

June 1, 2017

Ministry of Fisheries & Oceans

House of Commons, Ottawa, Ont.

Canada , K1A 0A6

Hon. Dominic LeBlanc, Minister

Dear Minister:

The B.C. Federation of Drift Fishers is adding it's voice to the growing, passionate opposition to the recently announced cuts to DFO programs in the Pacific Region.

We have grave concerns regarding the elimination of the DFO production of steelhead and cutthroat. At this time many B.C. stocks of steelhead are at point of extreme conservation concern. It will take the combined efforts of both governments , with the support of stakeholders to save these fish.

As designated in the "Provincial Steelhead Mgt Plan", which your Ministry signed off on, hatchery steelhead play a role in providing angling opportunity and can play a role in rivers where stocks are close to expiry or expired. Most disturbing is reassurances earlier this year from your staff to their provincial counter parts that the agreement established years ago under the SEP program to produce steelhead would be continued.

The sincerity of those assurances must be questioned and obviously the cuts do little to demonstrate willingness to work with the province as co-managers of the species.

Another area of concern is the announced cancellation of the respected "Salmonids in the Classroom" program. This program has for many years assisted in developing our youth as the future stewards of the resource. Our organization and other have worked with DFO relating to content as we appreciate that working with our children to make them responsible stewards must be a priority. We had assumed you shared that priority.

The "Salmonids in the Classroom" program is presented annually to over 35,000 children. At a cost of \$600,000 most would agree this is a wise expenditure of our license fees and tax dollars.

Mr. LeBlanc we implore you to reverse these cuts and demonstrate that your ministry recognizes the fragile state of B.C. steelhead and accepts responsibility for assisting in promoting environmental stewardship for our children.

Thank you for your consideration and your commitment to protecting and enhancing B.C. fish stocks.

Rod Clapton

President, B.C. Federation of Drift Fishers