



Islands Trust

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August 1, 2019

File No.: 5020-30; 400-30

Via Email: mayorandcouncil@bimbc.ca

Bowen Island Municipal Council
Bowen Island Municipality
981 Artisan Lane
Bowen Island BC V0N 1G2

Dear Mayor and Council:

Re: Regional Cooperation for a Moratorium on the Pacific Herring Fishery in the Salish Sea

I am writing on behalf of the Islands Trust Council to invite Bowen Island Municipality to co-sign a letter to Minister Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard (Attachment 1) calling for a moratorium on the herring fishery in the Salish Sea. The proposed moratorium would last until an ecosystem-based management plan is put in place that considers the current and future effects of climate change and the potential impact of the fisheries on predatory species, in particular Chinook salmon and the southern resident killer whales. The Islands Trust has written to all First Nation's in the Trust Area requesting support by co-signing a letter to the Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson, Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard.

Islands Trust Council is concerned with Pacific herring management issues since the Pacific herring are a keystone species in the food web of the Salish Sea and play a critical role in the functioning of the regions ecosystems. Currently, there is an annual removal of 20% of the Pacific herring population and this action may not support the needs of predator species, especially when populations are trying to recover. There is insufficient information available regarding appropriate conservation limits for Pacific herring based on ecosystem considerations, let alone within the context of the cumulative effects of climate change.

In addition, this forage fish forms one of the foundational species for language, and cultural and spiritual understanding for the Coast Salish Peoples who have resided within this landscape since time immemorial. The health of the Salish Sea and its complex food webs are too crucial to risk. That is why Islands Trust wants to collaborate with all levels of government -- First Nations, local governments, and federal and provincial agencies -- to protect the Pacific herring from the potentially devastating impacts of the fishing industry.

This forage fish is a vital part of the ecosystem and its continued removal has an impact that needs to be studied and understood fully. I am asking for Bowen Island Municipality's support in joining the Islands Trust, and any interested First Nations in the region, to call on the Government of Canada to put in place a moratorium on the herring fishery in the Salish Sea.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

cc: Islands Trust Council
Islands Trust website

Preserving **Island** communities, culture and environment

Bowen Denman Hornby Gabriola Galiano Gambier Lasqueti Mayne North Pender Salt Spring Saturna South Pender Thetis

ATTACHMENT 1



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XXXX XX, 2019

File Number: 5020-30 Fisheries-Herring

DRAFT for review and comment

via e-mail: jonathan.wilkinson@parl.gc.ca

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and the Canadian Coast Guard
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Wilkinson:

Re: Moratorium on the Herring Fishery in the Salish Sea

We are writing to request that you place a moratorium on the herring fishery in the Salish Sea until an ecosystem-based management plan is in place that considers the current and future effects of climate change and the potential impacts of the fishery on predator species, in particular, Chinook Salmon and Southern Resident killer whales. We are asking for this preventative action to ensure we are being precautionary in our management of herring, a keystone species in the Salish Sea.

We are concerned with herring management issues because Pacific herring are foundational to the food web of the Salish Sea. Herring play a critical role in the functioning of the ecosystem. Pacific herring are the dominant forage fish in the Salish Sea and a vital food source for species of seabirds, and for many species of fish; including Chinook salmon, which in turn, is the main food source of the Southern Resident killer whales. As well, herring are a fundamental part of the marine food web for Coast Salish peoples who have resided within this landscape since time immemorial.

We are concerned that the annual removal of 20% of the herring population may not support the needs of predator species, especially as populations struggle to recover. We note that your mandate letter includes the direction to “use scientific evidence, traditional Indigenous knowledge, and the precautionary principle, and take into account climate change, when making decisions affecting fish stocks and ecosystem management”. We question whether there is sufficient scientific evidence available on the population, habitat, and ecosystem, and the fishery dynamics of the BC Pacific Herring to support current management decisions. We are not aware of information being available about appropriate conservation limits for Pacific Herring based on ecosystem considerations in the context and cumulative effects of climate change.

We ask for your leadership to protect one of the foundational species – the BC Pacific herring - for language, cultural, and spiritual understanding of this area of the Salish Sea for First Nations, and conversely for all British Columbians and Canadians. A moratorium is needed until ecosystem based management plans are developed for the herring fishery that consider community and the pivotal role this species plays in the vitality and health of this region. The health of the Salish Sea and its complex food webs are too crucial to risk. Collaboration with all levels

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of government from First Nations, local government, federal and provincial agencies to protect the herring from fisheries impacts is vital in this time of climate change. We ask for your support in enacting initiatives and policies that would put this moratorium in place until these management plans, and herring health and sustainability as a keystone species is determined.

Thank you for considering this matter.

Yours sincerely,

Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

ADDITIONAL SIGNATORIES HERE

cc: Islands Trust Area MPs
BOKÉCEN (Pauquachin) First Nation
Cowichan Tribes
Halalt First Nation
Homalco First Nation
Klahoose First Nation
K'ómoks First Nation
Lake Cowichan First Nation
Lekwungen (Songhees) Nation
Lyackson First Nation
MÁLEXEL (Malahat) Nation
Penelakut Tribe
Qualicum First Nation
Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation
SEMYOME (Semiahmoo) First Nation
shíshálh First Nation
Snuneymuxw First Nation
Skw̓wú7mesh (Squamish) Nation
Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation
SṪÁUTW (Tsawout) First Nation
Stz'uminus First Nation
SXIMEŁŁ (Esquimalt) Nation
Tla'amin (Sliammon) Nation
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tseil-Waututh Nation
T'Sou-ke Nation
Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River) First Nation
We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge) First Nation
WJOLELP (Tsartlip) First Nation
WSIKEM (Tseycum) First Nation
xʷməθkʷəy̓əm Musqueam
First Nations Leadership Council
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
Laich-kwil-tach Treaty Society
Nanwakolas Council
Naut'sa mawt Tribal
Te'mexw Treaty Association
Bowen Island Municipal Council
Capital Regional District
Comox Valley Regional District
Metro Vancouver Regional District
qathet Regional District
Cowichan Valley Regional District
Area B – Regional District Nanaimo
Sunshine Coast Regional District
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