



SPORT FISHING INSTITUTE
OF BRITISH COLUMBIA

November 23, 2017

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, MP
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Parliament Buildings, Wellington Street
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Dear Minister LeBlanc,

RECOVERY OF SOUTHERN RESIDENT KILLER WHALES (SRKW)

On behalf of the Board of Directors and members of the Sport Fishing Institute of BC (SFI), I write to you to express our concern at the current scope of consultation underway to determine measures to protect Southern Resident Killer Whales.

Our organization is deeply concerned about the state of SRKW. We are willing and able to be participant in meaningful solutions and to be involved in communication of the issue to the public and 300,000 tidal angling licence holders. We urge you to establish a collaborative approach that utilizes the collective knowledge of those most affected and therefore most capable of providing information and participating in solutions; our Indigenous Peoples, our coastal communities, and our sectors (including recreational fishing, tourism, commercial fishing, and environment) in combination with the best science and government input available.

We are encouraged by federal support for the roundtable process underway concerning the North Atlantic Right Whale and observe that it appears to have good representation from experts, industry, scientists, and Indigenous communities. In contrast, the consultation around the Southern Resident Killer Whales has been non-inclusive and has seemingly, as best we are able to understand, focused only on a limited scientific knowledge base.

Although this consultation is a starting point, your mandate letter outlines commitments to a “renewed sense of collaboration”, “meaningful engagement”, and decisions that are made in the “public interest”. We are asking you to provide this opportunity on the west coast. We want to see many knowledge systems – Indigenous, fishing, tourism, local and scientific - collaborating in a timely manner on long term solutions for protecting this important and iconic species.

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The people of the west coast of Canada and Southern Resident Killer Whales have a lot to lose if decisions are made that only appear to address just one facet of the issue. It is our concern that without proper and full consultation with all those who can provide meaningful input, decisions could be made that are ineffective yet take attention away from the changes and improvements to conditions for SRKW that must occur.

Thank you for your immediate attention to this matter. We welcome the opportunity for additional discussion or to participate in a more open and inclusive process.

Sincerely,

SPORT FISHING INSTITUTE OF BC



Robert Alcock,
President

CC:

Terry Beech, MP and Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

Trevor Swerdfager, Senior Assistant Deputy Minister, Ecosystems and Oceans Science and Oceans Protection Plan, DFO

Ashraf Amlani, Special Assistant, Pacific – West Desk, DFO

Rebecca Reid, Regional Director General, Pacific Region, DFO

Paul Cottrell, A/Marine Mammals Coordinator, Pacific Region, DFO

Jeff Grout, Regional Resource Manager – Salmon, DFO