

Cohen Commission Public Forum – September 1, 2010

Q. How can citizens participate in the recovery of Fraser sockeye?

A. Citizens can participate through a Fishery Stabilization Program. Sustainability of the fish and the fishery is of utmost importance to all Canadian citizens. The term fishery pertains to both the commercial fishermen and the infrastructure associated with it.

One way in which participants can help in the recovery of the Fraser sockeye is through a voluntary commercial licence tie-up program. This program was initiated for the 1998 salmon fishery. At that time, a total of 37 percent of vessel owners representing 1,340 licences opted to tie-up their commercial fishing vessels. Vessel owners received payments of \$6,500 for gillnetters and trollers and \$10,500 for seiners. This assisted fishermen to offset costs and assisted Fisheries and Oceans with fish conservation.

This would provide stabilization through the boom and bust cycles and retain both the fishing infrastructure and the new entrants who have entered the industry. 2010 provides an excellent example of the challenges of lost infrastructure with one of the largest sockeye returns on the Fraser River.

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