

Ministry of Agriculture
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 187930

Date: March 8, 2018

Title: Canada-United States Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) negotiations.

Issue: Update on the status of current negotiations under the PST to renew chapters which expire in 2018.

Background:

- The Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) was the first bilateral salmon agreement that addresses the range of salmon interceptions on a coast-wide basis. It provides a forum for the countries to meet and develop coordinated fisheries management plans to achieve the objectives of the PST – conservation and sharing.
- Wild Pacific salmon are of great social and economic importance to British Columbia, sustaining communities' coast wide, generating a wholesale value of \$207 million in 2016. New data indicate that these fish generate \$4.8 Billion to the economy of Canada and the U.S. over the 2012 to 2015 period (over \$1B to B.C.). Commercial and recreational salmon fisheries provide significant economic and social benefits to B.C. The commercial salmon fleet includes 1,809 licences, while 228,162 (in 2010) recreational saltwater anglers are licensed.
- The Province has participated in the Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) process since the PST was signed in 1985. Since 2001, the Province has had a Commissioner representing its interests with Mr. Paul Sprout currently appointed as “BC’s” Commissioner.
- Most chapters are re-negotiated on a 10-year cycle and Canadian and U.S. representatives through the PSC process with potential negotiation of renewal of five chapters under Annex IV of the Treaty that expire December 31, 2018. These chapters are critical to the functioning of the Treaty as they set out the specific conservation and harvest sharing arrangements for Canadian and US salmon stocks and fisheries, subject to the Treaty.
- The Chinook Chapter (Chapter 3) is the most complex and difficult, due to the biology, and lifecycle of chinook, and the elaborate system in place in both countries to manage them.
- Complicating this are the uncertainties at play due to coastwide impacts of climate change, reduced marine survival, low abundance of most stocks, (potential SARA listing), and the need to protect chinook as primary prey species for SARA-listed Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW).
- B.C. through its Commissioner, participates directly as part of Canada’s negotiating team as the Parties continue to renegotiate.
- Canada has signalled to the US that we are now essentially at an impasse, if cuts to harvest are expected to be taken only in B.C. waters. It is not prepared to sign a deal that is not beneficial to Canada.

First Nations Considerations: Consultations with First Nations regarding international agreements are the responsibility of Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). BC First Nations are actively involved in the PSC, as Commissioners and on panels and committees. B.C. First Nations have a long history of involvement in commercial fisheries and in fish processing – about 31 percent of all commercial fishing jobs (including processing) are held by B.C.’s Indigenous people.

Discussion/ Current Status:

s.13,s.16

Next Steps:

- Given the current status, Canada is undertaking outreach with U.S. officials (e.g. State Department, NOAA, representatives at the State level) to:

¹ Chapter 4 (Fraser sockeye and pink salmon) expires December 31, 2019 and substantive negotiations will begin later this year.

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Appendix A - Key Outstanding Negotiation Issues
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s.16;s.13