

Ministry of Agriculture
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION FOR MEETING WITH
CRAIG DANIELL, CEO, BCSPCA

Ref: 189003

Date: October 12, 2018

Title: Minister's meeting with the BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals (BCSPCA).

Issue: The BCSPCA has requested a meeting with the Minister to discuss BCSPCA priorities.

Background: On October 18, 2018, the Minister will be meeting with BCSPCA representatives: Craig Daniell, CEO; Marcie Moriarty, Chief Prevention & Enforcement Officer; and Melinda Mennie, Stakeholder Relations Officer. The discussion topics proposed by the BCSPCA include:

- Update on the BCSPCA Facilities Development and Services Plan
 - Update on current activities
 - Presentation to Standing Committee on Finance
 - Request to Government for third round of funding
- Emergency response
 - Update on BCSPCA activities over summer and next steps
- Dog and Cat Breeder Regulations
 - Seek update on status
- Code of Practices: incorporation into regulation under the *Prevention of Cruelty to Animals Act* (PCAA)
 - Seek update on current status

Discussion: The following update covers the issues identified by the BCSPCA; issues raised about the BCSPCA during the Ministry of Agriculture's industry consultations; and proposed Ministry solutions.

BCSPCA Facilities Development and Services Plan

The Province provided funding to the BCSPCA to support the BCSPCA Facilities Development and Services Plan as follows:

- \$5 million in 2015 and a further \$5 million in 2017 to help replace/renovate aging BCSPCA facilities in BC communities (Vancouver, Nanaimo, Kamloops, Kelowna, Prince George, Dawson Creek and the Kootenays).
- \$100,000 grant in 2011 to defray costs of investigating sled dog cruelty allegations
- \$250,000 grant in 2010/2011 from the BC Gaming Commission for spay/neuter programs
- The Province also sponsored Crown leases for many of BCSPCA's facilities

Emergency Management:

- The Ministry of Agriculture provides support to agricultural producers and local governments during emergencies that impact the agricultural sector
- The Ministry serves as lead provincial agency for agricultural plant and animal disease emergencies and works in partnership with the federal lead, the Canadian Food Inspection Agency, in planning/response
- The Ministry provides relocation and feeding support and assistance of commercial livestock during emergency incidents but does not have a mandate to support impacted pets and hobby farm animals:
 - Local governments are responsible for addressing impacts to pets and hobby farm animals within their area of jurisdiction during an emergency
 - Local governments may seek assistance from the BCSPCA and other animal welfare organizations
- The Ministry appreciates the BCSPCA's support in assisting with impacted pets and hobby farm animals

- The Ministry recently established a Director of Emergency Management position and the Director is available to meet and discuss emergency preparedness/response in detail with the BCSPCA, if desired

Dog and Cat Breeding Registration System:

- The final round of Ministry consultations took place in the spring of 2018 to inform the development of the new regulatory framework

Results: A five-pronged approach to regulation:

- Education and Awareness: Leading implementation with strong industry and public education and awareness, with implementation of penalties over time
- Registration: Requiring mandatory registration and requiring use of a registration number for all sales including advertising
- Standards of Care: Mandatory BC standards of care (built from Canadian Veterinary Medical Association Codes of Practice for kennels and catteries)
- Inspection: Some degree of mandatory inspection with penalties for non-compliance (for both registration and standards of care), starting with complaint-based to build database for mandatory inspection/schedule
- Funding: Funding is required to 1) develop the online registration system, and 2) ongoing administration/implementation of the new system including education/awareness, inspections and enforcement
- The Ministry is proposing clear, established roles and responsibilities through protocols and procedures with BCSPCA, to ensure the Province's goals and objectives are met. These will be developed with the BCSPCA and are expected to include:
 - Memorandum of Understanding (MOU) of accountabilities and deliverables tied to funding and reporting in the administration of the new registration system; and,
 - MOU of BC government expectations for compliance and enforcement
- The Ministry understands BCSPCA expressed interest in serving as the designated agency for the registration system. Further Ministry discussion with BCSPCA is required to:
 - Confirm with BCSPCA the Ministry's five-pronged approach
 - Formally share with BCSPCA government expectations for the designated agency, which could potentially impact BCSPCA's fundraising strategies
 - Address issues and concerns raised about BCSPCA by industry stakeholders to build trust in the industry prior to confirming BCSPCA as the designated agency
- Ministry discussion with BCSPCA will help confirm whether the Province wishes to explore BCSPCA as the designated agency, and whether BCSPCA remains interested, given new accountabilities and expectations to be contained in an MOU

