

January 20, 2009

Fraser Health Authority
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To Whom It May Concern:

A news story has surfaced (see attached) in which a claim is made that near shore Pacific Orcas are consuming and dying from toxins imbedded in the flesh of Chinook salmon. This claim is apparently backed up by a scientific study.

The toxins mentioned in the above-noted study are PCBs, dioxins and chlorinated pesticides.

My concern is that the Sto:lo community of the Lower Fraser River (24 bands/8000 population) consumes copious quantities of Chinook caught in the Fraser River in both the early spring through to late summer. These fish are eaten immediately or preserved for the winter larder. Chinook is a staple in the diet of Sto:lo elders and children. Understandably, the Sto:lo wants to know if their traditional diet of Chinook is safe.

In light of the aforementioned study, is Fraser Health Authority in a position to issue assurances to the Sto:lo community that the Chinook they are harvesting from the Fraser River is safe to eat?

Thank you for your attention to this matter.

I await a prompt reply.

Ernie Crey
Senior Policy Advisor
Sto:lo Tribal Council

CC STC Directors
Minister of Health