

The BC Fisheries Strategy

Towards a 'Made-In-BC'
Vision to Renew the
Pacific Salmon Fishery

Discussion Paper

May 1997



BRITISH
COLUMBIA

MESSAGE FROM THE PREMIER

Few other regions of the world can match the diverse natural resources on which the Province of British Columbia was built. Of all our magnificent natural assets, perhaps none is more revered than the Pacific salmon.

British Columbians know that improving the state of our salmon requires a comprehensive and collective effort. That's why I am proud to present the British Columbia Fisheries Strategy. It's part of my government's commitment to make our fisheries the basis of a sunrise, rather than a sunset, industry.

I have confidence that by working within and through this Strategy, British Columbians can bring back abundant wild salmon runs. With a stronger resource we can return a measure of stability to the many towns and communities that depend on the Pacific salmon fishery.

Sincerely,



Glen Clark
Premier

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How the BC Fisheries Strategy will work...

SUMMARY

Protecting Fish Stocks

- ▲ Reduce habitat degradation caused by pollution and urban/industrial development.
- ▲ Establish a formal federal-provincial program to reduce duplication and overlap and coordinate habitat protection, restoration and enhancement efforts.
- ▲ Ensure open and accurate public information on the state of fish stocks through:
 - △ The establishment of a joint *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* to provide independent and public reporting on the state of fish and fish habitat;
 - △ Formal B.C. government and stakeholder representation on the federal scientific committee which assesses salmon stocks;
 - △ New shared and public information on fish stocks inventory and fish habitat.
- ▲ Enact stronger provincial laws to protect fish and fish habitat, and ensure adequate water for fish — *B.C. Fish Protection Act*.
- ▲ Targeted programs to protect and restore more fish habitat in all B.C. watersheds.
- ▲ Prohibit hydro-electric developments that threaten vital fish stocks and pursue a new federal/provincial framework for resolving fish-hydro disputes through a water-use planning process.
- ▲ Work to resolve the *Pacific Salmon Treaty* and ensure a fair return on conservation measures taken and investment in the resource for British Columbians.

Creating Sustainable Fisheries Jobs and Communities

- ▲ Establish stronger development programs and more efficient coordination in a new, federal-provincial partnership — *Fisheries Renewal BC* — with direct stakeholder and community involvement in direction and decision making.
- ▲ Priority areas of focus and investment for *Fisheries Renewal BC* will include:
 - △ Community-based salmon enhancement, habitat restoration and protection;

- ▲ Strengthening resource protection capacity (with associated job opportunities) at the community level to protect our fisheries resource;
- ▲ Supporting the development of sustainable fishing practices;
- ▲ Building a more diversified, multi-skilled workforce in support of the commercial and sport fishing industries;
- ▲ Diversifying B.C.'s fisheries by supporting value-added production, new product and species development and marketing;
- ▲ Assisting communities to develop strategies to create new jobs in the commercial and recreational fisheries in their area;
- ▲ Strategic fishing infrastructure in coastal communities to encourage investment.
- ▲ Develop a strategic plan with the sport fishing sector.
- ▲ Strengthen local government powers to protect fisheries habitat in local and regional planning processes.
- ▲ Establish mechanisms for regionally-based input into fisheries management and decision-making.

Enhancing the Role of the Province and British Columbians in 'Made-In B.C.' Fisheries Solutions

- ▲ Through the Canada-B.C. Fisheries Memorandum of Understanding process, achieve a new federal-provincial partnership in the management of the fishery that will:
 - ▲ Improve working relationships and coordination between the federal and provincial governments through a new *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* led by a *Canada-B.C. Council of Fisheries Ministers*;
 - ▲ Secure greater involvement by B.C. in setting policies and developing and directing mechanisms for allocation and licensing;
 - ▲ Increase the efficiency of government fisheries programs by reducing duplication and overlap and increasing coordination between governments;
 - ▲ Create a new, workable consultative process for fisheries management and policy development that will actively involve stakeholders and communities in fisheries management decisions.
- ▲ Involvement of stakeholders throughout the development and implementation of the *BC Fisheries Strategy*.

1 INTRODUCTION

Salmon — A Living Symbol

Salmon's place in our history, culture, economy and environment make it a true symbol of British Columbia.

From earliest times, Aboriginal peoples have relied on salmon for food and ceremonial purposes — for sustenance of body and spirit. After European settlement, the salmon fishery supported a large fleet of boats and canneries — and workers — throughout coastal British Columbia.

In more recent times, salmon have become vitally important to the growing tourism industry — not only for sports and recreational fishing, but also for the natural spectacle of spawning salmon that return by the millions each year to renew their life cycle.

Today, that life cycle is threatened. Environmental, economic and political pressures are pushing B.C.'s salmon resource to the brink.

Time for Change

Though salmon are vital to our culture and our future, this is the only natural resource in B.C. that remains largely under federal jurisdiction.

The most recent symptoms of the long decline of the West Coast salmon fishery are cause for concern. Vital stocks of B.C. coho, chinook and steelhead have dropped to seriously low levels. The apparent disappearance of more than a million sockeye salmon in 1993 still remains a mystery today. In 1994, B.C.'s Adams River sockeye run — the largest in the world — came within 12 hours of being fished to extinction. And in 1996, fishers and fishing communities up and down B.C.'s coast suffered severe economic hardship as a combined result of the poorest salmon returns in recent history, federal restructuring of the commercial fishery and failure to achieve a fair and workable *Pacific Salmon Treaty*.

“... we should see ourselves as stewards of the resource and not owners. It is our duty to hand over a healthy resource industry not to the highest bidder, but to the next generation of the public that cares about fish and those who depend on the resource. In this regard, we recommend the matter of fisheries renewal be put into the hands of people who live in B.C. and care about the resource.”

– Open Letter to all
Salmon Licence Holders,
January 1997, signed by:
Don Cruickshank, former processor
Jack Nichol,
former UFAWU president
Ron McLeod,
former DFO regional director
Chris Newton,
former DFO economist
Chief Jacob Nyce

“We need a solution that will bring both consensus among all sectors of the industry, and decision-making power closer to those most affected.”

– Fisheries Minister Corky Evans,
January 17, 1997

British Columbians are well aware of the tragedy of the East Coast cod fishery and are bound and determined not to let it happen here.

Canada's Pacific salmon fishery has managed to endure despite the lack of a widely shared vision to secure a healthy fishery for the future. In its absence, we have ad-hoc decision making and division among British Columbians who care about the resource and rely on the fishery for their livelihoods. With the fate of both the salmon resource and the West Coast fishery hanging in the balance — *the time for change has arrived*.

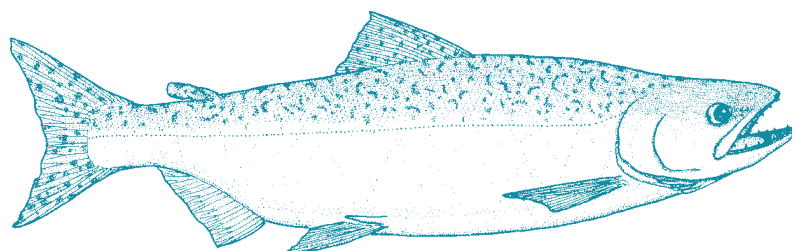
Building a Shared Vision

The present problems in the salmon fishery provide a historic opportunity for British Columbians to work together to build a strong future for salmon and those who depend on this resource for a livelihood.

Everyone has a stake in the future of the salmon. The Government of British Columbia is working to ensure that future is based on vision, not division.

The *BC Fisheries Strategy* lays out a course of action to achieve the partnerships necessary to renew our salmon resource — and create secure jobs and a bright economic future for fishery-dependent communities. The Strategy is intended to guide further development of provincial fisheries policy as well as fisheries renewal initiatives — and encourage public support and participation in these efforts.

The province's approach is based on the belief that all British Columbians affected by fishery-management decisions should have a say in how those decisions are made. Your response to our Strategy is vital. Please see Page 36 for details on how you can get involved in this 'made-in-B.C.' solution.



2. PROTECTING FISH, JOBS AND COMMUNITIES: A 'MADE-IN-B.C.' VISION

B.C.'s Vision for the Future

In May 1996, B.C. Premier Glen Clark proposed that the federal government join forces with B.C. and fisheries interests to develop a fisheries renewal strategy to conserve salmon and protect fisheries jobs. The *BC Fisheries Strategy* builds on this proposal, as well as the *B.C. Salmon Habitat Conservation Plan* introduced in September, 1995.

The *BC Fisheries Strategy* aims to provide a substantive vision for collective efforts towards fisheries renewal and the leadership that is needed to ensure a bright future for B.C.'s salmon fishery.

Building the Vision: Guiding Principles

CONSERVATION

- ▲ Saving the fish is the first and most fundamental priority — habitat must be protected and restored in every salmon-bearing river and stream.
- ▲ The biological diversity of wild stocks and the integrity of fish habitat are critical to healthy fish populations.
- ▲ A “conservation-first” approach will ensure that fishing is carried out in an environmentally-sustainable way.