Building Livestock and Farm Animal Codes of Practice in Regulation:

- Ministry consultations took place from July-September 2018 with 20 livestock/farm animal associations and representatives of the BCSPCA, RCMP and Ag-Safe BC (See Appendix A for list of stakeholders)
- The Ministry wanted to ensure strong stakeholder understanding of the purpose for building the Codes into regulation: to support industry use of generally accepted livestock and farm animal management practices and withstand legal challenge when following the Codes
- The Ministry understood from early outreach to the BC Agriculture Council that some industry associations would be concerned BCSPCA would use the Codes as a further enforcement tool under the PCAA (i.e., in addition to animal distress)
- The Ministry wished to:
 - Share information and understand the readiness of each sector for the Codes (i.e., are the sectors currently aware of/ using the generally accepted management practices in the Codes)
 - Identify issues/concerns for industry

- Determine what actions the Ministry can take to effectively support industry, including dialogue between industry and the BCSPCA
- Confirm Code purpose and expectations with BCSPCA

Results:

- The livestock and farm animal industry is supportive of the Ministry building the Codes into regulation but raised several issues with BCSPCA that have been concerns for many years

Industry Concerns with BCSPCA:

Ministry staff previously briefed the Minister on common themes from industry concerning the BCSPCA's role and approach to enforcement. This includes BCSPCA enforcement officers' limited knowledge of dog and cat breeding care and farm animal management. It also includes BCSPCA's fundraising techniques that shine a light on irresponsible operators whose animal management practices are not acceptable or in line with the rest of the industry. BCSPCA has not been fully informed of the negative perceptions and findings from both consultations.

The Ministry is currently developing an approach to improved relations between BCSPCA and industry that will start with sharing with BCSPCA what the Ministry heard during consultations. With a goal to support a positive and proactive approach, the Ministry will work with BCSPCA and industry associations to host a facilitated meeting on the Codes and the needs of all stakeholders. A similar approach will be taken with BCSPCA and the dog and cat breeding industry, to ensure strong implementation. These efforts are part of a larger approach to repairing the relationships and fostering an environment of trust, mutual understanding and collaboration between BCSPCA and agriculture stakeholders.

There is also a need for the Ministry to clarify its expectations of BCSPCA enforcement under the PCAA, to ensure successful implementation of the Province's animal welfare initiatives.

Suggested Response:

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Contact: Lorie Hrycuik, Corporate Governance Policy and Legislation - 778 974 3766

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Appendix A

List of Stakeholders from Codes of Practice Consultation

- BC Association of Cattle Feeders
- BC Cattlemen's Association
- BC Breeders and Feeders Association
- BC Bison Association
- BC Horse Council
- BC Sheep Federation
- Vancouver Island Rabbit Breeders Association & ARBA District 1 rep
- American Rabbit Breeders Association Inc.
- BC Chicken Growers Association
- BC Chicken Marketing Board
- BC Turkey Association
- BC Turkey Marketing Board
- BC Egg Marketing Board
- BC Egg Producers Association
- BC Broiler Hatching Egg Commission
- BC Broiler Hatching Egg Producer Association
- BC Poultry Association
- BC Pork Producers Association
- BC Society for the Prevention of Cruelty to Animals
- RCMP-Livestock Specialist
- AGSafe-Livestock Specialist

Ministry of Agriculture
FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION FOR MEETING WITH MINISTER SCOTT FRASER
REGARDING ROE HERRING FISHERIES ON BC COAST

Ref: 189006
X-Ref: 181986

Date: October 16, 2018

Title: Roe herring fisheries in British Columbia

Issue: Minister Scott Fraser is meeting with Minister Popham to discuss roe herring fisheries in British Columbia, and Indigenous Reconciliation initiatives.

