

## Steveston Public Forum Summaries

---

Date: September 13, 2010  
Time: 6:45 p.m. – 7:30 p.m. (approximately)  
Venue: Steveston-London Secondary School  
Presentations: 5

### **Welcome**

Henry Charles welcomed the Commissioner to the traditional territory of the Musqueam people. He emphasized the extent of the decline of Fraser sockeye by describing how salmon no longer jump from the water when Musqueam children walk along the Fraser River.

### **Captain Robert Karliner**

Captain Robert Karliner addressed DFO's management of the 2010 Adams River sockeye return. He described his background as a commercial fisher, including his involvement in the Adams River sockeye fishery from 1938 to 1958. Captain Karliner argued that DFO's predictions for the 2010 return were inaccurate and caused chaos for commercial fishers at the beginning of the season. He said that DFO prevented commercial fishers from harvesting Adams River sockeye by closing the fishery too soon, and called on the Commissioner to investigate the 1,440,000 sockeye that he said were caught from August 30, 2010 to September 6, 2010 between Mission Bridge and Hell's Gate. Captain Karliner said that DFO's policies favour First Nations fishers over commercial fishers, and that a new management system is necessary to revive the Fraser sockeye commercial fishery.

### **Garry Biggar**

Garry Biggar introduced himself as a commercial fisher. He explained that he is concerned by the presence of ex-DFO staff among the Commissioner's advisors. Mr. Biggar said that it is inappropriate for ex-DFO staff to be assisting in the investigation of their former employer, and that their presence may compromise the integrity of the commission's final recommendations.

### **Vivian Krause**

Vivian Krause presented on the validity of sea lice research and the motivation and funding of organizations opposed to open net-pen aquaculture. She described her personal and professional history, noting that she worked in the aquaculture industry from 2002 to 2003 but was not speaking on their behalf. She argued that the widely-cited sea lice research conducted by the University of Alberta and published in the journal *Science* was funded in part by an organization opposed to fish farming. In addition, she criticized the researchers for using selective data and falsely reporting their findings. Ms. Krause said that she filed a complaint of scientific misconduct with the University of Alberta, but that despite its policy of research integrity the university administration refused to launch a formal investigation. She emphasized that the public alarm over aquaculture would not have occurred had the results of the research been accurately reported. Ms. Krause concluded by encouraging the

Commissioner to investigate the authorship and funding of aquaculture research during his review of existing scientific literature.

**Gary Williamson**

Gary Williamson explained that he had been a commercial fisher his entire life. He noted that, like all commercial fishers, he only fished when permitted to by DFO. Mr. Williamson said that the decline of Fraser sockeye was caused by DFO mismanagement rather than overfishing. He pointed to the 2010 Fraser sockeye return as further evidence of the failure of DFO's management policies, noting that DFO's decision not to open the fishery earlier in the season prevented gillnetters from harvesting late-run sockeye.

**Eric Wickham**

Eric Wickham informed the Commissioner that he wished to respond to Vivian Krause's comments regarding funding of organizations opposed to open net-pen aquaculture. Mr. Wickham explained his involvement in AquaNET, a federally-funded program that he said provided significant funding to British Columbia's aquaculture industry. Mr. Wickham said that he was asked to resign from the organization due to his opposition to this practice. He noted, however, that the Canadian public, through the federal government, continues to fund profitable, foreign aquaculture corporations. He informed the Commissioner that he serves as the Executive Director of the Canadian Sablefish Association, which he said proudly donates money to Alexandra Morton's non-profit organization every year. Mr. Wickham also addressed DFO's management of the fisheries, calling it dysfunctional and unresponsive to the needs of both fish and commercial fishers. He called on the Commissioner to investigate fisheries management in other countries, particularly Japan, Russia, and the United States, and to encourage DFO to apply their best practices.