SHARED RESPONSIBILITY

- ▲ All British Columbians should have fair access to this common property resource.
- ▲ Effective resource management requires open, cooperative participation by communities, industry, First Nations, federal and provincial governments, and other stakeholders.
- ▲ Communities play a critical role as local stewards of fish and fish habitat in contributing to the sustainability of the resource.

Salmon — A True Survivor

Six species of salmon spawn in over 3,900 streams and rivers throughout B.C. Sockeye, pink, chum, coho and chinook are joined by steelhead trout, recently designated part of the salmon family. The salmonids — as they are technically known — are born in B.C. streams and rivers. At a certain age they migrate to the deep ocean, and later complete the life-cycle by returning to exactly the same river or stream where they were born, to spawn and die. During their homeward migration the salmon face natural predators as well as commercial, sport and Aboriginal fisheries, water pollution, stream blockages caused by dams or debris, and destruction of habitat by industrial, urban and agricultural development. In recent years, fish returns for certain stocks are declining in numerous key spawning rivers.

“Independent accountability is an essential condition for building public confidence in the fairness, rationality and effectiveness of fisheries resource conservation policies, priorities, strategies and activities.”

– Fraser River Sockeye 1994 —
Problems and Discrepancies
Fraser River Sockeye Public Review
Board report, 1994

ACCOUNTABILITY

- ▲ Fisheries resources are public resources and should be managed to derive the widest possible benefit to British Columbians.
- ▲ Businesses and people who benefit from the use or enjoyment of fisheries resources should pay fair value for the use of this natural capital, with revenues reinvested in the fishery.
- ▲ Provincial and federal government responsibilities in fisheries management must be carried out in a fiscally accountable, cooperative and efficient manner.

OPPORTUNITY — VALUE-ADDED JOBS

- ▲ The commercial and sport fishing industries are sunrise industries, with excellent potential to provide secure jobs.
- ▲ Priority should be given to viable opportunities to diversify and strengthen the fishery as a key element of our coastal economy through development of value-added processing, seafood niche markets, or sport fishing and tourism.
- ▲ Competitiveness is essential to the long-term viability of the industry.
- ▲ The most value must be gained from each fish harvested, to reduce pressure on the resource.

A Foundation of our Provincial Economy

The salmon fishery today provides employment for thousands of fishers, families and shore-workers in British Columbia. From 1993 to 1995, the wholesale value of the commercial harvest of salmon averaged over \$400 million per year. And hundreds of thousands of British Columbians and visitors engage in recreational angling — contributing an estimated \$1.2 billion annually in direct and indirect benefits to the B.C. economy.

These economic facts cannot be separated from resource management decisions. The *BC Fisheries Strategy* is designed to provide jobs and a future for our coastal communities, within the limits of a sustainable harvest.

Building the Vision: Strategic Goals

PROTECTING FISH STOCKS

- ▲ The fundamental priority of the Strategy is to protect fish — ensuring healthy, fish-bearing streams and plentiful fish stocks.

CREATING SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES JOBS AND COMMUNITIES

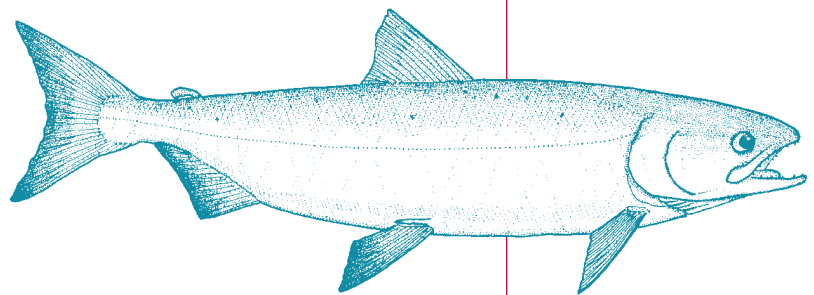
- ▲ Sustainable fish stocks can support thriving and diverse fisheries — in the commercial seafood and recreational sectors — that will provide secure jobs for British Columbians.
- ▲ The Strategy aims to help communities develop a wider range of local, fisheries-based employment and business opportunities.

ENHANCING THE ROLE OF THE PROVINCE AND BRITISH COLUMBIANS IN 'MADE-IN-B.C.' FISHERIES SOLUTIONS

- ▲ B.C. must be fully involved in the development of key fisheries management decisions, to ensure that B.C.'s comprehensive interests are taken into account. Therefore, the Strategy aims to secure a more substantive role for the Province in fisheries management.
- ▲ The B.C. government recognizes that change is necessary and that there must be greater involvement by, and accountability to, people who depend on this public resource.

“There will be no second chances. Either we protect this resource, or we watch it vanish, lost for generations to come. History won't judge us kindly if we allow that to happen.”

– Premier Glen Clark,
March 28, 1996



“Habitat protection, restoration and enhancement will ensure long-term employment in the fishery. In the short term it can contribute significantly to job creation, and provide a great opportunity to train British Columbians in stream care, stock and habitat assessment, and fisheries management. British Columbians are the stewards of fish habitat, protecting the well-being and biodiversity of fish stocks.”

– Fish First: A “Made-In-B.C.” Future For Our Fisheries report by the Women in Fishing Consultation Committee, February 13, 1997

3. HOW THE STRATEGY WILL WORK...

PROTECTING FISH STOCKS

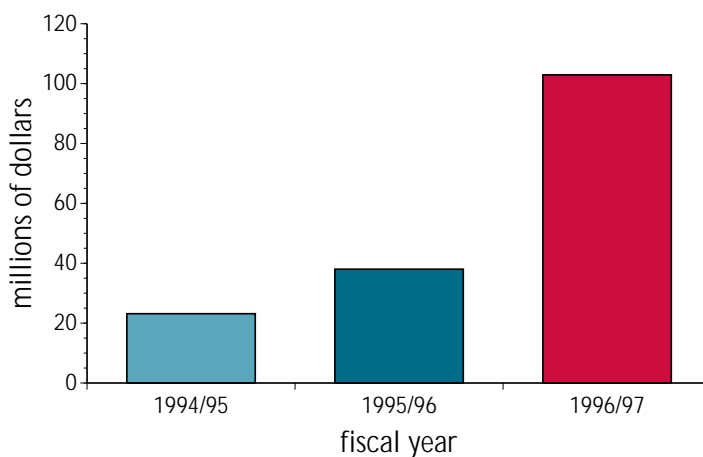
The *BC Fisheries Strategy* is based on the principle that conservation must come first. Over the past three years, B.C.’s investments in activities to protect fish and fish habitat on rivers and streams throughout the province have increased more than four-fold, from \$23 million in 1994-95 to nearly \$103 million in 1996-97. B.C. will continue to expand its role and commitment to ensure the long-term survival and health of our salmon stocks.

ACTIONS:

- ▲ Reduce habitat degradation caused by pollution and urban/industrial development.

A new *Fish Protection Act* will propose strengthened local government powers to protect the environment, including fish and fish habitat, from competing urban and industrial development. The legislation will expand riparian (streamside) management based on provincial fish protection and enhancement objectives.

Figure 1: BC Expenditure on Fish Protection Activities, 1995-1997



Fish Protection Act 1997

B.C. is introducing strong legislation to protect fish and fish habitat and ensure adequate water for fish. Key provisions under consideration include:

1. ENSURING WATER FOR FISH

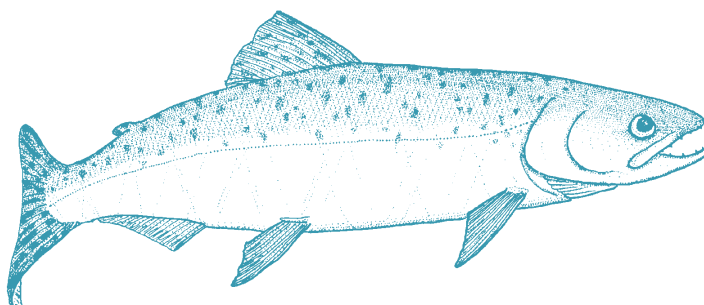
- ▲ no new dams on provincially significant rivers;
- ▲ new allocation tools to protect water flows for fish in all B.C. streams;
- ▲ stronger water protection measures and recovery plans for streams where fish are in danger;
- ▲ new water-management planning provisions and abilities to reclaim water for fish.

2. PROTECTING AND RESTORING FISH HABITAT

- ▲ new provincial directive for riparian (streamside) management at the local government level;
- ▲ habitat protection through incentives for conservation covenants;
- ▲ pursuing existing endangered species powers with linkages to fish and fish habitat.

3. STRENGTHEN LOCAL GOVERNMENT ENVIRONMENTAL PLANNING

- ▲ new authority for local governments to include environmental policies in Official Community Plans;
- ▲ new power for local governments to require development approval information for proposed developments;
- ▲ stronger environmental protection measures in development-permit approval processes;
- ▲ stronger tools to protect water quality.