Background: B.C.'s extensive coastline and unique geography provide for a significant fisheries and seafood industry. In 2016, fisheries and aquaculture in B.C. harvested over 100 different species of fish, shellfish and marine plants with a wholesale value of \$1.72 billion. The aquaculture and fisheries sectors provide 1,600 and 1,800 jobs to British Columbians, respectively. Continued increasing demand for seafood globally, population growth, and climate change will likely increase the importance and value of fisheries and seafood to B.C. moving forward.

The B.C. Seafood Alliance (BCSA) and the Seafood Producers Association (SPA) recently met with Minister Scott Fraser, to raise a number of issues of concern including the 2018 Central Coast Herring Decision by Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO). The BCSA has previously raised these issues in meetings with Minister Popham.

The BCSA is an umbrella organization whose members represent approximately 90% of wild harvested seafood from Canada's Pacific coast. Their member associations represent the majority of commercial license holders in nearly every major fishery making BCSA the most representative commercial fisheries organization in B.C. It works closely with the SPA, who represents the major processors of wild seafood, including salmon, herring and groundfish. The two associations often align on policy positions and work closely together on achieving goals of a sustainable and profitable wild seafood sector. Some key initiatives of the associations include working on maintaining commercial fisheries access in light of Indigenous Reconciliation and conservation efforts, attaining eco-certifications (e.g., MSC), marine planning consultations, and responding to the changes to the federal *Fisheries Act*.

B.C., through the Ministry of Agriculture, has a long history of working with BCSA. AGRI staff regularly consults with BCSA on emerging fisheries issues that impact the Pacific industry or Canadian sector at large.

There are three types of herring fisheries in B.C.:

1. Food and bait – whole herring are caught in inshore waters when they return to spawn. Herring are primarily harvested using seine methods in this fishery.
2. Roe herring – herring are harvested not for their flesh but for extraction of their roe (eggs), which is a delicacy in Asian markets. Herring are primarily harvested using seine methods in this fishery.
3. Spawn-on-kelp (SOK)– another form of harvesting herring roe. When herring spawn, their eggs adhere to blades of kelp. This fishery consists of hanging lengths of kelp where herring are spawning and extracting the kelp once eggs are attached. No actual herring fish are harvested. This fishery is of significant cultural and social importance to First Nation and primarily allowed under

First Nations Considerations: First Nations representation in the seafood sector in B.C. is significant. One third of wild capture fish harvesting jobs are in First Nation communities. In addition to (FSC) fishing, many First Nations are commercial license holders. In B.C.'s salmon farming companies, about 30% of the total direct jobs are staffed by First Nations employees.

Discussion: For several years there have been concerns about overall abundance of herring for all fishery types in B.C. and more critically in the Central Coast region. In recent years, DFO has closed the area to roe herring and food and bait fisheries and has only allowed SOK fisheries, which are primarily conducted by First Nations (See attached briefing note 181986). Issues around the roe herring fishery stem in part from recent fisheries management decisions by DFO (responsible for the conservation and management of all marine fisheries), and some Central Coast First Nations which are fundamentally opposed to commercial roe herring fisheries.

Herring fisheries in the Central Coast (located primarily within Heiltsuk First Nation traditional territory) have long been controversial. On March 2, 2018, DFO announced it would close the commercial roe herring fishery, leaving only a small opening for Heiltsuk Food, Social and Ceremonial (FSC) fishing. This decision came after years of disagreement between DFO (who argue the herring stock in the area is healthy enough to support a commercial fishery) and the Heiltsuk (who contend the stock is not abundant enough to support commercial fisheries). In recent years, DFO opened a limited commercial fishery, but 2018 marks the first time a complete commercial closure has been in place as a result of considering local Indigenous knowledge. DFO has heralded their management decision as a positive step towards Reconciliation. The fishing industry however, disagrees, citing a lack of scientific influence in the decision making.

