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August 12, 2011

Ms. Guyanne Desforges
Clerk on the Standing Committee on Finance
Sixth Floor
131 Queen Street
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON K1A 0A6

Subject: 2012 Pre-Budget Submission

Dear Ms. Desforges,

I write at the encouragement of the Honorable John Duncan, who, in an email dated July 21, 2010, suggested that the Pacific Salmon Foundation provide input to the Standing Committee on Finance as part of the committee's annual pre-budget consultation process.

The Pacific Salmon Foundation's overarching message to the Standing Committee on Finance is to ensure that the budget process does not forget West Coast environmental conservation and restoration, particularly efforts to ensure a sustainable future for wild Pacific salmon.

Specifically, the Foundation would like to make the following recommendations (please see the attached for additional details):

1. **Expand investment in volunteerism to support Pacific salmon restoration.**
2. **Support a comprehensive plan to restore the Strait of Georgia ecosystem.**
3. **Maintain the current budget of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Salmonid Enhancement Program.**

Pacific salmon restoration and regeneration merits additional support because it sustains a major part of the economic life of British Columbia, particularly in coastal communities, and has a track record of leveraging partnerships to maximize federal investments:

- Based on the Foundation's grant making over the last 24 years, volunteer and community-based Pacific salmon conservation projects generate seven additional dollars for every dollar invested;
- Seafood processing as well as commercial and recreational fishing bring in more than \$1.8 billion in revenue and contribute roughly \$500 million in GDP to the provincial economy each year, employing more than 12,000 workers;

- A vibrant recreational and sportfishing industry generates more than \$800 million alone in annual revenue;
- A 24-year-old partnership between the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the federal government has directed \$6.1 million generated through the sales of Pacific Salmon Conservation Stamps. The Foundation has granted this money to 1,279 community-based Pacific salmon projects, resulting in \$67 million worth of project activity. That means, for every dollar generated from the Pacific Salmon Conservation Stamp, an additional \$11 is leveraged locally by volunteers and Pacific salmon stewardship groups;
- Since 2006 the Foundation has played a leading role in implementing the Fraser Salmon and Watershed Program, part of the \$21 million B.C. Living Rivers Trust. This provincial initiative was partially matched with federal dollars and in-kind services. This provincial and federal funding allowed the Foundation to support 275 salmon conservation projects in the Fraser River basin, an area covering 30 per cent of the province.

The Foundation is a trusted leader in the conservation community because of the credible program evaluation, monitoring and investment capacity that we bring to partnerships with government. The recommendations we make to the Standing Committee on Finance are reflective of the federal government's commitment to engaging in partnerships, the importance of which was reiterated to the Foundation's leadership by Fisheries and Oceans Minister Keith Ashfield during his recent visit to British Columbia.

As the Foundation moves forward, we look forward to continuing to partner with the federal government to recognize the economic, environmental and cultural importance of Pacific salmon. We strongly encourage you to honour the service of the 30,000 people who have volunteered to make more than 1,200 salmon projects possible in British Columbia by making Pacific salmon restoration and regeneration a priority during the 2012 budgeting process.

Please feel free to contact me at briddell@psf.ca or (604) 664-7664 extension 106.

Sincerely,



Brian Riddell, PhD
President and CEO

Recommendations from the Pacific Salmon Foundation to the Standing Committee on Finance

Recommendation One: Expand investment in volunteerism to support Pacific salmon restoration.

The Foundation was heartened during this year's Speech from the Throne to learn of the government's plan to, "engage a broad range of stakeholders on the development of a national conservation plan, to move our conservation objectives forward and better connect all Canadians with nature." As an environmental foundation that has funded more than 1,250 volunteer-driven conservation projects, we understand well the power of connecting people to nature. Since 1989, Foundation grants have supported more than 30,000 volunteers across British Columbia. Thanks to their work and resourcefulness, they have generated \$67 million (of which \$9.2 million represents the sales of the Pacific Salmon Conservation Stamp and Foundation-generated revenue) in salmon projects and have generated seven additional dollars for every dollar invested by the Foundation.