▲ **Establish a formal federal-provincial program to reduce duplication and overlap and coordinate habitat protection, restoration and enhancement efforts.**

Both governments place enforcement officers in the field to ensure compliance with a broad range of regulations designed to protect fish. There is ample opportunity to do a better job together, through innovative worksharing arrangements that will reduce overlap and increase the efficiency of habitat restoration and salmonid enhancement programs. For example, federal and provincial field staff could share office facilities to improve delivery of service and minimize administrative costs.

The *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* includes a commitment to develop a new federal-provincial *Habitat Protection and Fisheries Enforcement Agreement* which will improve service, and reduce duplication and overlap in 'on-the-ground' fish protection activities. In addition, the Agreement commits both governments to improve coordination of habitat protection activities and to develop joint management plans — with stakeholder consultation — to protect key steelhead stocks and watersheds.

▲ **Ensure open and accurate public information on the state of fish stocks through:**

△ **The establishment of a joint *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* to provide independent and public reporting on the state of fish and fish habitat.**

Fish are owned by the people of Canada and those given responsibility to manage the resource on the public's behalf must be fully and openly accountable for their decisions. Since 1994, B.C. has proposed the creation of an independent *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* appointed by and reporting to the provincial and federal governments. The council would be made up of a small number of individuals who are widely respected for their knowledge and experience in fisheries management. Specific tasks for the council would include annual reports on the State of Fish Stocks and Habitat, plus forecasts for the future based on present trends.

Under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* signed April 16, 1997, a jointly appointed *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* will be established to report publicly on conservation and long-term sustainable use of salmon resources and habitat.

△ **Formal B.C. government and stakeholder representation on the federal scientific committee which assesses salmon stocks.**

The federal *Salmon Subcommittee* of the *Pacific Salmon Assessment Review Committee* provides the scientific basis for fisheries management plans and decisions on harvest levels. B.C. is seeking to increase the openness and accountability of the scientific

assessment process for counting salmon stocks through increased provincial government and stakeholder participation.

Under terms of the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*, B.C. and stakeholders will now formally participate in this process and the public will have increased access to related information

▲ New shared and public information on fish stocks inventory and fish habitat.

B.C. proposes development of a shared federal-provincial fish habitat information base, using B.C. standards. This will ensure that habitat protection decisions are based on accurate, up-to-date information accepted by both governments. The information base should be fully accessible by all stakeholders and the general public.

▲ Enact stronger provincial laws to protect fish and fish habitat, and ensure adequate water for fish — *B.C. Fish Protection Act*.

Building healthy fish stocks and habitat are central to the *Sustainability Charter* introduced by the B.C. government in 1996. Key provisions of the charter will be achieved when new provincial legislation to protect fish is passed.

The *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* includes a commitment by both governments to strengthen fisheries habitat protection legislation.

B.C. is introducing a *Fish Protection Act* this year to restrict development on major salmon rivers, ensure adequate water necessary for fish survival, and ensure that fish needs are considered in water allocation and development decisions.

▲ Targeted programs to protect and restore more fish habitat in all B.C. watersheds.

The federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans conservation emphasis is increasingly focused on the two big salmon-producing river systems in B.C. — the Fraser and the Skeena. B.C. will work with the federal government to develop a more comprehensive approach to protect and restore fish habitat and will build upon restoration programs in many more watersheds across the province through targeted restoration programs and local habitat-protection partnerships.

“Each Party shall conduct its fisheries and salmon enhancement programs so as to: (a) prevent overfishing and provide for optimum production; and, (b) provide for each Party to receive benefits equivalent to the production of salmon originating in its waters.”

Article III,
Pacific Salmon Treaty

- ▲ **Prohibit hydro-electric developments that threaten vital fish stocks and pursue a new federal/provincial framework for resolving fish-hydro disputes through a water-use planning process.**

B.C. recognizes that hydro-electric developments — the major holders of water licenses in B.C. — can have significant impacts on fisheries sustainability. That’s why the provincial government put ‘fish first’ in canceling the Kemano Completion Project in 1995. More can be done to ensure that fish are accorded the best protection possible while still meeting B.C.’s hydro-electric needs.

The *Fish Protection Act* will ensure that no new “bank-to-bank” dams will be built on provincially significant salmon rivers. B.C. is committed to ensuring that many of the world’s greatest salmon-producing rivers will be protected for future generations.

Further work is required to ensure fish are adequately protected while still meeting anticipated future demands for power. B.C. will pursue a federal-provincial agreement to develop a workable water-use planning framework that will help resolve fish-power disputes and provide security for both fish and hydro-electric producers over the long term.

- ▲ **Work to resolve the *Pacific Salmon Treaty* and ensure a fair return on conservation measures taken and investment in the resource for British Columbians.**

A serious threat to B.C. salmon stocks is the current impasse on the negotiation of a new *Pacific Salmon Treaty*. Canada and the United States have not been able to agree on implementing the principles of the treaty, signed in 1985.

B.C. is not getting a fair deal. Salmon produced in B.C. rivers and streams are over-fished by US fishing fleets, particularly Alaska which reaps the benefit of B.C.’s investment in conservation. This imbalance threatens the sustainability of our salmon stocks and costs B.C. \$60 million a year in lost fish and lost jobs in the sport and commercial fishing industries.

In communications with Canadian federal and US state leaders, Premier Glen Clark has emphasized the importance of finding a solution without delay. In February, Canada and the United States agreed to renew their commitment to resolving the dispute, via government-to-government negotiations that include direct participation by stakeholders from the relevant regions.

Thanks to high-profile efforts by the provincial government, British Columbia is at the table. We are hopeful that these negotiations will lead to a resolution of the Treaty. If not, we must consider further action.

The Pacific Salmon Treaty [PST]

The PST, signed in 1985, is intended to prevent over-fishing and ensure an equitable harvest between Canada and the United States. The treaty recognizes that the country which spawns salmon in its rivers has primary interest and responsibility for those stocks.

Canada has reduced its interception of US salmon stocks by 30% — thus allowing more fish to return to US rivers to spawn. However, in the same period, US interceptions of Canadian salmon have increased by over 50% — with the Alaska fishing industry accounting for most of these interceptions. The resulting inequity — four million fish — is costing B.C. an estimated \$60 million per year and 180 permanent jobs.

B.C. tax dollars — nearly \$103 million this past year alone — are paying to restore habitat and conserve the resource, while our salmon are harvested by Alaskan fishers instead of returning to B.C. waters. Of the chinook and sockeye caught in southeast Alaska, over 60% are of Canadian origin. Many chinook, coho and steelhead stocks that spawn in B.C. have fallen to dangerously low levels, simply because not enough fish are escaping the Alaska fishing fleets.

British Columbia has made repeated calls on the Canadian and US governments to resolve the deadlock. In September 1996, Premier Glen Clark wrote to the governors of Alaska, Washington and Oregon to request their support for a new B.C. proposal to get the treaty negotiations back on track.

In February 1997, the two national governments announced a renewed commitment to settle the dispute through regionally-based stakeholder negotiations. Based on initial progress achieved to date in these stakeholder discussions, Canada has agreed to an early May review to evaluate further progress.

B.C. is monitoring the stakeholder process closely and is encouraged by this progress. But before the 1997 salmon season opens, significant progress must be made, including:

- ▲ conservation agreements for chinook and all other salmon species;
- ▲ fishing arrangements for the northern and southern regions;
- ▲ adjustments to Alaskan fisheries to reduce interceptions of B.C. salmon.

B.C. is committed to achieving a fair and workable treaty, based on the fundamental principles of conservation and harvest equity. The Province wants a negotiated settlement. However, failure to resolve the deadlock will leave B.C. no choice but to take steps to ensure the treaty's full implementation for the sake of salmon.

“B.C. and Canada are working closely with stakeholders on developing a fully sustainable fishery in B.C. But all the conservation and renewed management efforts are for naught if this treaty is not honoured both in spirit and implementation.”

– B.C. Premier Glen Clark,
September, 1996

How the BC Fisheries Strategy will work...

CREATING SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES JOBS AND COMMUNITIES

Securing a healthy fish resource will support secure job opportunities. The *BC Fisheries Strategy* calls for maximizing the total number of jobs — the full range of job types — and the quality and security of employment, within sustainable harvest levels for the fisheries resource. Diversification and development of value-added opportunities are vital for the future of the commercial and sport fishing sectors.

Secure jobs build healthy communities. B.C.'s fishery-dependent communities will have a prosperous future — if they are given a meaningful say in decisions, and a key role in sustaining the fish stocks and habitat in their area. British Columbia communities have become acutely aware of the need to diversify local economies and move away from the single-industry town. The *BC Fisheries Strategy* emphasizes diversity of opportunities, shared decision-making, local investment and stewardship. The proposed new *Fish Protection Act* will provide local governments with new powers to protect fish and fish habitat.