BCSA has been critical of DFO's decision, arguing that it results in an unfair transition of resource access from commercial operators (some of which are First Nations) to the Heiltsuk. BCSA also regularly raises the significance and importance of the seafood industry to the B.C. economy, particularly in coastal communities, and encourages provincial efforts to support and grow it. They also have concerns and continue to raise a number of pressing issues that threaten the stability of the sector, including:

- **Indigenous Reconciliation:** The federal government has strong direction to move forward with indigenous reconciliation initiatives, and through DFO it has implemented some recent decisions which have impacted the level of certainty within the commercial fisheries and aquaculture sectors in BC. The 2018 Central Coast Herring Decision was the first complete commercial closure based on local Indigenous knowledge. The commercial fishing industry remains critical of the lack of science in the decision and concerned there will be a decrease in the stocks available to harvest and export over time.
- **Conservation Efforts:** The federal government is also pursuing Marine Conservation Targets of 10 per cent protection of Canadian coasts by 2020. The commercial industry has undertaken a collaborative exercise between 19 fishing sectors to propose changes to areas in Gwaii Haanas that may be closed. Nearly a third of Pacific waters will be closed to fishing of some type through conservation efforts. The commercial industry is seeking balance on conservation planning to continue to harvest and export seafood.

Suggested Response:

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Contact: David Travia, Corporate Governance, Policy and Legislation, 778 974-3764

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Ministry of Agriculture
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION FOR MEETING WITH WILD SALMON
FOREVER REGARDING STATE OF WILD PACIFIC SALMON IN BC

Ref: 189018

Date: October 10th, 2018

Title: The Minister of Agriculture is meeting with Tony Allard of Wild Salmon Forever.

Issue: The purpose of the meeting is to discuss the status of wild Pacific salmon in B.C.

Background: Wild Pacific salmon are of great social and economic importance to B.C., sustaining communities coast-wide and generating a wholesale value of \$207 million in 2016. New data indicates they generated \$4.8 billion to the economy of Canada and the U.S. over the 2012 to 2015 period (over \$1B to B.C.). Many Pacific salmon stocks have suffered significant declines leading to equivalent declines in the ecosystems and economies that rely on them. The Ministry of Agriculture and other provincial agencies work on a variety of initiatives that support the restoration and conservation of wild Pacific salmon.

Tony Allard is the Chairman of Wild Salmon Forever (WSF) and the owner and proprietor of Good Hope Cannery lodge, a private sport-fishing lodge in Rivers Inlet. Mr. Allard also supports the Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) and the Salish Sea Marine Survival Project (SSMSP). He has made multiple large donations to fund initiatives and research into declining wild salmon populations. In October 2014, Mr. Allard pledged \$250,000 to the SSMSP, a five-year research effort to determine the causes of major declines in Coho and Chinook salmon in the Strait of Georgia during the last 20 years. The funding was directed to Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) scientist Dr. Kristi Miller-Saunders' Strategic Salmon Health Initiative (a partnership of PSF, Genome BC, and DFO) to inventory pathogens suspected of causing mortality in Pacific salmon. This work uses genetic research tools to study wild, hatchery, and aquaculture salmon in B.C. and the possible transfer of harmful microbes between salmon in B.C. waters. Mr. Allard has been personally supporting research to address this issue for many years. Mr. Allard joined the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada and other dignitaries on May 22, 2015 in a major funding announcement of \$57 million for science facilities, marine protection and Pacific Salmon research.

Mr. Allard has also been an outspoken critic of salmon aquaculture in B.C. and brought that position to his appointment as a member of the Ministry of Agriculture's Advisory Council on Finfish Aquaculture (MAACFA) through 2017-2018. Mr. Allard co-wrote an article in the Vancouver Sun on June 11th, 2018 urging the Provincial Government not to renew the open-net pen salmon farm tenures on June 20th, 2018. In the article, he places focus on land-based aquaculture and notes that Washington State's commitment to phase out open-net pens leaves B.C. as the only place left in the world trying to manage commercial Pacific salmon fisheries and an open-net pen Atlantic salmon industry in the same water.

First Nations Considerations: One third of fish harvesting jobs are in First Nation communities. Pacific salmon are of critical cultural, social and economic importance for coastal and interior First Nations. In B.C.'s four largest salmon farming companies, 240 employees or 30% of the total direct jobs are staffed by First Nations employees.

