



Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance
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July 7, 2017

Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Ottawa, Ontario K1A 0E6

Dear Minister LeBlanc,

Thank you for your reply to my letter of March 14, 2017. The “strict regulations” your department currently has in place are unable to contain the sea lice problem plaguing the expanding aquaculture industry. This is an out-of-control problem in Canada and around the world. In a June 12, 2017 letter to you, Dr. Alexandra Morton outlined this precarious situation, which needs to be taken seriously by you and your departmental staff. The Musgamagw Dzawada’enuxw have lost too many salmon to sea lice from open net pen fish farms, and this is one of the reasons they have opposed the industry for the past 30 years and finally served eviction notices in the summer of 2016. Please let us know what your department is doing to get sea lice farms under control.

We are encouraged that you have finally responded to Hereditary Chief Moon, and we expect to be kept informed of what steps the government will take to remove open net fish farms from the Musgamagw Dzawada’enuxw and Namgis territories before they do any more harm to their wild salmon, clam beds and herring. We trust you understand that First Nations on the Fraser River are also affected, as fish from our territories are exposed to these farms. We saw last year the lowest Fraser sockeye salmon run in history. River First Nations need to be consulted about harmful impacts to wild salmon by fish farms. We too want fish farms removed from the migration routes of wild salmon. Please let us know your consultation process with Indigenous River Nations regarding ocean aquaculture impacts on wild salmon runs.

When we read the attached news story from Norway, we can only think that harassment of scientists reporting on the impact of salmon farms is likely happening here as well as in Norway. Many of us have been watching the situation with Dr. Kibenge, Dr. Kristi Miller and Alexandra Morton for many years and we observed the testimony given by scientists at the Cohen Commission. Clearly there are serious problems with the way Canada is handling the impact of salmon farms on wild salmon.

As Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and Canadian Coast Guard, you are **not following the law by refusing to test BC farmed salmon for the piscine reovirus before permitting them to be transferred into open-net pens.** Please answer this question: Why have some DFO scientists stated in the media and scientific papers that the virus does not cause disease in B.C., when other DFO scientists have come out and confirmed that it does? **Who should we believe?**

We urge you to comply with the Rennie decision, adhere to the Precautionary Principle, comply with the *Fisheries Act*, and test farmed salmon for PRV before permitting them to be transferred to ocean fish farms, and be mindful of the necessity to respect the rights and title of Indigenous Nations, by protecting wild salmon from the adverse impacts of open net pen fish farms. Should DFO choose not to do this, what is DFO’s response to the grave threat of piscine reovirus to wild salmon, in particular the Fraser sockeye that are so integral to the physical, cultural and spiritual wellbeing of Indigenous Nations of the Fraser River, and that are of great significance to the sports fishing industry?

Sincerely yours,

Eddie Gardner
President, Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance

Attachment: <http://harvest.as/artikkel/et-forskermareritt> (Can be translated on line)

c.c. Willie Moon, Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw
Don Svanvik Namgis Chief Councillor
Eric Joseph Hereditary chief Dzawada'enuxw
Hank Nelson, Hereditary chief Namgis
Steven Dick - Hereditary and elected Chief of the Kwiakah
Bob Chamberlin, First Nations Wild Salmon Alliance
Stewart Phillip, Union of B.C. Indian Chiefs
The Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, Minister of Justice
The Honourable Tom Mulcair, NDP
Fin Donnelly, NDP MP
Elizabeth May, Green Party of Canada
George Quocksister
Aaron Hill, Executive Director, Watershed Watch Salmon Society
Dawn Morrison, Wild Salmon Caravan
Chief Michelle Lee Edwards, Sek'wel'was (Cayoose Creek Band)
Chief Judy Wilson, Neskonalith First Nation
Chief Bob Combes, Skwah First Nation
K'wak'wabalas (Ernest Alfred), Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw Tribal Council
Chief Ernie Crey, Cheam First Nation
Chief Bob Pasco, Nlakap'mux Nation Tribal Council
Chief Marilyn Gabriel, Kwantlen First Nation
Chief Paul Michel, Adams Lake Indian Band
Chief Alice McKay, Matsqui First Nation
Chief Rhoda Peters, Chawathil First Nation
Dean Werk, President, Fraser Valley Salmon Society
Chief Janet Webster, Lytton First Nation
Chief Darrell Bob, Xaxli'p First Nation
Chief Ryan Day, Bonaparte Indian Band
Don Bain, Executive Director Union of BC Indian Chiefs
Dr. Alexandra Morton, Marine Biologist