The *BC Fisheries Strategy* is not intended to artificially prop up inefficient and uncompetitive activities in the fishing sector. Instead, the Strategy focuses on achieving a bright future for fisheries-dependent communities by developing new opportunities to ensure a diversified economy based on a sustainable resource.

ACTIONS:

- ▲ Establish stronger development programs and more efficient coordination in a new, federal-provincial partnership — *Fisheries Renewal BC* — with direct stakeholder and community involvement in direction and decision making.

Both federal and provincial governments currently invest taxpayer dollars in programs designed to protect and restore fish habitat, enhance fisheries and develop and diversify the Pacific fishery. This involves two separate bureaucracies and two different program application and delivery processes — all for the benefit of the same client. In addition, fishery stakeholders do not often see the full benefit of revenues raised from the sector — through license fees, etc. — being directly reinvested in the resource and the industry in a dedicated manner.

“We want to get people into the fishery, not out of it. This is a public resource and we need to ensure that the benefits derived from the resource are spread as widely as possible and not concentrated in the hands of the few that can afford it.”

– B.C. Fisheries Minister
Corky Evans,
January 9, 1997

B.C. proposes to address both of these issues in a new federal-provincial partnership for program development and delivery — *Fisheries Renewal BC* — which will be an efficient agency led by a government-stakeholder *Fisheries Renewal Advisory Board* and a small administrative team. The agency will be dedicated to enhanced program coordination and delivery with direct stakeholder and community involvement in recommending spending priorities that will best advance the objectives of a sustainable resource, jobs and communities.

Under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* signed on April 16, 1997, the federal government has agreed to take a first step on this road and jointly establish the *Fisheries Renewal Advisory Board* as outlined above. B.C. is pleased by this latest development and will continue with plans to establish *Fisheries Renewal BC* and encourage the federal government to participate as a full partner.

To back up our commitment, B.C. will introduce *Fisheries Renewal BC* legislation this year and invest new funds over the next three years to provide a financial foundation for fisheries renewal activities — including \$15 million towards habitat protection and restoration (as agreed in the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*) plus a further \$7.7 million for industry and community fisheries diversification and development initiatives. In addition, B.C. will begin to move existing programs dedicated to these areas into a new coordinated program mechanism. Together, this new funding investment and commitment to internal coordination will provide a core program base for *Fisheries Renewal BC* — a base which could be enhanced significantly in the future if the federal government agrees to join as a full partner.

▲ **Priority areas of focus and investment for *Fisheries Renewal BC* will include:**

△ **Community-based salmon enhancement, habitat restoration and protection.**

This will provide funding for community-based habitat restoration and protection projects throughout B.C.

In addition to the new three-year, \$15 million funding commitment outlined above, B.C. will also ensure that communities and a broad range of fisheries stakeholders are actively involved in developing proposals for habitat restoration and protection projects, maximizing employment opportunities for workers in the commercial and sport fishing sectors and ensuring that the projects are carried out successfully.

“After exhaustive consultation, it has become apparent that the industry is need of fundamental renewal. Unless the decline in economic fortune is reversed, further upheaval will occur.”

– Tangled Lines: A Federal-Provincial Review of the Mifflin Plan
December, 1996

Framework for a Fisheries Renewal BC Agency

Building on B.C. Premier Glen Clark’s May 1996 proposal to Prime Minister Chretien, the B.C. government will introduce enabling legislation for a *Fisheries Renewal BC* agency.

The agency would enable the Province, in cooperation with the federal government, First Nations, fishing communities and industry, and other interested parties, to:

- ▲ Provide funding for programs that will promote healthy fish stocks, support conservation measures for B.C.’s fisheries, encourage job creation, industry diversification and coastal community development.
- ▲ Increase effective stakeholder and community participation in decisions relating to funding of fisheries-related programs.
- ▲ Enter into agreements with the federal government to increase coordination, reduce duplication and facilitate strategic use of federal and provincial funding for fisheries programs.
- ▲ Increase access to programs that benefit industry development and diversification.
- ▲ Protect and expand dedicated funding for fisheries-related programs.

Potential activities for the agency could include:

- ▲ Fisheries habitat restoration and protection, and fish enhancement — using watershed-based principles such as:
 - △ community-based stream and habitat restoration and stewardship
 - △ establishment of stream guardian programs
 - △ local jobs for catch monitors/observers
 - △ habitat and fish stock data collection.
- ▲ Local training and skills development projects to support employment of fishers and others in fisheries communities.
- ▲ Development of new fisheries technologies and diversification opportunities to increase investment in the commercial seafood and sport fish sectors, such as:
 - △ value-added initiatives for seafood
 - △ sport fishing tourism services
 - △ new pilot fisheries and fish product development
 - △ by-product and waste utilization
 - △ marketing
 - △ sustainable fishing practices.
- ▲ Local community strategic planning/infrastructure development to support continued investment and community participation in a diversified and sustainable fishery.

Table: Economic Development Opportunities Suggested by Communities

A. Fisheries

Commercial Fishing

- ▲ develop fisheries for under-utilized species (e.g., flying squid, octopus, tanner crabs, mackerel, tuna)
- ▲ community-held fishing licences
- ▲ community salmon quotas
- ▲ terminal fisheries using non-conventional gear (e.g., beach seines)
- ▲ fish royalties that flow to the communities (e.g., Alaska model)

Aquaculture

- ▲ expand salmon aquaculture
- ▲ develop aquaculture of clams, scallops, abalone, black cod, seaweed, etc.
- ▲ ocean ranching of salmon

Processing

- ▲ fresh product such as live rockfish
- ▲ packaged value-added products such as specialty smoked salmon
- ▲ processing of pink and chum salmon

B. Tourism

- ▲ ecotourism
- ▲ aboriginal tourism
- ▲ sport fishing lodges and charters
- ▲ destination resorts/hotels

C. Other

- ▲ community timber licences and value-added forestry products
- ▲ aboriginal housing development on reserves
- ▲ for displaced seine boats, transportation and accommodation of tree planters
- ▲ stream/habitat enhancement
- ▲ infrastructure development related to fishing e.g., docks

Source: *Fishing for Answers: Coastal Communities and the B.C. Salmon Fishery*, Job Protection Commission, September 1996.

“The Panel strongly believes the industry must nurture value-added niche markets — recreational, aboriginal and commercial — and focus on opening up new markets and adding value to existing products. New blood, new energy and, above all, new entrepreneurial spirit is needed if B.C.’s salmon industry is to thrive in the harsh new realities of the global marketplace.”

– Tangled Lines: A Federal-Provincial Review of the Mifflin Plan
December, 1996

△ Strengthening resource protection capacity (with associated job opportunities) at the community level to protect our fisheries resource.

Both the federal and provincial governments need to ensure that there is a stronger network throughout B.C. to ensure full compliance with policies and regulations designed to protect fish and fish habitat. B.C. proposes a new federal-provincial program that will work with communities and build on the energy of existing volunteer programs to help get the job done. The new program will help both governments extend their respective resource management and enforcement activities while providing employment opportunities for community residents.

Under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*, both governments are committed to action — with stakeholder consultation — to ensure communities and First Nations are involved in compliance and monitoring activities.

△ Supporting the development of sustainable fishing practices.

△ Building a more diversified, multi-skilled workforce in support of the commercial and sport fishing industries.

To build this workforce in communities, the training needed to build both the commercial harvest and sport fishing sector must be addressed. Key areas of focus could include: sustainable harvesting, value-added processing, new product development, tourism services, marketing, habitat restoration, and salmon enhancement.

For example, people engaged in the sport or commercial fisheries for part of the year may be training or working in habitat restoration or other fishery-related jobs during the off-season, through *Fisheries Renewal BC*. B.C. seeks formal coordination in the development and delivery of federal and provincial training, technology and business development programs that promote the economic viability of fishery-based communities.

△ Diversifying B.C.’s fisheries by supporting value-added production, new product and species development and marketing.

To sustain jobs we need to look beyond the traditional horizons of the salmon fishery. For example, development of under-utilized species, such as squid and various groundfish, is an important way to create employment. The program will assist in the development of these fisheries and promote new value-added opportunities for the salmon fishery — striving for a practical balance between the needs of industry, communities and responsible resource management.

We must derive more value from each fish caught, to sustain more jobs. This way, the fishery can grow as an economic sector without increasing pressure on the resource. International competitiveness is also recognized as essential to the long-term viability of

B.C.'s fisheries. The program will support British Columbia companies who pursue value-added processing and niche markets for B.C. seafood and fish products aimed at getting the most value out of each fish caught. It will also support efforts to build on the world-class reputation of our sport fishing industry.

Pursuant to the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* a joint review of industry and community development programs will be completed by September, 1997. The aim of the review will be to find new ways to more effectively coordinate and deliver these programs.