Discussion: Mr. Allard and other representatives of WSF will likely wish to discuss issues related to wild salmon health and the practices of open-net pen salmon aquaculture. Topics may include:

- Provincial platform commitments to support closed-system and land-based aquaculture initiatives;
- Negotiations with Broughton First Nations; and,
- The Premier's Wild Salmon Advisory Council (WSAC).

B.C. agencies are currently working towards goals that align with the province's commitments. These include implementation of the MAACFA recommendations, advocating for funding from the federal government for

a Pacific Fisheries Fund, and working closely with DFO on improving the environmental and social sustainability of the aquaculture industry.

WSF representatives may also provide their views on the implications of the recent decision to permit month-to-month salmon farm tenures in the Broughton Archipelago.^{s.16}

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B.C. announced a new policy on the issuance of salmon farm tenures that after 2022 requires First Nations agreement and assurance by DFO that the risk to wild salmon is minimal.

Most recently, B.C. has launched the Wild Salmon Advisory Council (WSAC), a multi-stakeholder advisory council that is assisting in the development of a strategy to support restoring healthy and abundant wild salmon stocks in B.C. The focus of WSAC is the restoration and enhancement of wild salmon populations, sustainable fisheries management and stewardship opportunities and new economic development opportunities to assist viable and sustainable community-based fisheries. A report from WSAC has been submitted to government and will soon be released for public comment through the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

Suggested Response:

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Contact: Kevin Romanin, Senior Seafood Analyst, 778-974-4884

ED LH ADM JM DM WS

Ministry of Agriculture
BRIEFING NOTE FOR MINISTER FOR INFORMATION

Ref: 189195

Date: November 6, 2018

Issue: First Nation Agriculture Opportunities in the Cariboo Chilcotin

Background:

David Zirnhelt is a member of the Cariboo Cattlemen's Association (CCA) and Cariboo Applied Agriculture Research Alliance (CARA) as well as an advisor of the Thompson Rivers University Applied Sustainable Ranching program (ASUR). He has an interest in Indigenous agriculture and in identifying First Nation agriculture opportunities in the Cariboo region.

First Nation communities have been involved in agriculture since time immemorial; harvesting, use and trade of fish (salmon); management of wild plants (potato) and ecosystems (grassland burning); or more recently ranching, food security (community gardens), food processing, and opportunities (native seed nurseries). Community specific initiatives are listed in Appendix 1.

There are numerous First Nations in the Cariboo. Many fall under a larger governing or strategic group. While the Ministry is interested in Indigenous agriculture, there are no Inuit or Metis communities in the region so First Nation is the appropriate term. Appendix 2 illustrates the connections and name pronunciation.

The Tsilhqot'in National Government (TN) is comprised of the Xení Gwet'in, Yunesit'in, Tl'etinqox, ?Esdilagh, and Tsi Del Del.

- In June 2014, TN became the first Indigenous community in Canada to be granted Aboriginal title to a defined area of land located in the South Chilcotin.
- In 2016 the B.C. Government and the Tsilhqot' in national Government signed the Nenquay Deni Accord which establishes a framework for reconciliation for longer-term negotiations to reconcile the rights, interests and goals of the Tsilhqot' in Tsilhqot'in Territory.
- Upon a request on how to improve First Nation engagement in agriculture, AGRI's Indigenous Business Agrologist and Regional Agrologist recently met with the TN Dietician, Xení Gwet'in member, Yunesit'in Chief, and Yunesit'in Greenhouse lead, ?Esdilagh member and key partners to discuss existing agriculture initiatives and future opportunities.
 - Mr. Zirnhelt, Angela Abrahao and a current ASUR student were in attendance and provided a presentation on the ASUR.
 - There was interest in the program, learning more about wild harvesting procedures used by other First Nations in the province, slaughter and processing of wild game, wildlife interactions specific to domestic goats, reinvigoration of ranching, apiaries, greenhouses, business mentorship, wild plants such as berries, medicinal plants and potatoes, agriculture knowledge and preparing for climate change, forage, stocking lakes to relieve pressure on dwindling wild fish stocks, and hazelnuts.

