



December 16th, 2020

Honourable Bernadette Jordan
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Minister's Office
200 Kent Street, Station 15N100
Ottawa, Ontario, K1A 0E6
min@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Dear Honourable Jordan,

On December 11th, 2020 the Board of the North Coast Regional District (NCRD) received correspondence from Fisheries for Communities titled 'A Call to Coastal Communities: Take Back Your Fishery'. For your convenience, the letter has been attached to this correspondence. Within this letter are several recommendations that were made based on a 2019 report by the House of Commons Fisheries Committee.

The Board of the NCRD resolved to submit correspondence requesting that the Department of Fisheries and Oceans Canada formally respond to the recommendations outlined in the letter from the Fisheries for Communities, based on the report by the House of Commons Fisheries Committee.

Sincerely,

Barry Pages

Chair

Attach: Correspondence from Fisheries for Communities "A Call to Coastal Communities and Request for Support"

*Cc: Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (info@rdks.bc.ca)
Central Coast Regional District (info@ccrd-bc.ca)
Regional District of Mount Waddington (info@rdmw.bc.ca)
Strathcona Regional District (administration@srd.ca)
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (mailbox@acrd.bc.ca)
Cowichan Valley Regional District (reception@cvrld.bc.ca)
Capital Regional District (crdreception@crd.bc.ca)
Regional District of Nanaimo (inquiries@rdn.bc.ca)
Comox Valley Regional District (administration@comoxvalleyrd.ca)
Qathet Regional District (administration@qather.ca)
Sunshine Coast Regional District (info@scrd.ca)
Metro-Vancouver Regional District (icentre@metrovancouver.org)*



14, 342 3rd Avenue West
Prince Rupert BC, V8J 1L5



P: 250.624.2002
TF: 888.301.2002



W: www.ncrdbc.com
F: 250.627.8493



December 16th, 2020

Honourable John Horgan
Premier of British Columbia
PO Box 9041 STN PROV GOVT
Victoria, BC, V8W 9E1
premier@gov.bc.ca

Dear Honourable Horgan,

On December 11th, 2020 the Board of the North Coast Regional District (NCRD) received **correspondence from Fisheries for Communities titled 'A Call to Coastal Communities: Take Back Your Fishery'. For your convenience, the letter** has been attached to this correspondence. Within this letter are several recommendations that were made based on a 2019 report by the House of Commons Fisheries Committee.

The Board of the NCRD resolved to submit correspondence requesting that the Province of British Columbia formally respond to the recommendations outlined in the letter from Fisheries for Communities, based on the report by the House of Commons Fisheries Committee.

Sincerely,

Barry Pages

Chair

Attach: Correspondence from Fisheries for Communities "A Call to Coastal Communities and Request for Support"

*Cc: Regional District of Kitimat-Stikine (info@rdks.bc.ca)
Central Coast Regional District (info@ccrd-bc.ca)
Regional District of Mount Waddington (info@rdmw.bc.ca)
Strathcona Regional District (administration@srd.ca)
Alberni-Clayoquot Regional District (mailbox@acrd.bc.ca)
Cowichan Valley Regional District (reception@cvrld.bc.ca)
Capital Regional District (crdreception@crd.bc.ca)
Regional District of Nanaimo (inquiries@rdn.bc.ca)
Comox Valley Regional District (administration@comoxvalleyrd.ca)
Qathet Regional District (administration@qather.ca)
Sunshine Coast Regional District (info@scrd.ca)
Metro-Vancouver Regional District (icentre@metrovancover.org)*



14, 342 3rd Avenue West
Prince Rupert BC, V8J 1L5



P: 250.624.2002
TF: 888.301.2002



W: www.ncrdbc.com
F: 250.627.8493

A Call to Coastal Communities **Take Back Your Fishery**

From

The Fisheries for Communities Network

For the coastal communities and First Nations of British Columbia, commercial fishing from adjacent waters has for many generations been a source of productive livelihoods, family incomes, healthy food supplies, social connectedness, and cultural vitality.

But over the past 25 years, the coast has watched these values ebb away as remote companies and non-fishing investors consolidate control over licenses and quotas.

Too many working fishermen now operate as sharecroppers, fishing for a fraction of the value they produce just to keep going to sea.

The wealth of the fishery is drained away from the coast, and with it go future careers for young people and the sustainability of coastal communities.

The major downsizing of the salmon and herring industries happened in the 1990s, but the decline in BC fisheries overall have continued since then despite **more stable landings and rising product values**. Since 2000 the number of people earning employment income in fish harvesting in British Columbia fell 27%, from over 7,000 in 2000 to just 5,300 in 2018. That has meant a loss of \$32 m in employment earnings flowing through fishing communities.