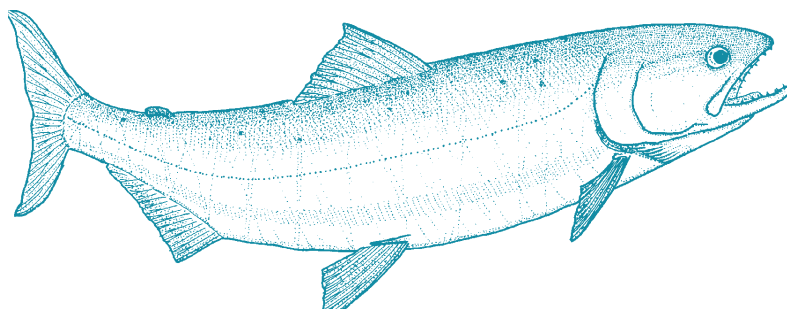
△ Assisting communities to develop strategies to create new jobs in the commercial and recreational fisheries in their area.

This will require a close working relationship between federal and provincial government departments to ensure that fisheries adjustment funds are targeted to communities based on need — and that local workers have access to training, new employment opportunities, and start-up funding for new ventures.

△ Strategic fishing infrastructure in coastal communities to encourage investment.

The Province will work with local governments to assist in developing the infrastructure needed to support the fishery of the future — including harbor facilities, tourism services, transportation, sewage and water systems — and encourage private investment and development of the commercial and recreational sectors.

B.C. will seek to coordinate provincial-federal infrastructure programs that benefit fishery-based communities.



▲ **Develop a strategic plan with the sport fishing sector.**

The province will work in partnership with industry and sector stakeholders to develop a strategic plan to ensure a sustainable future for this increasingly important fishery sector.

This important work is already underway. In mid-March, Comox Valley MLA Evelyn Gillespie was appointed to lead the provincial team working with sport fishing organizations on the development of a joint plan to encourage and manage future growth.

The plan will include a strategy for implementation and evaluation and will focus on the saltwater sport fishery and sport fishing for anadromous species (salmon, steelhead) in fresh water.

The joint province-sector committee is expected to submit the completed plan to provincial ministers by Fall, 1997.

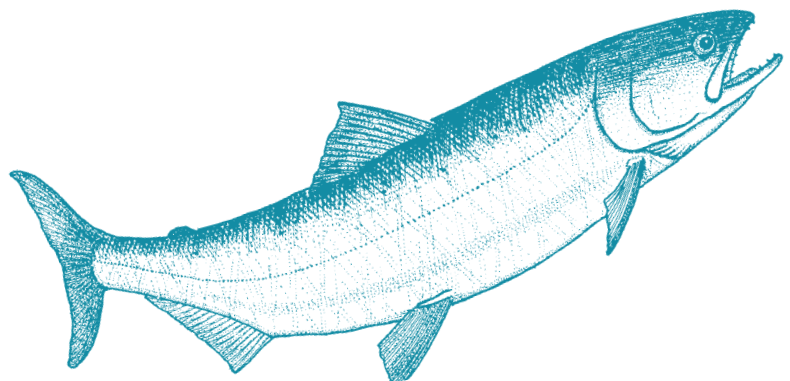
▲ **Strengthen local government powers to protect fisheries habitat in local and regional planning processes.**

B.C.'s proposed new *Fish Protection Act* will strengthen the ability of local governments to protect fish habitat and water quality by providing new or enhanced powers to include environmental policies in Official Community Plans, and ensure adequate environmental protection measures are carried out for proposed new developments.

▲ **Establish mechanisms for regionally-based input into fisheries management and decision-making.**

For too long the interests of communities have been ignored in fishery consultation processes. The Province proposes to work with the federal government to rebuild fisheries consultation processes to ensure that communities are included in, not excluded from, new consultation and decision-making processes.

The province will work with communities and local governments to define visions for their future in a diversified commercial seafood and recreational fishery.



How the BC Fisheries Strategy will work...

ENHANCING THE ROLE OF THE PROVINCE AND BRITISH COLUMBIANS IN ‘MADE-IN B.C.’ FISHERIES SOLUTIONS

The lack of meaningful involvement by British Columbians in the development of federal policies which affect their future has created discord rather than solutions in our salmon fishery. The federal government’s *Pacific Salmon Revitalization Plan* — the ‘Mifflin’ Plan — introduced in March, 1996 is a recent example.

The federal-provincial *Pacific Salmon Revitalization Plan Review Panel* confirmed that the federal restructuring had imposed severe economic impacts on thousands of residents of coastal communities. First Nations were most severely affected by the ‘Mifflin’ Plan, with Ahousaht and Kyuquot losing 46% and 18% respectively of the total jobs in their communities. The panel’s findings also reinforced an earlier report by B.C.’s Job Protection Commission which found that almost 8,000 jobs had been lost in the commercial and sport fishing sectors due to the combined impacts of the ‘Mifflin’ Plan and the lowest salmon catch in 36 years.

The *BC Fisheries Strategy* provides the framework for achieving ‘made-in-B.C.’ solutions with a long-term focus. All stakeholders will have shared responsibility for ensuring the long-term survival of the resource and the industries, jobs and communities that depend on it.

ACTIONS:

- ▲ Through the Canada-B.C. Fisheries Memorandum of Understanding process, achieve a new federal-provincial partnership in the management of the fishery that will:
 - △ Improve working relationships and coordination between the federal and provincial governments through a new *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* led by a *Canada-B.C. Council of Fisheries Ministers*. The *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* reflects a consensus among British Columbians that decisions on the West Coast fishery must be made openly — with the participation and consent of the people most affected by those decisions.

“Canada’s Pacific salmon fishery is at a point of crisis. Up and down the Pacific coast — from Masset to Steveston — there is a common perception that a once-proud and vital, \$400-million-a-year industry is in serious trouble as world salmon prices fall and critical stocks of B.C. salmon continue to decline.”

– Tangled Lines: A Federal-Provincial Review of the Mifflin Plan
December, 1996

“Jobs, the resources and communities would be better off with truly made-in-B.C. management. The thousands of people who rely on the fisheries deserve no less.”

– B.C. Fisheries Minister
Corky Evans,
January 9, 1997

Table 2: Communities Hardest Hit by Long Term Salmon Fleet Job Losses

Community	Job Loss as % of Employment	# of Salmon Jobs Lost	1991 Unemploy. Rate (%)	1991 Average Household Income (\$)	Aboriginal Community (% of Pop.)	Road Access to Urban Area?
Ahousaht	46%	32	33%	\$25,700	97%	NO
Kyuquot	18%	14	33%	na	82%	NO
Kitkatla	14%	5	65%	\$24,000	96%	NO
Bella Bella	11%	38	35%	\$30,000	89%	NO
Sointula & Area	11%	40	26%	\$42,600	1%	NO
Alert Bay & Area	10%	63	21%	\$42,800	51%	NO
Port Simpson	9%	11	62%	\$27,900	95%	NO
Sayward	7%	13	5%	\$49,900	na	YES
Hartley Bay	6%	2	36%	na	84%	NO
Masset & Area	4%	46	10%	\$44,600	31%	NO
Klemtu	4%	4	32%	\$22,000	93%	NO
Port Hardy	3%	80	13%	\$48,200	13%	YES
Quadra Island & Area	3%	40	14%	\$40,100	4%	YES
Tofino	3%	20	15%	\$38,600	28%	YES
Ucluelet	3%	29	12%	\$48,900	15%	YES
Prince Rupert & Area	2%	159	16%	\$53,100	18%	YES
Bella Coola	2%	5	18%	\$26,300	96%	NO
Qualicum Beach	2%	37	9%	\$43,200	1%	YES
Parksville	2%	53	11%	\$38,000	< 1%	YES
Bamfield	2%	9	12%	\$39,800	13%	YES
B.C.	< 1%	2,750	10%	\$46,900	2%	na

Source: *Fishing for Answers: Coastal Communities and the B.C. Salmon Fishery*, Job Protection Commission, Sept. 1996.

The Agreement includes provisions to:

- ▲ establish a *Canada-B.C. Council of Fisheries Ministers* to review and coordinate all policy activities relating to the management of the salmon resource and the fishery;
- ▲ incorporate direct stakeholder and community participation — to provide advice to the Council on policy matters and a feedback mechanism when differences arise between governments on major policy issues.

B.C. needs a stronger, more formal role in the management of the resource. The *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* signed April 16, 1997 provides a comprehensive, cooperative framework to:

- ▲ conserve and protect the salmon resource for future generations;
- ▲ ensure that the salmon fishery remains a publicly owned resource, with equality of access for all British Columbians;
- ▲ encourage sustainable employment in B.C.'s fishery-dependent communities;
- ▲ extend specific powers and responsibilities to the Province, within the parameters of the *Constitution*;

- ▲ provide a formal framework for improved federal-provincial cooperation on fishery problems — to the benefit of all Canadians;
- ▲ improve service and delivery and reduce costs by eliminating the overlap and duplication between governments.

△ **Secure greater involvement by B.C. in setting policies and developing and directing mechanisms for allocation and licensing.**

Decisions regarding the allocation of fish and the licensing of those given the privilege to harvest a public resource are vital in determining how the social and economic benefits that flow from fisheries are distributed and how British Columbians can receive a fair return on their investment in fisheries habitat and development.

