



## Liberal MPs Reject Study of Fishery Closure Impacts in British Columbia

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**OTTAWA, ON** - Liberal Members of Parliament unanimously voted against a proposed study of socio-economic impacts resulting from the latest round of chinook salmon harvest closures announced by the federal government.

The study motion was presented at the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans by Conservative Blaine Calkins, MP for Red Deer-Lacombe, and was supported by all opposition members. Unfortunately, the Liberal majority on the committee, including British Columbia MP Ken Hardie (Fleetwood-Port Kells), rejected the proposed study.

“Government decisions have a major impact on the lives and livelihoods of Canadians, and the latest round of Pacific salmon closures has already impacted coastal communities and businesses that depend on fisheries,” said MP Calkins following the committee meeting. “As disappointing as it was to see the proposed study defeated by the Liberal committee members, my Conservative colleagues and I will continue to work with people in B.C. directly impacted by another round of reductions and closures.”

The latest rounds of fishing closures and reductions were announced in April by Liberal Fisheries Minister and B.C. MP Jonathan Wilkinson.

“Of course, we see politics in Ottawa, but this was pretty callous,” said Mel Arnold, MP for North Okanagan-Shuswap. “The proposed study would have focused on the impacts being felt by the 8,000 British Columbians who work in and around our public fishery. Apparently, the Trudeau Liberals don’t want anyone asking them questions or hearing what they’re experiencing.”

British Columbia’s public fishery is a world-famous destination for sport fishing and contributes \$1.1 billion to the Canadian economy every year. Some 300,000 annual license holders who depend on BC’s public fishery for recreational and subsistence fishing are impacted by the latest closures, as are numerous businesses in the fishing, tourism, transportation, retail and accommodation sectors.

The proposed study motion noted that “since 2016, the public fishery in British Columbia has been damaged by unrelenting reductions of access to fisheries caused by the federal government’s preference to close fisheries rather than support balanced fishery enhancement and habitat restoration to grow fishery populations.” The proposal also sought an assessment of “other measures that could deliver increases in chinook salmon stocks.”

“After years of mismanagement and stone-walling grassroots efforts to restore wild Pacific salmon stocks, this government dealt another blow to Pacific salmon fisheries and the people who depend on them to put food on their family’s tables,” said MP Todd Doherty who represents Cariboo-Prince George. “The Liberals stopped this study because they have the numbers at committee, but I am from B.C. and I know the determination of British Columbians. We will keep fighting to restore salmon stocks and restore access to the public fishery.”

-30-

### Proposed Study Motion

#### *Whereas:*

- the public fishery in British Columbia contributes \$1.1 billion to Canada’s economy; and
- the public fishery in British Columbia provides 9,000 jobs while benefiting 300,000 annual license holders, their families and businesses connected to the public fishery’s activities and tourism-related spending; and
- since 2016, the public fishery in British Columbia has been damaged by unrelenting reductions of access to fisheries caused by the federal government’s preference to close fisheries rather than support balanced fishery enhancement and habitat restoration to grow fishery populations,

#### *Mr. Calkins moves that:*

- the Standing Committee on Fisheries and Oceans undertake a study of the socio-economic impact of the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans’ decisions to close the recreational fishing of chinook salmon to fully understand the impact of this decision on small businesses and coastal communities; and
- as part of its study, the Committee travel to the west coast to meet with those impacted including small businesses that have had to decrease staff numbers due to the reduction of opportunities in the public fishery; and
- as part of its study, the Committee assess other measures that could deliver increases in chinook salmon stocks.

### Vote Results

#### ***In Favour***

MP Blaine Calkins, Conservative, Red Deer-Lacombe, AB  
MP Todd Doherty, Conservative, Cariboo-Prince George, BC  
MP Mel Arnold, Conservative, North Okanagan-Shuswap, BC  
MP Fin Donnelly, New Democratic, Port Moody-Coquitlam, BC

#### ***Opposed***

MP Ken Hardie, Liberal, Fleetwood-Port Kells, BC  
MP Colin Fraser, Liberal, West Nova, NS  
MP Churence Rogers, Liberal, Bonavista-Burin-Trinity, NFL  
MP Robert J. Morrissey, Liberal, Egmont, PEI  
MP Alaina Lockhart, Liberal, Fundy-Royal, NB

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