At around \$22K in 2018, average annual fishing incomes for BC harvesters are the lowest in Canada and grew by only 8% (after inflation) over the previous 18 years. In Atlantic Canada, fishing incomes on average are 50% higher than in BC and grew by 70% over the period.

The decline of community-based fisheries in BC stems in large part from federal government policy. In BC, processing companies and speculative investors can own licenses and quotas and lease them to harvesters to control fish prices and make money off the rents. Speculative investors have driven up license and quota prices beyond the financial reach of working fishermen, and many harvesters must lease licenses or quota at high rents to sustain their enterprises, becoming sharecroppers. In BC there are limited adjacency rules to tie licenses and quota to home communities, or even to the Province.

Under a very different DFO policy regime in Atlantic Canada, only qualified harvesters are allowed to own fishing licences or quota in “inshore” fisheries where 90% of landed value is generated, and leasing of licenses and quotas is not allowed – licenses are fished by their owners, one harvester – one license or quota. Strict adjacency rules tie ownership of licenses & quotas to home regions and communities.

In 2019 the House of Commons Fisheries (“FOPO”) Committee looked at this comparison, and at the poor economic performance of the BC fishery, and put out a report titled “West Coast Fisheries: Sharing Risks and Benefits”, with the following conclusion.

As the status quo is not economically and socially sustainable, the committee calls on DFO to facilitate, foster and implement grassroots initiatives for change within each fishery that have gained the support from most of that fishery's participants. The committee is convinced that a successful transition toward a more equitable quota licencing regime must be "made-in-British Columbia" and supported by all participants, including vessel/licence owners, active fish harvesters, processors, and First Nation and non-First Nation coastal communities.

The FOPO report called on the DFO Minister to undertake a full review of licensing policy in BC to address the poor economic performance and unequal distribution of benefits from BC fisheries. To date, the DFO Minister shows no signs of initiating such a review.

The Wild Salmon Advisory Council established by Premier Horgan in BC made a full report in 2019 that also endorsed a review of the performance of the BC commercial fishery and recommended expansion of BC government capacities to support sustainable commercial fisheries renewal. To date the Province has not conveyed its support for the FOPO Report to the federal government nor has it undertaken to expand its own support and leadership capacity in commercial fisheries.

The Fishers for Communities Gathering in February 2020 – with over 120 participants with diverse interests including indigenous and non-indigenous harvesters, First Nations leaders, civil society groups, academia, and more – **reached consensus on these demands:**

That the Federal Government needs to formally respond to and act on the recommendations of the May 2019 FOPO Report including:

- developing a new policy framework through authentic and transparent engagement
- establishing an independent commission, to look at new licencing policy options.

That the Province of BC must become a real partner with the Federal Government to achieve needed changes in BC fisheries, starting with establishing a Provincial Ministry for Fisheries.

And that the following recommendations from the FOPO report are especially critical and should be acted on immediately as a starting point for recapturing a fairer share of the wealth of our marine environment to benefit coastal communities, First Nations, and working harvesters:

- Stopping future sales of quotas and licences to non-Canadians.
- Support independent fish harvester ownership of licences and quotas.
- Regulation of leasing costs
- Transparency of the real beneficial ownership of quotas and licences.

The Fisheries for Communities Coalition is now reaching out to leaders and lead organizations in coastal communities and First Nations to endorse these demands and convey your support for them to the Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, Bernadette Jordan, and to Premier Horgan in BC, so we can begin the much needed process of ensuring that the value and benefits of BC fisheries flow back to adjacent BC communities and First Nations.

Please consider voicing your support by sending a letter endorsing the above stated demands to the following elected officials:

BC Premier John Horgan, Premier@gov.bc.ca

Federal Fisheries Minister Bernadette Jordan, Bernadette.JordanC1@parl.gc.ca

And cc:

Timothy Sargent, Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada, timothy.sargent@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Jennifer Phillips, Policy Advisor, Pacific Region, jennifer.phillips@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Ken McDonald, MP, FOPO member, ken.mcdonald.P9@parl.gc.ca

Mel Arnold, MP, FOPO member, mel.arnold.P9@parl.gc.ca

Marilene Gill, MP, FOPO member, marilene.gill.P9@parl.gc.ca

Ken Hardie, MP, FOPO member, ken.hardie.P9@parl.gc.ca

Richard Bragdon, MP, FOPO member, richard.bragdon.P9@parl.gc.ca

Gord Johns, MP, FOPO member, gord.johns.P9@parl.gc.ca

Terry Beech, MP, Parliamentary Secretary, terry.beech.P9@parl.gc.ca

Geoff Meggs, Chief of Staff to the Premier, geoff.meggs@gov.bc.ca

Thank you or your consideration.

Sincerely,

Fisheries for Communities Network

<https://www.fisheriesforcommunities.org/>