A major issue in the Pacific salmon fishery has always been — who gets to catch how many fish? A variety of different groups are in conflict over salmon allocation. They include Aboriginal, commercial and sports fisheries — and within the commercial industry, different gear-types such as seiners, trollers, and gillnetters.

In the past, authority over these decisions rested entirely with the federal government, with very little role for the provincial government or British Columbians. Through the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*, B.C. has secured significant changes in how these decisions are made — most notably a much greater role for the Province and stakeholders. This will help to ensure that B.C. achieves real returns on our investments to support sustainable fisheries and the maximum benefit for British Columbians.

How decisions are made in government should be directed by strong and consistent policies. Given the impacts of these decisions on B.C.'s economy, society and culture, it is vital that the Province achieve a stronger role in this area so we can ensure that the provincial interest is considered. Accordingly, B.C. proposes that we work cooperatively with the federal government in developing policies and principles by which allocation and licensing decisions are made.

Once the policy is set, the provincial government believes strongly that allocations and licensing decisions should be made in British Columbia and should be done in an open and transparent manner. Hence, B.C. proposes the creation of a new mechanism — appointed by and reporting to the federal and provincial fisheries ministers — that will ensure timely decisions in an open forum with clear and impartial rules. B.C. will aim to ensure broad stakeholder involvement in the development of such a mechanism, in the context of work currently underway to reform the salmon allocation process.

Under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*, B.C. has secured a major role in the federal process for designing and implementing a

workable, inter-sectoral salmon allocation framework among the Aboriginal, commercial and recreational sectors. As part of this process, the concept of a licensing, allocation and sanctions mechanism will be explored during stakeholder consultations to take place following the current fishing season and by the end of 1997.

▲ Increase the efficiency of government fisheries programs by reducing duplication and overlap and increasing coordination between governments.

The federal and provincial governments must do a better job to protect and restore fisheries habitat and enhance the fisheries resource. Both governments currently administer programs that aim to protect and restore vital fisheries habitat and engage in enhancement activities. B.C. proposes that these programs be brought together, better coordinated and provided more funding through *Fisheries Renewal BC*.

Provincial and federal governments must perform their duties in a fiscally responsible and efficient manner.

Users of environmental resources should pay fair value for the benefits they receive from this natural capital. In this time of universal fiscal restraint, communities and stakeholders are willing to accept increased responsibilities and a greater share of the financial burden for fisheries programs — *provided their contributions are reinvested in the Pacific fishery, and they have a meaningful say in decisions on priorities for fisheries programs.*

▲ Create a new, workable consultative process for fisheries management and policy development that will actively involve stakeholders and communities in fisheries management decisions.

Under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*, an improved consultation process and structures will be developed jointly to more effectively involve stakeholders and communities in fisheries management decisions.

▲ Involvement of stakeholders throughout the development and implementation of the BC Fisheries Strategy.

Openness, cooperation and public participation — to include communities, industry, First Nations, and provincial and federal governments — are essential to deliver a B.C.-based solution for the effective management and conservation of this vital resource.

B.C.'s aim to ensure meaningful consultation and the participation of British Columbians in fisheries management decisions has been achieved through the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*. Key examples include the creation of stakeholder group steering committees to provide advice and feedback to the *Council of Fisheries Ministers*, the establishment of a *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council*, stakeholder and community representation on the *Fisheries Renewal Advisory Board* and B.C. representation on the *Pacific Salmon Assessment Review Committee*.

B.C.'s Accomplishments in Fish Protection

Over the past five years, B.C. has made unprecedented progress in environmental action to protect the sustainability of our natural resources and our economy. B.C. has 'turned the corner' in recognizing that not enough was done in the past and in taking strong actions to restore and protect our precious natural heritage.

Through locally developed land-use plans and the *Protected Areas Strategy*, government has brought British Columbians together to resolve long standing land-use conflicts and create over 250 new parks and wilderness areas. The B.C. government has changed the way our forests are managed, introduced major fines for bad forestry practices — including those which damage spawning streams — and through *Forest Renewal BC*, we've created jobs for people to repair the damage of the past.

B.C. has protected the environment from polluters and introduced some of the toughest enforcement measures in Canada — setting standards for pulp effluent, making major investments in sewage treatment facilities and taking other action to improve the quality of water in our rivers and streams.

Conservation Programs Increased To \$103 Million

The Province has been assuming a larger role in fish habitat protection and restoration, making this area the largest provincial financial commitment in the salmon fishery. Provincial expenditures on fish protection activities over the past year have risen to almost \$103 million and will increase further this year through new funding sources — including B.C.'s commitment of \$15 million over three years under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*. The *BC Fisheries Strategy* calls for a larger role consistent with provincial ownership of fresh-water habitat to help ensure better integration of resource planning around watersheds.

Actions and structures proposed in the strategy will work in harmony with existing efforts such as the *Urban Salmon Habitat Program*, *Forest Renewal BC*, *Watershed Restoration*, *Environmental Youth Teams* and other programs.

B.C.'s Record: Working to Protect our Salmon Resource

1992 — The B.C. government's new pulp mill effluent regulations, introduced this year, have reduced dioxin discharges into the Fraser River by 98+ %.

1992 — Locally developed strategic land use planning commences to end long standing 'valley-by-valley' conflicts over land use in B.C. Protection of critical fisheries habitat is among the many values considered in establishing zoning designations for land use.

1992 — *Protected Areas Strategy* introduced to protect viable examples of B.C.'s natural diversity and unique natural features, including marine and freshwater ecosystems and other fish habitat. By early 1997 more than 250 new protected areas have been created, increasing parks and wilderness permanently preserved to more than 9% of B.C.

1994 — *Watershed Restoration Program* introduced as a component of *Forest Renewal BC*, with a four-year budget of \$200 million to restore B.C. streams damaged by logging, especially important salmon-bearing streams. To date the program has funded hundreds of restoration projects around the province.

1994 — Increases to freshwater angling fees generated an extra \$2 million a year for conservation projects.

1994 — A new *Stream Stewardship* guide helps planners and developers conserve fish habitat in urban areas. This is part of a series of stewardship documents for public, community groups, local governments and students.

1995 — The new *Forest Practices Code* provides unprecedented protection for streams on Crown lands, including no-harvest zones of up to 50 metres around salmon bearing streams and a further buffer zone of 20 to 30 metres where logging is strictly regulated. Tough penalties help enforce regulations.

1995 — The B.C. government rejected Alcan's proposed Kemano Completion Project, which would have used up to 88% of the water in the Nechako River — a part of the Fraser system — putting chinook and sockeye stocks at risk.

1995 — B.C. *Salmon Habitat Conservation Plan* launched with a new five-year, \$12.5 million *Urban Salmon Habitat Program* for projects by community groups, schools, local governments and First Nations to protect and restore salmon streams in the Georgia Basin/Lower Mainland.

1995 — B.C. contributes \$184 million towards upgrading the Annacis Island sewage treatment plant at the mouth of the Fraser River in an effort to ensure clean water for salmon.

1995 — New regulations under the *Water Act* set fish-sensitive standards for work in and around streams, such as construction of dikes, bridges and culverts.

1995 — The independent B.C. *Heritage Rivers Board* established to officially recognize and protect the province's most important rivers, including key salmon-bearing rivers such as the Fraser, Cowichan, Adams, Babine and Stikine.

1996 — The *Habitat Conservation Trust Fund* provides funding for a wide range of fish and wildlife projects — about half the record \$4.9 million spent this year went to support salmonid projects.

1996 — *Sustainable Environment Charter* sets out principles to guide government in addressing environmental issues: stewardship, sustainability, precaution, pollution prevention, user pays, environmental equity, shared responsibility and enforcement.

1997 — A new *Fish Protection Act* will provide strong legislation to protect fish and fish habitat.

1997 — A new *Fisheries Renewal BC Act* will provide a focused mechanism for coordinating and delivering programs aimed at sustaining the fisheries resource and the jobs and communities which depend on the fishery.

B.C. Salmon Habitat Conservation Plan

The provincial government has a crucial role to play in ensuring that freshwater and streamside habitat exists to sustain species for the future. The *B.C. Salmon Habitat Conservation Plan* introduced in 1995 is a continuing, comprehensive strategy to save B.C. salmon.

This forward-looking plan aims at sustaining B.C.'s salmon stocks and was launched with a five-year, \$12.5 million *Urban Salmon Habitat Program* to restore critical salmon streams in urban areas.

Tactics range from the enactment of the toughest pulp mill effluent regulations in Canada, to new *Water Act* standards for streamside activities, *Forest Practices Code* provisions to protect streams from logging impacts, *Forest Renewal BC's Watershed Restoration Program*, the 1995 decision to protect Nechako River salmon from the effects of damming, and the proposed new *Fish Protection Act*.

