

Contact For Letters

- 1. Hon. Gail Shea Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Room**
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- 2. Honorable Mary Polak Environment Minister**
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- 3. Dan Wagner Fisheries Management Coordinator, DFO**
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- 4. Jennifer Rice North Coast MLA**
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Sample Letters

Please feel free to paraphrase from any of the following.

Dear Minister Shea,

The Dean River in British Columbia is considered among the very best steelhead sport fisheries and every year anglers from around the world come to British Columbia in their pursuit.

However, large-scale non-selective gill net fisheries in Dean Channel and Fitz Hugh Sound (the outer reaches of Dean channel) capture and often kill steelhead in large number. During commercial gill net openings for chum salmon, sport fishing is dramatically impacted and many of the fish that do reach the Dean River bear fresh wounds from their time spent in these nets. Visitors are far less likely to come back after witnessing fish in this condition and are more likely to boycott steelhead fishing in Canada altogether.

When gill net fisheries do occur in conflict with steelhead returns selective harvest methodologies should be mandatory. The Steelhead Society of British Columbia strongly recommends the implementation of selective fish harvesting practices (e.g., purse seine or use of weed lines) in Area 8 to help manage all incidental bycatch. Ideally, cork to web distances should be at least 100 cm to allow shallow swimming steelhead to pass over gill nets (as currently done in area 8-8). We determine that Fitz Hugh Sound and Dean Channel are all part of the same long body of water and; therefore, request that both these measures be implemented from sub area 8-1 to 8-8 and from July 1- August 31.

The implementation of these measures would continue to provide a viable large-scale commercial fishery while protecting critical non-target species. It would also support the conservation of one of the most important sport fish in the world and the substantial revenue they generate.

Yours truly,

Re: Impact of Current Chum Fishery in Dean Channel on Wild Steelhead Stocks

I am a member of the Steelhead Society of BC. We have been a part of the conservation of wild fish stock and in particular, Steelhead, in British Columbia since 1970. I write to impress upon you the need to re-think whether the current Chum fishery in the Dean Channel is meeting the objective for this opening and in particular, what measures can be taken to reduce the impact of this fishery on wild stocks migrating at the same time in the same area.

It appears that Chum runs to the Kimsquit and the Dean are at all-time lows. There have been no chums observed on the beach, there have only been a hand full observed in the Dean River and the Kimsquit run appears to be almost non-existent. Based on these observations, it may take the closure of this fishery in Area 8 to ensure the remaining fish get to the spawning beds. Targeting surplus hatchery Chinook and Chums from the Bella Coola Hatchery has caused a culling of Dean channel bound wild fish stocks which travel Fisher Fitzhugh at exactly the same time as the Bella Coola Chinook and Chums. If this fishery is meant to target Chinook and Chum from the hatchery, then DFO needs to find a way to better target what it sees as "surplus stock". If DFO remains insistent on continuing this fishery, it is time for a terminal fishery in Bella Coola that will better target the perceived "surplus".

A gill-net fishery of nearly 100 boats cannot be seen in any way as being a selective fishery or harvest. That said, moving this fishery closer to the hatchery at Bella Coola may be a step in the right direction by removing/relocating this threat to wild stocks destined for other river systems (the Dean in particular).

If DFO could create a more selective fishery nearer to the hatchery source, it might allow time for research to collect data on whether there is any surplus available from the wild stocks that migrate in the same area. Until such time that this research can be started, I implore you to re-consider the current opening.

Yours truly,



Ideally, all letters would sent via snail mail. But if time is restricted, emails can be sent to those that provide them. Phone calls are also extremely effective

Issues:

You can voice any opinion or grievance you have but here are some major ones.

1. Geographic size of the openings- the openings have been conducted over the length of Dean Channel and out to Fitz Hugh sound; from sub zones 8-1 to 8-8. A huge area being fished for 2 days a week; doesn't allow enough times between openings to let any fish through.

REQUEST: Openings in smaller geographic areas.
Openings in 1 or 2 sub zones to allow an adequate fish passed the commercial fleet on the off-fishing days.

2. Gill nets- don't discriminate between fish species caught; steelhead released from gill nets have extremely high mortality; those that survive have net marks... takes away from experience.

REQUEST: No gill net fisheries.

If they MUST continue....

3. Cork to Web Distance- Steelhead have been proven to swim the surface in Dean Channel. They spend 70% + of their time within 3 feet of the surface. By hanging the webbing (part that nets fish) 3+ feet down from the cork, steelhead can avoid capture with better certainty while allowing fisheries to continue.

REQUEST: cork to web distance of at least 100cm in zones 8-1 through 8-8 from July 1 through August 31.



Your Name
Your Street Address
Your City, State
Country
ZIP Code

Date

Hon. Gail Shea
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
Room 556, Confederation Building
Ottawa, ON
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[\(619\) 992-9223](tel:6199929223)

Dear Minister Shea,

PARAGRAPH 1: Who you are and where you are from.

PARAGRAPH 2: What your grievance is and how you are personally affected by the issue.

Issue: Gill net Chum Salmon fisheries in region 8. Impact on steelhead.

PARAGRAPH 3: What you see as a solution. "I would like to see..."

Things such as: - selective fisheries such as purse seine not gill nets.
 - cork to web distance (explained next page).

PARAGRAPH 4: How this solution would impact (help you).

Sincerely,

Your Name