

August 12, 2005

The Honorable Geoff Regan
Minister of Fisheries & Oceans
Parliament Buildings, Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0E6

Dear Sir:

Re: Early Summer Sockeye Environmental Adjustment

It appears to me that your officials in BC are about to unilaterally make adjustments to the management plan you signed off on for Fraser River Early Summer Sockeye Salmon stocks in 2005. If they are allowed to do so, public skepticism in DFO's ability to properly manage is likely to rise.

I have information that DFO plans to make changes to the formula for calculating the Early Summer Sockeye Environmental Adjustment (EMA) by removing the Pitt River abundance while still calculating the Total Allowable Harvest for Early Summer Sockeye as though Pitt River Sockeye were included. In this way, DFO hopes to justify over harvesting of the Early Summer Sockeye. As you know, a number of the Early Summer stocks are already endangered. Four years ago, the escapement target for Early Summer Sockeye stood at 400,000. In 2005, there may be fewer than 70,000 for the entire Early Summer run. These mid-season changes will affect the rights of First Nations that rely of the early Summer Sockeye. Before there is any decision to over harvest Early Summer Sockeye, extensive consultation with First Nations are obligatory.

Regrettably, the decision respecting Early Summer Sockeye harvests might take as early as today at a meeting of the Fraser Panel. I urge you to immediately contact your officials and override any plans they may have to craft a fishing plan that would allow over harvesting of the Early Summer Sockeye.

I hope you will act on my concerns immediately.

Sincerely,
Grand Chief Doug Kelly
Sto:lo Tribal Council

c.c. Paul Sprout, RDG
Leader of the Conservative Party
Leader of the Bloc
Jim Wild, Area Manager