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The Northern Secwepemc te Qelmuw (NStQ) was formed to negotiate the first modern treaty encompassing Crown grazing tenures and consists of Stswecem'c Xgat'tem, Canim Lake, Williams Lake, and Xats'ull.

- The Agreement in Principle (AIP) was signed the summer of 2018.
- There may be an opportunity for AGRI to support the success of the implementation of these negotiations though early engagement will be important to ensuring success.
- Some private ranching operations are part of the negotiations.
- Note that Esketem'c is not a member of this group and it should not be confused with the NSTC.

The Southern Dakelh Nation Alliance (SDNA) is made of Lhtako Dene, Lhoosk'uz Dene, Ulkatcho, and Nazko.

- This alliance was formed to negotiate engagement agreements with the Ministry of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation (MIRR).

Discussion:

Challenges related to agriculture development in the region include:

- Sourcing funds to employ staff to follow through on Agriculture Opportunity Assessments (AOA) and identifying a community agriculture champion

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- Identifying qualified business consultants to work with the communities, particularly in remote locations, as there are fewer based in rural areas and costs of projects increase expensive.

AGRI and Investment Agriculture Foundation (IAF) programs do not support capital expenditure. Northern Development Initiative Trust (NDIT) and the Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations and Rural Development's (FLNR) Rural Dividend Fund (RDF) may be better suited for start-up costs. The First Nation Health Authority also funds community gardens.

Communities or individual band members may need to enter into debt to establish their agribusiness. Feasibility studies and business planning through the B.C. Indigenous Agriculture Development Program (BCIADP) can assist to build the business case for approaching lending institutions. The current program is focused on First Nations communities and requires Chief and Council support particularly for land use or financial support. The Ministry also provides business planning and capacity building workshops and webinars for new entrants to agriculture which includes First Nations. Indigenous entrepreneurs also continue to be an area of focus for new entrant program development.

Under the new Step 2 portion of the BCIADP, funding has been increased to \$10,000 which can be used to create a detailed business plan that can be used for conversations with lenders or funding agencies. The program can also include technical production related workshops which, in the past, have been used to facilitate mentorship and knowledge transfer.

While AGRI supports aquaculture, and can provide limited support through FACTAP for aquaculture, commercial fisheries and seafood processing where an existing project or business exists, the establishment of a commercial fishery is federal jurisdiction. Under CAP programs, aquaculture, commercial fishing, and aquaponics projects (production/innovation/capital/business development) are not eligible with the exception of market development and some aspects of traceability.^{s.13}

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Next Steps:

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Contact: Nicole Pressey, Regional Agrologist, 250 992-4408

Co-authors include Anne Skinner and Erica Nitchie, Indigenous Agriculture Agrologists; Myron Roth Industry Specialist, Aquaculture and Seafood; James Street, Manager, Food Processing.

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Appendix 2 – Cariboo Chilcotin Coast First Nation Guide

The Northern Secwepemc te Qelmucw (NStQ: Soda Creek/Canoe Creek, Canim Lake, Williams Lake, Xats'ull)	
The Northern Shuswap Tribal Council (NSTC: Esketem'c, Stswecem'c Xgat'tem, Canim Lake, Williams Lake, and Xats'ull)	
Canim Lake (Tsq'escen')	Ca-nim Lake (Chk-es-hen)
Stswecem'c Xgat'tem (Canoe Creek/Dog Creek)	Ca-noo Creek and Dog Creek (Ss-chew- weh-hmm/ hight-tlem)
Williams Lake Indian Band (Sugar Cane or T'exelc/)	Sch-ga-Kane (Tlah-hel)
Xats'ull (Soda Creek)	So-dah Creek (Hat-sulth)
Esketem'c (Alkali Creek)	Ess-ket-tem
Southern Dakelh Nation Alliance	
Lhtako Dene (Red Bluff)	Lah-tak-koh Den-aye
Lhoosk'uz Dene (Kluskus)	Looze-k'U z Den-aye (Klus-kus)
Nazko	Naz-ko
Ulkatcho (Anahim Lake)	Ul-gat-cho
Tsilhqot'in National Government	Sill-koe-teen
?Esdilagh (Alexandria)	Ess-dey-lah
Toosey (Tl'esqox/Riske Creek)	Two-zee (Tles-koh)
Tsi Del del (Alexis Creek/Red Stone)	Sigh-dell-dell
Yunesit'in (Stone)	You-nes-ee-teen
Anaham (Tl'etinqox)	An-a-ham (Tlah-teen-koh)
Nuxalk (Bella Coola)	New-hawk (Bel-lah Koo-lah)

