFO stock data. The purpose was to allow very modest access to the retention of hatchery Chinook and other Chinook stocks that are not of concern. The proposals were assessed by DFO review to be very low risk or no risk at all to stocks of concern. They offered an important lifeline to the Public Salmon Fishery to avoid further harm, and importantly did not jeopardize the recovery of Fraser River Chinook stocks of concern, yet they have all been rejected.

Recently, DFO's specific concerns with the latest SFAB proposal have been disclosed. With your department's salmon management team now indicating these important early season opportunities will not be discussed, it would appear the Public Fishery is set for another year without relief. However, there are clearly solutions to these concerns that would allow the reopening of very modest Chinook retention fisheries in critically important areas where stocks of concern are not present, and/or the abundance of hatchery Chinook is sufficiently high.

We, the undersigned, firmly believe there are additional solutions, which could, for example, include reductions in fishing times and areas, hatchery only fisheries and size limit adjustments

to the original proposals. These added management actions would result in even more protection for stocks of concern. Therefore, we urge that you direct your department to work together with the SFAB, particularly at the upcoming February 11th SFAB Main Board meeting, to explore ways these desperately needed openings can be approved. We particularly want to focus on the period from April 1st to May 31st this year, where there is a documented unique window of opportunity when stocks of concern are not present, while hatchery marked Chinook are prevalent in high numbers.

As very significant work and discussion has already taken place on this issue, and with April 1st being less than two months away, this is obviously a time sensitive matter that needs urgent attention and should be easy to complete. The undersigned organizations that rely on these Chinook openings respectfully seek your support in ensuring that the required consultations take place as soon as possible.

Be assured we are committed to working respectfully with your department and First Nations toward conservation of this precious resource, the recovery of stocks of concern and preserving opportunities for all Canadians.

Yours in conservation,



Public Fishery Alliance
Board of Directors



BC Federation of Drift Fishers
Rod Clapton, President



Victoria Fish and Game
Protective Association
Doug Bancroft, OMM CD MSc
President



Esquimalt Anglers
Association
Gary Caton, President



South Vancouver Island
Anglers Coalition
Christopher Bos, President



Fraser Valley Salmon Society
Dean Werk, President



Fraser Valley
Sportfishing Alliance
Fred Helmer



Sidney Anglers Association
Peter Bay, President

Amalgamated Conservation Society

Bringing anglers together since 1963

Amalgamated Conservation Society
Gary Caton, President



Victoria Golden Rods and Reels
David Cooke, President

Kingfishers Rod and Gun Club

Kingfishers Rod and Gun Club
Jason Tonelli



Fraser Valley Fishing
Guides Association
Kevin Estrada, Board of
Directors Representative

VANCOUVER SPORT FISHING GUIDES ASSOCIATION

Vancouver Sport Fishing Guides Association

The Clover Point Anglers' Association

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VICTORIA, BRITISH COLUMBIA

Tom Vaida,
President

This letter has been copied by email to:

Neil McIsaac – DFO – Minister's Office, Director of Fisheries Management
Don MacDonald – DFO – Minister's Office, Regional Advisor, British Columbia
All Members of the Standing Committee on Fisheries – DFO FOPO
Rebecca Reid – DFO – Regional Director General, Pacific
Jeff Grout – DFO – Resource Manager, Salmon
Candice Bergen – Interim Leader, Conservative Party of Canada
Jagmeet Singh – Leader NDP Canada
Amita Kuttner – Interim Leader Green Party of Canada
Keila Stark - NDP – Fisheries Critic
Rick Perkins - Conservative - Fisheries Critic
Amita Kuttner - Green Party of Cda - Fisheries Critic