

**Ministry of Agriculture**  
**BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION**

**DRAFT**

Ref: 188XXX

X-Ref 187930

Date: April 4, 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

- The Canada/US Pacific Salmon Treaty (PST) when first signed in 1985, (it followed from the previous International Pacific Salmon Fisheries Commission), was intended to prevent overfishing, and to ensure fair sharing of the harvest between the two parties. Consistent with the United Nations Convention on the Law of the Sea, the PST recognizes that the country which produces salmon in its rivers, has primary interest in and responsibility for those stocks.
- Formed under the PST, The Pacific Salmon Commission (PSC) is an international decision-making organization, composed of four Commissioners (and four alternates) from the United States and Canada. This body handles ongoing administration of the PST through advice from four regional Panels of fisheries experts. Scientific advice on salmon populations and appropriate fishery controls comes from several joint technical committees of salmon scientists from each country. Details can be found at <http://www.psc.org/>

**BC Context**

- Commercial and recreational salmon fisheries provide significant economic and social benefits to B.C. Wild Pacific salmon generated 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.). The commercial salmon fleet includes 1,809 licences, while 228,162 (in 2010) recreational saltwater anglers are licensed.
- B.C. has participated in PSC process since the PST was signed. Starting in 2001, the Province has had a Commissioner representing its interests with Mr. Paul Sprout currently appointed as “BC’s” Commissioner.
- Most chapters of the PST were renewed for 10-years during the last major renegotiations, in May, 2008. Those fishing regimes are in force from the beginning of 2009 to the end of 2018 and are contained in Chapters 1, 2, 3, 5, and 6 of Annex IV of the Treaty.
- Canadian and U.S. representatives, through the PSC process, are currently negotiating to renew the chapters under Annex IV of the PST that expire December 31, 2018. These chapters are critical to the functioning of the PST as they set out the specific conservation and harvest sharing arrangements for Canadian and US salmon stocks and fisheries, in waters 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 had signalled to the US in March 2018 that the Parties were 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.

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