



URGENT  
December 12, 2008

**To Prime Minister Stephen Harper**

**Subject: Pacific Salmon Treaty: A Proposal to sell out Canada's interests.**

**Issue:** While Parliament is prorogued, bureaucrats are pushing Cabinet to quickly and quietly ratify their recommended proposal that dramatically alters the Pacific Salmon Treaty to include an unprecedented sale of Canada's national interest.

**Background:** While several Treaty Annexes expire this year. Fisheries and Oceans Pacific Region are determined to have government sign off without being fully informed, without proper consultation with stakeholders and without due process. Most of the proposal is consistent with past agreements and is based on science, sharing information and cost sharing. However within the Proposal is an unprecedented recommendation that Canada sell its fishing licenses on the West Coast of Vancouver Island to the U.S. for \$30 million.

The Department gave assurances that there would be open consultation on this proposal with access to relevant information. Yesterday, in a conference call with Randy Kamp, and Brock Stephenson from your office, we discussed the status of the recommendations and how consultation with directly affected industries and communities would proceed before signing off. While many realistic concerns that must be answered prior to signing off have been raised, there is great frustration that answers to these serious questions are still not available. At this point in time there is even more concern that the government is being misinformed or misled.

**Significant issues that have not been fully reviewed include, but are not limited to:** the actual cost to impacted stakeholders, the indirect cost to Canada, the impacts to the region from loss of access, the long term loss of infrastructure, and the loss of capacity to access our share of resources in the region. The true financial impact to Canada in all likelihood will far exceed the sale price of our resources that will be lost in this treaty.

**Consideration:** There is no urgency to accept this proposal. Since negotiations, there has been an election called, an economic collapse and now the House is prorogued. The U.S. is under similar constraints and will understand the need for additional time. There are no real time constraints. The proposal will remain fully implementable if the time is taken to follow proper process.

The Conservative platform committed to more accountability and to 'place international treaties before Parliament for Ratification'. The proposal to sell out national interests is controversial. We are further concerned that the Members of Cabinet are being misled with a false sense of urgency, and significant inaccurate information.

Signing off while Parliament is prorogued would look like the government is operating in secrecy, fears transparency and is unwilling to work with other parties

It would be best to defer signing off on this treaty until there is the opportunity to have open, informed and accountable consideration of the implications and proper due process.

Kathy Scarfo

President West Coast Trollers Association  
491 Beaver Point Road  
Saltspring Island, B.C.  
V8K 2J9  
250 653-9207