The *Urban Salmon Habitat Program* provides a missing link in this multi-stakeholder effort. It focuses on stream habitat restoration in areas where urbanization and development are the greatest threat to B.C.'s salmon resource.

The *Urban Salmon Habitat Program* encompasses three major initiatives. First, the B.C. government is encouraging stewardship projects by providing funding and other resources to community-based organizations for activities such as public education, habitat resource assessment, landowner contact programs, watershed planning, monitoring and evaluation, rehabilitation and restoration.

Second, partnerships between the Province, regional districts, municipalities and communities are being forged under the *Urban Salmon Habitat Program* through cost sharing for staffing. Provincial government funds are available to support conservation efforts by local government staff in strategic Georgia Basin urban centres. In addition, twelve B.C. government staff will act as a resource for locally-based salmon habitat conservation initiatives.

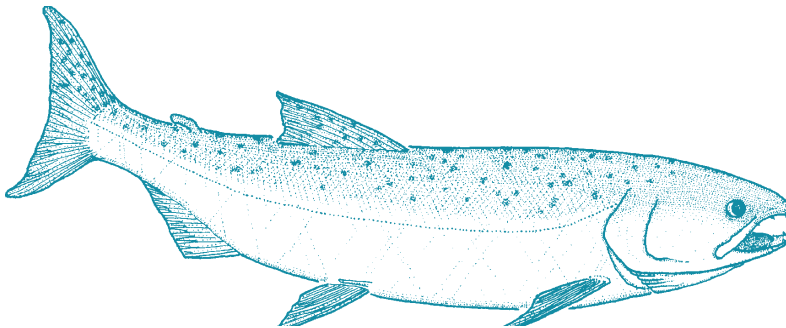
Third, a major public education initiative will raise awareness of conservation issues and stream stewardship programs.

Through these programs under the *Salmon Habitat Conservation Plan*, the Government of B.C. has been using its resources — regulation, education and funding — to protect our vital salmon. But saving B.C. salmon must be a commitment of all British Columbians. There are still important roles for government, private industry, First Nations, and the public in the effort to take care of B.C.'s fragile salmon habitat.

4. THE CASE FOR A 'MADE-IN-B.C.' FISHERY

Salmon has such a broad importance in our society, culture and economy that B.C. must ensure it is fully involved when decisions on the resource are made. We must achieve a strong balance of interests without compromising sustainability. The lesson learned on sustainability over the last decade is that the issues of resources, jobs and communities can't be artificially separated.

B.C. has already taken on significant responsibilities for conserving the salmon resource. The province has made a significantly increasing investment in recent years towards protecting fisheries habitat and stocks — almost \$103 million in 1997 alone and a further \$15 million over three years under the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues*. The taxpayers of B.C. deserve a return on this investment through a greater role in fisheries management decisions.



“The search for common ground is due to a realization among many fishers that, unless we get our act together, the West Coast salmon fishery will go the way of the East Coast.”

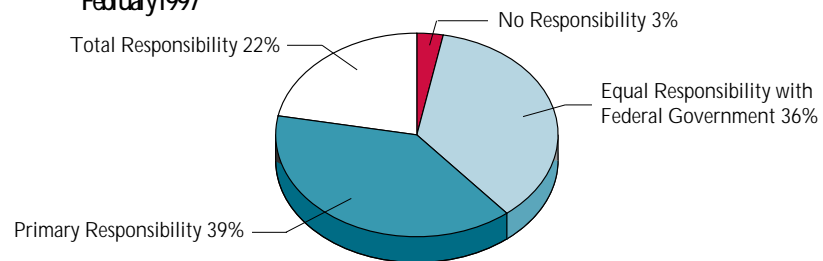
– Mark Hume, *Vancouver Sun*,
March 16, 1995

Summary of Results Public Opinion Research on Fisheries Issues March 1997

In February-March 1997, BC Fisheries Secretariat funded a public opinion research program on issues relevant to the B.C. fishery. The survey consisted of a 25-minute telephone questionnaire conducted with 703 B.C. residents and is considered accurate within plus-minus 3.7%, 19 times out of 20. The following are highlights of the survey results:

- ▲ Poll results indicate clearly that the public's first priority is to protect fish.
- ▲ The B.C. salmon fishery is viewed as being in the worst condition of all B.C.'s major natural resources.
- ▲ There is overwhelming support for tough actions to clean up water pollution.
- ▲ People continue to think B.C.'s fish are in deep trouble. 51% believe drastic measures are needed while 41% think only better management is needed.
- ▲ There is overwhelming support (97%) for B.C. to have an equal or greater role than the federal government in managing B.C.'s fisheries. 36% believe B.C. should have equal responsibility, 39% favour primary responsibility and 22% support total responsibility for B.C.

Figure 2: Responsibility of the B.C. Government for the Salmon Fishery February 1997



- ▲ Strong support exists for the directions B.C. is proposing to renew the fishery — especially regulations and enforcement to protect fish.
- ▲ An overwhelming majority (52%) believe that B.C.'s highest priority should be protecting and restoring salmon habitat.
- ▲ Large majorities strongly or somewhat support all proposed B.C. measures to protect the salmon fishery, including *Fish Protection* and *Fisheries Renewal BC* legislation.
- ▲ Proposed changes to the 'Mifflin Plan' and key elements B.C. is pursuing in the Canada-B.C. MoU roles and responsibility negotiations are strongly supported. These include a B.C.-based allocation mechanism (89% strongly or somewhat support), formal B.C. stakeholder representation in the federal salmon stock assessment process (88%), establishing a conservation council to act as a watchdog body (85%), and involving those affected in fisheries management decisions (90%).

Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues

B.C. is committed to a new partnership with the federal government in the management of the Pacific fishery for the future. This partnership will build on our mutual recognition that change is necessary in this important sector and that the B.C. government and provincial stakeholders should have an enhanced role in the management of the fishery.

On April 16, 1997, Prime Minister Jean Chretien and B.C. Premier Glen Clark signed a *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* which will form the basis for this new partnership.

“Somebody has to look after the fish. Canadians are sick of the endless squabbling over salmon.”

– John Fraser,
Fraser River Review Board

Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues

Highlights

With the signature of the *Canada-B.C. Agreement on the Management of Pacific Salmon Fishery Issues* on April 16, 1997, B.C. has achieved a historic new role which will provide:

AN ENHANCED ROLE IN THE MANAGEMENT OF THE FISHERY THROUGH...

- ▲ Federal government recognition that the government of British Columbia will assume an enhanced role in the management of the fishery;
- ▲ A *Canada-B.C. Council of Fisheries Ministers* will be established to jointly review and co-ordinate all policy initiatives in the Pacific salmon fishery;
- ▲ B.C. agrees to work co-operatively with Canada to re-build an improved, effective consultative system that will actively involve fishery stakeholders and communities in advice and decision-making;
- ▲ B.C. and Canada will establish policy and processes for salmon allocation along with possible mechanisms for allocation decision-making;
- ▲ A federal-provincial *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* will be established after consultation with stakeholders;

...continued

Canada-B.C. Agreement Highlights — Continued...

- ▲ B.C. assumes direct involvement on the scientific assessment panel reviewing salmon stocks;
- ▲ Federal government agrees to pursue stronger co-ordination of fisheries programs with B.C. through a *Fisheries Renewal Advisory Board*.

MORE INVOLVEMENT OF B.C. STAKEHOLDERS AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH...

- ▲ An improved stakeholder consultative process that will actively involve stakeholders and communities in fisheries decision-making;
- ▲ A new advisory process to the *Canada-B.C. Council of Fisheries Ministers* that will have a direct role in developing major new policy initiatives and resolving any disagreements between both governments on matters of policy;
- ▲ Participation in a federal-provincial *Fisheries Renewal Advisory Board* which will provide stakeholders with a direct role in directing government expenditures on habitat protection, restoration and salmonid enhancement and on-going role in developing programs for industry and community development;
- ▲ Advice on the formation and mandate of the new federal-provincial *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council*.

STRONGER FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL COMMITMENT TO PROTECTING FISH STOCKS AND HABITAT RESTORATION AND PROTECTION THROUGH...

- ▲ commitment by B.C. and Canada to provide \$15 million each of new funding over three years to habitat and enhancement initiatives;
- ▲ commitment to strengthen federal-provincial habitat protection legislation;
- ▲ development of a new *Habitat Protection and Fisheries Enforcement Agreement* that will improve co-ordination between federal and provincial field officers and focus resources on the areas of highest need in support of sustainable fisheries;
- ▲ agreement to more actively involve communities and First Nations in resource protection activities in order to re-inforce and supplement government's enforcement capacity.

...continued

Canada-B.C. Agreement Highlights — Continued...

STREAMLINED BUREAUCRACY BY REDUCING DUPLICATION AND OVERLAP AND IMPROVING SERVICE TO CLIENTS THROUGH...

