



BACKGROUND

October 19, 2006

PFRCC objects to Business Council of BC's attempts to reduce federal fisheries habitat protection authority

A recent report by the Business Council of BC is highly critical of the federal Fisheries Department's (DFO) habitat management program. The Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council (PFRCC) is concerned about these sort of proposals that would weaken DFO's habitat management capabilities.

The advice contained within PFRCC's advisory issued today, *Implementing the Habitat and Ecosystem Components of DFO's Wild Salmon Policy*, will assist the DFO in making high quality decisions while also tailoring their effort to what's at risk.

Council disagrees with the Business Council's report, which seems to go beyond streamlining and advocates a more extreme view that could potentially withdraw DFO's ability to protect all habitats that contribute to the productivity of the resource.

Without habitat, there would be no salmon. Without some sensible level of protection for all habitats, it would not be possible to maintain vibrant and strong runs such as those of the Adams River.

In contrast to the Business Council's suggestion to revamp the Fisheries Act and weaken the ability to protect certain habitats, PFRCC recommend that the DFO protect all salmon – but with a degree of effort geared towards what is at risk.

Council's advisory emphasizes the need for formal agreements with the province to do the job effectively, especially given the shared jurisdictions involved in managing salmon habitat.

There must be adequate resources provided to the DFO to carry out needed monitoring, make timely habitat management decisions, do required follow-up and undertake enforcement as necessary.

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