



**John Cummins**  
Official Opposition Critic  
Fisheries and Oceans

# Press Release

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## Senator Murkowski Warns of the Dangers of Salmon Feedlot Expansion

**OTTAWA**– “The lifting of the moratorium on salmon feedlot expansion in British Columbia and the attendant difficulties with escapees, disease and parasites has triggered a reaction in the State of Alaska and in Washington, D.C.,” said John Cummins, M.P. (Delta-South Richmond), Vice Chair of the House of Commons Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans.

“In a letter to United States Secretary of State Colin Powell, Alaska Senator Frank Murkowski has called for a reopening of the Canada-US *Pacific Salmon Treaty* to include an Annex establishing ‘a mutually agreed upon framework for the control of further migration of Atlantic salmon into the habitat of native species’ and to address disease and pollution issues.”

“The federal Minister of Fisheries, Robert Thibault would do well to move ahead of Senator Murkowski on this vital issue,” said Cummins. Murkoski’s concerns were triggered by the lifting of the moratorium in British Columbia which would allow for the establishment of salmon feedlots adjacent to the Alaska border.

Murkowski notes that fish farms in British Columbia have been “plagued by mass escapes” which could lead to the establishment of Atlantic salmon in Alaskan streams and the spread of diseases to their wild stock. Salmon feedlots are illegal in Alaska.

“The Senator’s letter to Secretary Powell echos the concerns of Canada’s Auditor General who in a recent report found that Canada’s Department of Fisheries and Oceans is not meeting its legislative obligation under the *Fisheries Act* to protect wild Pacific salmon stocks and habitat from the effects of salmon farming and indeed is unable to enforce the provisions of the *Fisheries Act* with respect to salmon farming. Further, the Auditor General concluded that the potential cumulative environmental effects of salmon farm expansion warrant a federal public review before a decision is made to lift the moratorium,” said Cummins.

The protection of wild salmon stocks is solely a federal responsibility and any activity that is likely to effect wild stocks must be authorized by the federal Minister of Fisheries.

“The time to act for the federal Minister of Fisheries is now. Salmon feedlots in British Columbia have never been merely an internal matter for Canada,” warned Cummins. “Murkowski’s letter makes that very clear.”



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