To expand volunteerism, we encourage the federal government to invest \$20 million over the next five years for salmon stewardship infrastructure. This investment could generate a return of upwards of \$100 million attributed to the federal government. This investment has the potential to create a 5:1 return on investment for communities based on successes associated with an analogous but smaller-scale project in 2009/2010, which was made possible by a \$1.2 million Canada Action Plan investment.

Ageing infrastructure of many community-based salmon conservation facilities and hatcheries, some dating from the 1970s, are in critical need of repair to ensure the health and safety of both the volunteers and salmon in their care. There is a serious need to protect the investment made to date by the government and communities through Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Salmonid Enhancement Program. The Foundation has worked with community stakeholders to develop a proposal that would create jobs in rural communities to improve ageing infrastructure, expand environmental volunteerism and public education, restore access to historic habitat, as well as improve watershed function.

Recommendations from the Pacific Salmon Foundation to the Standing Committee on Finance

Recommendation Two: Support a comprehensive plan to restore the Strait of Georgia ecosystem.

In 2009, the Foundation engaged a panel of scientists familiar with the varied issues in the Strait of Georgia. The panel provided a series of recommended actions to: restore a sustainable fishery, dramatically improve our understanding of what limits survival and production in the near-shore and marine environment, plus provide an ecosystem basis for future management planning.

The proposed five-year Strait of Georgia Initiative includes 14 unique projects covering the range of topics from biological oceanography to marine mammals and aquaculture (including both hatcheries and salmon farms). With a budget of \$10 million, it will be the single largest project of its kind ever undertaken by the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the most comprehensive study of the Strait.

Building on the Pacific Salmon Foundation's history, it will also be inclusive of volunteer and professional communities around the Strait. Coastal communities were directly involved in the development of the plan and will play important roles moving forward.

The federal government could kick start this historic initiative with a one-time investment in 2012 of \$1.5 million. This investment would be a catalyst for securing additional investments from individual donors, foundations, and the private sector. Several donors have indicated they are interested in donating to the project, but they need to see a lead contributor willing to invest 15 per cent up front before they finalize their commitments. This would be an excellent opportunity for a relatively modest federal investment to easily be multiplied several times over with private sector support.

This project also has a tremendous potential "up-side" economically since the commercial and recreational fishing industry in B.C. already generates annual revenues of more than \$1.8 billion and contributes roughly \$500 million in GDP to the provincial economy. Increasing the abundance of highly-valued coho and Chinook salmon in the Strait of Georgia in particular would provide a major injection for an industry critical to the survival of coastal communities and uniquely represent "Beautiful B.C" as a global tourist destination.

Recommendations from the Pacific Salmon Foundation to the Standing Committee on Finance

Recommendation Three: Maintain the current budget of Fisheries and Oceans Canada's Salmonid Enhancement Program.

This program provides the core support and heavy lifting that is the backbone of volunteer-based habitat restoration, stock assessment, and broader community involvement in Pacific salmon restoration and regeneration. This program is critical to the work of the Foundation.

Started in 1977, this program has engaged volunteers and watershed stewardship organizations in projects to reverse the decline of Pacific salmon stocks. This included the construction of hatcheries, spawning channels, fish ladders and other fishways by the federal government, complemented by the volunteer service of community members to restore Pacific salmon habitat. As a result, each year, millions of juvenile Pacific salmon are incubated and released into B.C.'s rivers and streams, and, in some cases, genetically-unique salmon populations are preserved from extinction.

A diminished Salmonid Enhancement Program would undercut more than 300 volunteer streamkeeping organizations that work hand-in-glove with the federal government to ensure a sustainable natural environment, which Governor General David Johnston said "shapes our national identity, our health and our prosperity" during the June 3, 2011 Speech from the Throne.