



The State of Wild Salmon - The Good and the Bad

We are very encouraged by reports of good returns of certain salmon runs on B.C.'s coast. However, other significant developments have generated strong momentum to reduce impacts of open net-cage salmon farms on BC's wild salmon.

With Fraser River sockeye stocks having collapsed to a mere ten percent of the predicted return, public awareness about the need to conserve B.C.'s wild salmon has been dramatically heightened.

While many variables could have contributed to the poor ocean survival of the Chilko and Quesnel runs of Fraser River sockeye, increasingly people recognize that the easiest variable to control is the impact of open net-cage salmon farms.

Dr. Craig Orr of the Watershed Watch Salmon Society has advised SOS that, with a collapse so severe [economically, ecologically and culturally], it is all the more important to control the variables that can be controlled. The evidence is that there are Fraser River sockeye around open net-cage salmon farms in the Spring; that sockeye smolts host sea lice [*Caligus clemensi*]; that the farms in the Discovery Islands area produce substantial numbers of lice; and that smolts the size of sockeye are vulnerable to lice.

Therefore, precaution dictates that the impacts of open net-cage salmon farms be mitigated immediately.

Thankfully, there are many wild salmon runs that had healthy returns this year including the Harrison Lake sockeye of the Fraser River and some runs of pink salmon in the Broughton Archipelago.

In assessing the survival of these various runs, it is necessary to include consideration of the migration routes of the salmon and the management practices of the salmon farming companies on these routes.

SOS will soon have a document completed that provides insight into the various perspectives on the state of B.C.'s salmon runs. When the document is available on the SOS website, an announcement will be made via email.

[Click here](#) for news stories on the Fraser River sockeye collapse.

Solutions

Closed Containment Feasibility Study

Solutions Advisory Committee member, Dr. Andrew Wright, is in the final stages of completing a **technology review** of land-based closed containment aquaculture. Thorough feedback from external reviewers is being processed with the expectation that final recommendations on land-based closed containment will be available by the end of October.

The **business feasibility study** for land-based closed containment is also nearing completion. Working with EcoTrust and the Namgis First Nations, two sites are being assessed for a commercial size facility as recommended in the technology review.

Government Engagement

As part of SOS's strategy for solutions, a draft framework for development of a "Finfish Aquaculture Innovation Fund" (FAIF) is under review. The purpose of the FAIF is to develop a mechanism to bring together potential funders interested in supporting closed containment projects through various stages of development.

SOS is contributing to DFO's National Aquaculture Strategic Action Plan Initiative ([NASAPI](#)) and has also provided input into DFO's Aquaculture Innovation and Market Access Program's ([AIMAP](#)) funding priorities for 2010/11.

Salmon Related Legal Updates

Constitutional challenge: It has recently been announced by the Province that it will not contest jurisdictional responsibility for marine finfish aquaculture being transferred to the Federal government by the February 2010 deadline set by Justice Hinkson. SOS understand that DFO will be taking over full regulatory responsibility for marine finfish aquaculture in B.C. and that this will include responsibility for the issuance of licenses. The Province will remain involved in the salmon farm application approval process as land tenures will continue to be issued by the Province.

Class action lawsuit: In February, the Kwicksutaineuk/Ah-Kwa-Mish First Nations filed a class action lawsuit against the British Columbia Government to address the impacts of aquaculture on wild salmon in their territory. The Province joined the Federal Government into the lawsuit making DFO a defendant. The anticipated date for the certification hearing is January 2010.

Industry Development

Members of the SOS Solutions Advisory Committee (SAC) appreciated the opportunity to meet with Marine Harvest Canada's senior management team in September.

Marine Harvest Canada shared with the SAC the steps they are undertaking to minimize the impacts of sea lice on wild salmon including the application of more precautionary sea lice management strategies; increasing transparency of farm management practices and collaborating with independent science.

Gunner Point

SOS is monitoring the Grieg Seafoods proposal for an open net-cage salmon farm at **Gunner Point** in Johnstone Strait. The Strathcona Regional District is considering rezoning this site, with the rezoning now through third reading. If this is approved and ultimately a lease and license for the farm site is granted, this 700,000 fish facility would be directly on the path of B.C.'s largest migration of salmon.

[Click here](#) for background news stories on the rezoning application for Gunner Point.

SOS Funded Science

The fieldwork on the following three research projects has been completed:

- Salmon Farm Antibiotic Resistance, Dr. Michael T. Kelly (Raincoast Research)
- Aquaculture Driven Evolution in Pacific Salmon, Brendan Connors (SFU)
- Sea Lice and Sockeye in the Discovery Islands, Mike Price (Raincoast Conservation) and Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

Publication of the studies is anticipated for Spring 2010.

SOS Webpage

The SOS webpage has been updated to include the most up-to-date information on [the issues](#) related to open net-cage salmon farms.



Offers to SOS Supporters

Come fishing with SOS: With the great fishing success and fun had at North King Lodge this past July, we've decided to go back! The 2010 "Fishing for Good" Derby and Poker Tournament will be from July 10th to 13th which is absolute prime fishing season in B.C.'s Caamano Sound. Only 20 spots are available with proceeds supporting the work of Save Our Salmon. [Click here](#) for details.

In-kind Donations: The fishing trip at the Babine Norlakes Trout and Steelhead Camp has been sold. Our great thanks go out to Pierce and Anita Clegg for their generous donation and to the SOS supporter who bought the package and will be steelhead fishing within the next week!

[Click here](#) for more trips and special offers available on the SOS webpage. These include a "Tall Sails & Ale" culinary and sailing adventure with Maple Leaf Adventures (Gulf Islands); heliskiing packages with Last Frontier Heliskiing (northwest B.C.); a ski mountaineering week with Bear Mountaineering (northwest B.C.); SOS fly-fishing reels; a Mark Hobson original painting; wild salmon t-shirts, a stay at the Echo Valley Ranch and Spa (central B.C.) and more!

By taking advantage of these opportunities, you support the work of Save Our Salmon and endorse the generosity and environmental ethic of the companies and individuals who have made these offers possible.

The SOS Marine Conservation Foundation

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