- ▲ A new federal-provincial *Habitat Protection and Fisheries Enforcement Agreement* to streamline and co-ordinate workloads between federal and provincial fisheries protection officers in the field and target resources to highest priorities;
- ▲ For the first time, a federal commitment to B.C.'s '*Fisheries Renewal*' approach to work toward a "single window" for federal-provincial habitat restoration and protection programs.

GREATER ACCOUNTABILITY TO THE PUBLIC IN THE MANAGEMENT OF A PUBLIC RESOURCE THROUGH...

- ▲ Creation of a federal-provincial *Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council* with a mandate to report publicly on the state of salmon resources and habitat;
- ▲ Direct stakeholder involvement in federal scientific salmon review processes;
- ▲ More comprehensive, shared and publicly-accessible information on the state of fisheries stocks and their habitats.

BETTER WORKING RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN THE FEDERAL-PROVINCIAL GOVERNMENTS IN THE INTEREST OF SUSTAINABLE FISHERIES, JOBS AND COMMUNITIES THROUGH...

- ▲ The *Canada-B.C. Council of Fisheries Ministers* to co-ordinate and review policy initiatives — as well as a process that will actively involve stakeholders to resolve disagreements;
- ▲ Endorsement of a '*Fisheries Renewal*' approach to program co-ordination and stakeholder involvement in direction;
- ▲ More effective working relationships in the field through worksharing protocols and by reduction of duplication and overlap.

“The resource is now, more than ever before, critically endangered. . . The consequences of inaction can be severe. . . Now is the time to realign the game pieces and establish relationships among the players to make the system workable.”

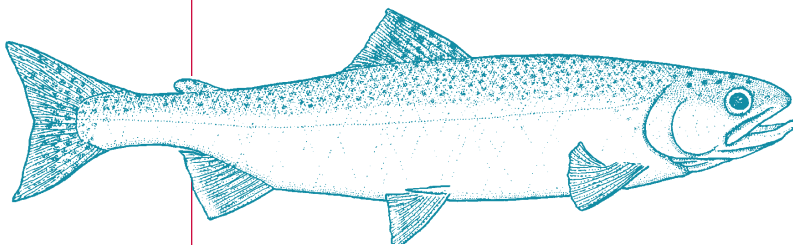
– Fraser River Sockeye 1994 —
 Problems and Discrepancies
 Fraser River Sockeye
 Public Review Board report, 1994

Change within the Constitutional Framework

British Columbia is optimistic about the future of the fishery, and is eager to work in a new partnership with the Government of Canada, First Nations, stakeholders and communities to begin the renewal process based on a shared vision and a comprehensive strategy. We believe that the fishery crisis provides a showcase opportunity for cooperative and flexible federalism, demonstrating that working together can yield better solutions, and avoid the need for Constitutional reform.

Aboriginal rights are recognized and affirmed in Section 35 (1) of Canada’s *Constitution Act* of 1982. With respect to fisheries, the federal government carries the major responsibility for working with First Nations to ensure these rights are recognized and affirmed. B.C. recognizes these rights and the role of the federal government, and remains committed to meeting its legal requirements with respect to these rights. Decisions and initiatives proposed in the *BC Fisheries Strategy* are without prejudice to aboriginal rights and treaty negotiations.

B.C.’s aim is not simply to transfer power from Ottawa to Victoria. Instead, we wish to improve cooperation and coordination on fisheries management by working in partnership with the federal government to bring decision-making closer to the First Nations, stakeholders and communities who depend on the resource for their livelihoods. The *BC Fisheries Strategy* proposes a number of new mechanisms that can be developed in partnership with stakeholders to accomplish this.



5. CONCLUSION

Sustainable Fish, Jobs and Communities

For the past century and more, Canada's West Coast salmon have managed to survive the lack of a comprehensive, shared vision to ensure their future. With both the salmon resource and the West Coast fishery in crisis, the time for change has arrived.

We need leadership in developing a long-term sustainable fishery in B.C. and a shared vision that our fishery is a sunrise industry — not a sunset industry. We need a vision that follows a path to a bright future — for healthy fish and secure jobs in our coastal communities.

The provincial government is providing that vision and leadership through the *BC Fisheries Strategy*. It defines what British Columbians want and expect in terms of resource management. It is based on the principles of:

- ▲ conservation first;
- ▲ shared responsibility for the sustainability of the resource;
- ▲ accountability to stakeholders;
- ▲ development of value-added opportunities that create more jobs from each fish harvested, to reduce pressure on the resource.

The changes we propose will lead to renewed and sustainable fish stocks and habitat — stable and secure employment — and vibrant coastal communities with a strong voice in fisheries decision-making. The result will be a healthy and thriving salmon resource that continues to be a foundation of British Columbia's economy for the future.

“My government intends as well to ensure a future for the Pacific salmon — a resource that has nourished countless generations among B.C.'s First Nations and coastal communities. Our single most important priority must be the conservation of this resource. Our fisheries not only support coastal communities reliant on commercial fishing, but also generate jobs and economic activity in our huge recreational fishery, which is a major element of our tourism industry.”

– Speech from the Throne
Opening of the Second Session,
Thirty-Sixth Parliament of the
Province of British Columbia
March 24, 1997

“What do we as citizens want from the fish resource? First, we want the best economic value for Canadians while preserving the natural resource. Secondly, we want maximum employment and local economic activity so the dollars derived from the fish are spread as widely as possible. Thirdly, we want the opportunity for British Columbians to be able to appreciate and protect the recreational potential of our fish.”

– Erik Lund
Letter to the Editor,
Victoria Times Colonist,
February 2, 1997

WE WANT TO HEAR FROM YOU.

The B.C. government wants to work actively with all stakeholders — not just a select few.

Your opinion on the *BC Fisheries Strategy* is valuable to us.

If you have comments on the *BC Fisheries Strategy*, please fill out and return the attached

Reader Response form by **June 30, 1997**.

BC Fisheries Strategy — Discussion Paper Reader Response

1. The Province of British Columbia is taking a bigger role in fisheries management. What are the priority areas we should concentrate on?

2. How can the Province best show leadership in moving toward a shared vision for the future, with less division among fisheries stakeholders?

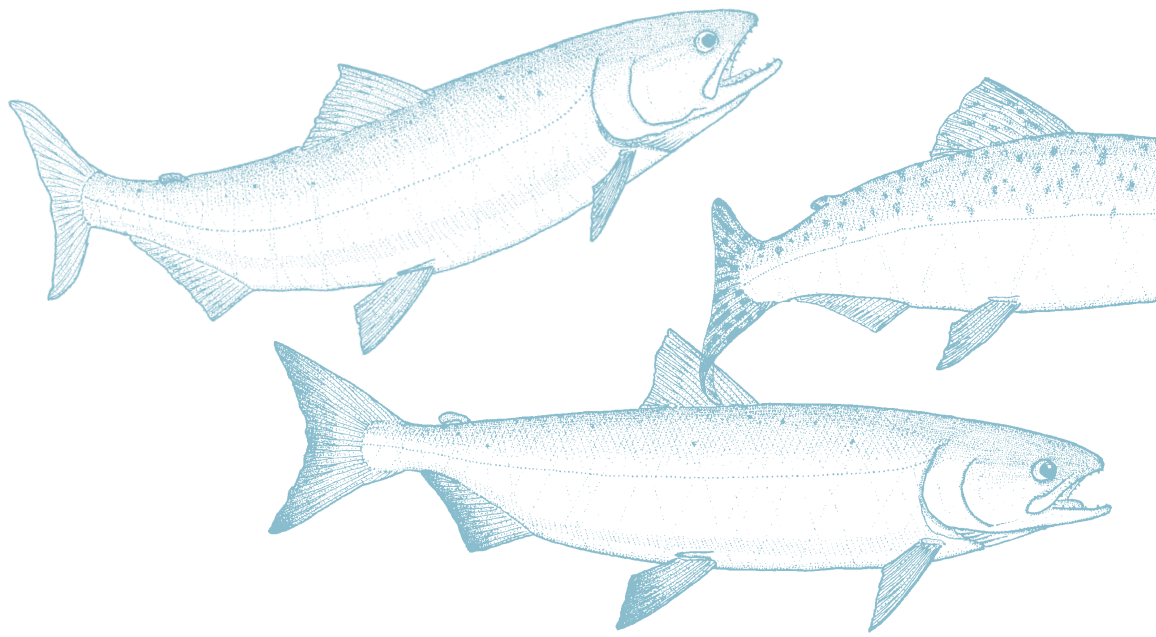
3. How can we realistically involve British Columbians, stakeholders, and communities in fishery decision-making?

4. What new mechanisms for consultation should we explore?

5. Do you have other comments or suggestions on the *BC Fisheries Strategy*?

Deadline: June 30, 1997

Mail to: BC Fisheries Secretariat
PO Box 9119
Stn Prov Govt
Victoria, BC
V8W 9B3
Fax to: (250) 387-3291



“British Columbia does not see the fishery as a sunset industry. Indeed, we are excited about the potential it holds to build on the historic role it has played in our culture and in our economy.”

—Premier Glen Clark, May 8, 1996