BRIEFING NOTE

Premier meeting with First Nations Leadership Council

Briefing Note

What:

Premier John Horgan will be meeting with the First Nations Leadership Council (FNLC) to discuss the state of wild Pacific salmon and the role of First Nations Guardianship Programs.

Who:

The FNLC is composed of Indigenous leaders from the Assembly of First Nations B.C. Region, First Nations Summit, and the Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs. The FNLC produced a news release on September 24, 2018 calling on the governments of Canada and B.C. to begin immediate action to restore and protect wild salmon populations (Appendix 1).

Executive Summary:

- B.C. recognizes the values of wild salmon stocks and the commercial, recreational and First Nations fisheries, as well as the First Nations that depend on them.
- B.C. has a long history of funding programs that support or benefit salmon and their habitats and is actively working towards new initiatives to assist salmon recovery, specifically through the development of a made-in-B.C. Wild Salmon Strategy. The Wild Salmon Advisory Council's report was recently released as the first step in this strategy development process.
- The Province appreciates and supports current First Nations guardianship efforts and is eager to learn about further opportunities to develop these programs in the name of wild Pacific salmon conservation.
- B.C. is in the process of developing new policies on salmon aquaculture tenures underpinned by principles of Reconciliation and safety of wild salmon, and will continue to work with the federal government and First Nations on these issues.

Background:

Wild Salmon: Wild Pacific salmon are of great social and economic importance to B.C., sustaining communities coast-wide and generating a wholesale value of \$207 million in 2016. New data indicates they generated \$4.8 billion to the economy of Canada and the U.S. over the 2012 to 2015 period (over \$1B to B.C.). Many Pacific salmon stocks have suffered disastrous declines leading to equivalent declines in the ecosystems and economies that rely on them.

BRIEFING NOTE

Premier meeting with First Nations Leadership Council

B.C., through the Ministry of Agriculture and other provincial agencies, works on a variety of initiatives that support the restoration and conservation of wild Pacific salmon. Most recently, B.C. launched the Wild Salmon Advisory Council (WSAC), a multi-stakeholder advisory council that is assisting in the development of a strategy to support restoring healthy and abundant wild salmon stocks in B.C. The focus of the strategy development is the restoration and enhancement of wild salmon populations, sustainable fisheries management and stewardship opportunities, and new economic development opportunities to assist viable and sustainable community-based fisheries. A report from WSAC has been released and will form the basis of upcoming public consultations led by the Select Standing Committee on Agriculture, Food and Fish.

First Nations Guardianship Programs: First Nations guardianship programs are coordinated initiatives by local First Nations to act as stewards of the surrounding environmental resources. The Coastal First Nations runs the Coastal Guardian Watchmen who ensure marine resources are sustainably managed, rules and regulations are followed and land and marine use agreements are implemented effectively in B.C.'s central coast area. The Ministry of Forests, Lands and Natural Resource Operations also partners with First Nations on the lower Fraser River on a guardianship program focused on education and outreach regarding steelhead and sturgeon fishing. First Nations are well-placed to play a key role in future guardianship programs regarding wild salmon (e.g., stream walking salmon counts, etc.).

Salmon Farming: B.C. is undertaking sensitive negotiations with First Nations in the Broughton Archipelago on the future of tenures in that area where there has been consistent opposition to salmon farms. In advance of these negotiations, B.C. announced a new policy on the issuance of salmon farm tenures that after 2022 requires a First Nations agreement and assurance by DFO that the risk to wild salmon is minimal.

Recommendations:

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BRIEFING NOTE

Premier meeting with First Nations Leadership Council

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Premier meeting with First Nations Leadership Council

Appendix 1 – FNLC Press Release, September 24th, 2018

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Premier meeting with First Nations Leadership Council

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