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### **INTERVIEW WITH KATHY SCARFO**

**MARK FORSYTHE (Host):** Right now the Canadian government has just signed a new Pacific salmon treaty with the United States, a deal that could have serious consequences right here in BC. Those in the industry say it could bankrupt rural fishermen and their communities, and joining me with more on this is Kathy Scarfo. She is president of the West Coast Trollers Association. She's joining us from Salt Spring this afternoon. Hello Kathy.

**KATHY SCARFO (President, West Coast Trollers Association):** Hello Mark.

**MARK FORSYTHE:** For our listeners who have not been following this closely, could you give us the big picture view first of all of what we have agreed to?

**KATHY SCARFO:** Well, the principles in the salmon treaty have, you know, expired this year on certain annexes. So it's not the whole treaty that we're negotiating. It's species by species at this point, which is a significant

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change from in the past where we deal with the whole package. And one of the main principles in the Pacific salmon treaty has always been obviously conservation, but also equity to your production. So in other words, if you as a nation decide not to dam your rivers and to invest in maintaining good, healthy habitat, therefore you should receive the benefits of that, but obviously because fish transit other countries, you may be taking that equity, your share of the fish, in other people's stock. So the West Coast troll fleet, in this case, are...this is predominantly Southern US fish, whereas Alaska, which also is a big harvester of Chinooks, takes a significant amount of Southern US fish, but also a fair amount of Canadian fish. So what's been proposed in this case, which was a complete departure and was rather unexpected, was that instead of where we were when we went into these negotiations – and I say "we" as a stakeholder group. We were the only group excluded from the process. But what we were told by the Canadian government was that they were satisfied with the changes that we made in 1998 and 1999 which actually gave us about a 50 percent reduction in catch at that point across the board to everyone based on a scientific model. Now what they've done is they've said when it comes to Chinook, there's enormous pressure from the Southern US to get more salmon so that they don't have to stop some of their rather risky practices of damming rivers, decreasing water flows and not investing in

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habitat the way they should, so they need more fish to meet their legal requirements under the endangered species act. One way to do that was either, you know, cut back the water flow on the Columbia River, and have more fish reach the spawning ground, or they could actually just say, "Hey, it's a pretty good deal. We'll offer Canada some money in exchange for their share, a portion of their share of the fish they're entitled to.

**MARK FORSYTHE:** Which I believe is about \$30 million for 30 percent of the Chinook that you have been catching, or you and other BC fisherman have been catching, right?

**KATHY SCARFO:** Yes, and...

**MARK FORSYTHE:** Ok, and what's wrong with that in itself, that you'll receive or Canada will receive \$30 million for those Chinook?

**KATHY SCARFO:** Well, I guess there are several things that are wrong. One is if this is the right thing to do, then we should be able to have reasonable debate on this, which should take place as it is supposed to happen, and as had committed to us. It should take place in Parliament, that there would be...this would be brought up before Parliament. There would be 21 days of legal debate on this issue where all the concerns could be raised. It would go to committee, and we could make that decision in an open and somewhat educated

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forum. While the House has been prorogued, this has gone through, which is a complete departure from the commitment that we had as to the process. We were excluded from the negotiating process. We were the only group of stakeholders excluded for the last year. So there's a bit of a problem on the process there. But basically on the principle itself, it starts a precedent of are Canadian natural resources that we're entitled to, that we invest in, that we hold dear, are they actually having a monetary value placed on them and they're for sale for somebody who might have a better use, in their mind, for them, rather than the use that we have which may be harvest for food and jobs within our local region? So that on principle alone, there's an issue that needs and should have had really serious debate as to the ethics of whether or not Canadian national resources are up for sale. If they are up for sale and we decide that this is the route that we're going to go, then there's a very significant question of where did we come up with \$30 million? The landed value alone of that product is triple the amount that's being offered at the table, let alone the infrastructure loss, the capital loss to individuals that have created a livelihood, and not to mention the job loss.

**MARK FORSYTHE:** Do we have bad negotiators?

**KATHY SCARFO:** Well, if you're asking me, the answer would be yes. Because this does not make sense as to...

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**MARK FORSYTHE:** How do you know it's three times as much as what they've...

**KATHY SCARFO:** Well, I mean, I know what a salmon is worth to me when I deliver it. So if you take X amount of fish away from me over the next ten years, it's a pretty basic calculation as to what that is. We have consistently over the last five months asked DFO in the Pacific region, the Minister, the federal government to do a cost analysis before they even start talking about the amount of money. If they feel \$30 million is the right amount of money, show us why. Because we've had, we hired an economist who actually ran the DFO Aboriginal Fishing Strategy buyback program and we said what's the value of our licences and our investment at this point? And the value came back significantly higher than what's being put on the table. So we said wait a minute. In principle we disagree with selling our resources, but if you're going to do that, at least get good value for them. They're worth an incredible amount to Bonneville Power on the dams on the Columbia, who spends \$800 million a year on their fisheries program trying to make sure that they get fish back to the ground. If they have to cut back on water flows this year, if we didn't give them these fish, they would be losing billions of dollars worth of power, so why are we giving up valuable jobs in a region that desperately needed jobs that we've invested in, that

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we continue to invest in over the years. Why are we giving that up for so little value?

**MARK FORSYTHE:** I'm going to ask our listeners who are affected by this decision to tell us more about what you're saying. Kathy, thank you very much for this right now. Kathy Scarfo, president of the West Coast Trollers Association. We would like to hear from you if you're in (inaudible) or on the Charlottes, wherever you may be, if you're a fisherman or in a community affected by this treaty, give us a call. It's a toll-free number, 1-888-866-6104. The lower mainland, 604-662-6104. There's e-mail as well, [Almanac@Vancouver.CBC.ca](mailto:Almanac@Vancouver.CBC.ca).

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