




 THE SVIAC BOARD OF DIRECTORS TAKES THIS OPPORTUNITY TO WISH YOU AND YOUR FAMILY A MERRY CHRISTMAS AND A HAPPY AND PROSPEROUS NEW YEAR.
 

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NOTABLE CALENDAR EVENTS

- FEB **TBA**, 2023 Victoria Boat & Fishing Show, Pearkes Rec Centre
- FEB 1 – 5, 2023 Vancouver International Boat Show, Vancouver
- FEB 25, 2023 PSF Gala Dinner, Victoria Conference Centre
- MAR 3 – 5, 2023 BC Sportsmen’s Show, Abbotsford
- MAR 25, 2023 (**TBC**) SVIAC Salish Sea Spring Fishing Derby, Cheanuh

**SUCCESSFUL
AGAIN!!**

SOOKE CHINOOK ENHANCEMENT INITIATIVE

This year was the sixth year in the water for the Sooke Chinook Enhancement Initiative. Once again SVIAC and the dedicated Sooke project team delivered on our commitments making 2022 another successful year. With 2022 now under our belts, there are some brag-worthy statistics to share.

Since our first year in 2017, when we reared just 200,000 juvenile Chinook, we have come a long way. Over the past six years, approximately 3,500,000 healthy Chinook smolts have



acclimatized to marine conditions in our pen system and been safely released. We have adipose fin clipped and Coded Wire Tagged over 400,000 fish. This community-based project, administered by SVIAC, has also raised more than \$375,000 of private funds to keep the program operational. And, despite the global pandemic and the necessity for lockdowns, the Sooke Chinook

program continued operating during the COVID in 2020 and 2021.

There is evidence of our enhancement efforts having successfully resulted in large adult salmon returning to the Juan de Fuca Strait. Indication of abundant Chinook off Sooke and Beecher Bay in Juan de Fuca during August and early September, has been confirmed by anglers busy catching fish and thrilled to have plenty of action while on the water. The size of fish caught and returned Coded Wire Tags from clipped fish verifies this.

In addition, during August and September, endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales are frequently witnessed cruising up and down the Juan de Fuca Strait transiting from Orcas Island USA to Swiftsure Bank. They too are searching for large Chinook to eat.

The data speaks to our success too. Information from the DFO salmon head recovery program, that processes the Coded Wire Tags handed in by anglers and



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commercial fishermen, indicates that the fish are being harvested from Southern Alaska all the way to Victoria, with the bulk of the tags showing up off Juan de Fuca Strait.



**Hatchery
Origin
Chinook
with
Adipose
Fin
Clipped**

Our success is due to a true community effort. From the incredible generosity of our local sponsors who provide the private funds needed to continue operations, to the selfless volunteers that come out year after year to help with the fish deliveries and maintaining the pens while the fish are there. From the local businesses like Jenkins Marine and Vancouver Island Lodge that help us with the pen system, to the T'sou-ke Nation members who come out to assist.

IMPORTANT!

Please take a moment to read the list of our incredibly generous sponsors on the last page of this bulletin

There are also special individuals who have stepped up to play important rolls in the program. Glen Varney's assistance with the pen operation and overseeing the aquaculture during the first five years has been extremely valuable. With these responsibilities taken over for the time being by Peter McCully and Ben Eardley of Goldstream Hatchery, we have entered a new era. And let's not forget Rob Brouwer, who is the DFO Vancouver Island Watershed Manager, plus Caroline Cherry and the crew at Nitnat Hatchery, who have all been instrumental in us achieving what we have with our program so far.

The SVIAC Board of Director are truly grateful for everyone's support and look forward to steering this project successfully into the future. With near term ambitions of seeing our program grow to handling 1,000,000 Chinook smolts per year or more and increasing the adipose fin clipping to 100% of our fish, we have lots to do this coming year. The Board

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genuinely hope you will seriously consider supporting us and this worthy initiative, either again if you are an existing sponsor or for the first time.

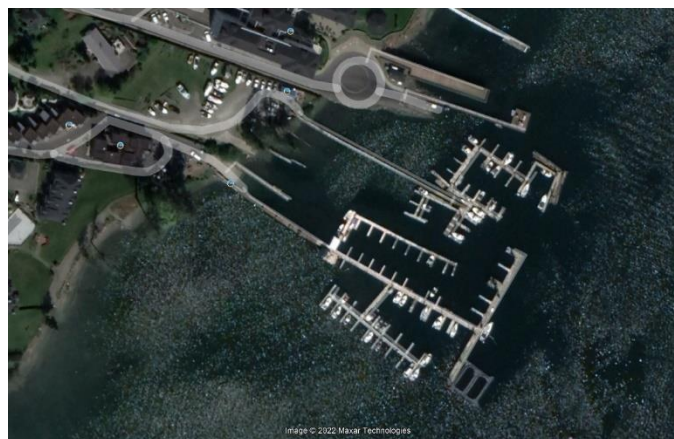
In the coming year, the program will be facing certain unexpected costs, some of which are one time only and others that will become annual, they are listed below. In addition, several important matters need to be dealt with in 2023 that may add extra operating cost or require greater effort:

1. The bottom portions of both of the pen nets are suffering wear and tear from six years of use. These can be replaced, but the cost will be higher than the usual check and minor repair costs we have dealt with in the past. We anticipate this could be as high as \$6,000 to \$7,000;



2. The 20-foot storage container, where our pen equipment and hoses are kept, is located conveniently near the pen system when the pen is on site at the marina. Regrettably, the container needs to be relocated. This will incur moving costs and likely require heavy equipment to move it, which are not cheap. In addition, dependent on where the unit is moved too, there may well be monthly fees to leave it at that new location, something we have not had to pay to date.

3. Particularly worrying, the Sooke Harbour Resort and Marina have indicated that the moorage space we have occupied for six years straight may not be available to us in the coming year; and,



4. We are extremely grateful for all the Pacific Salmon Foundation support to date and we will miss their participation from here on in. Sadly, their grants are for helping enhancement groups start new projects and are not designed as long-term support, so SVIAC will be seeking new funding sources to replace the PSF funding.



A SERIOUS CALL FOR YOUR SUPPORT

Since early 2020 when the lockdown began, South Vancouver Island Anglers Coalition, an important local angling advocacy and enhancement society, has been particularly hard hit by the COVID pandemic.

The society, like many others, has suffered in two ways over the last two and a half years during the lockdown. Firstly, our membership base has declined, which means less revenue from members' dues, plus fewer members results in less participation in all aspects of what SVIAC does for the angling community on South Vancouver Island.



Membership reduction during COVID has been common for many societies, so far as we can see.

Secondly, a number of major sponsors who support SVIAC and our efforts in Sooke to increase the Chinook salmon population, have experienced difficulties with their own business revenues being way down due to lack of international tourism.

Unfortunately, this interruption in our regular stream of funding has resulted in a cash flow shortfall.

While our core group of dedicated volunteers and the devoted members of SVIAC's board of directors have kept the ship afloat during the pandemic, it has been and continues to be a challenge.

It was even uncertain at one point whether the Sooke Chinook Enhancement Initiative could operate during COVID or not. The SVIAC Board was able to work closely with DFO to find a way to keep the program operational throughout the lockdown, even though the department was rightly ultra-precautious about the health of their staff and COVID being spread. As already mentioned, fundraising for the program was in jeopardy too, as the program operates exclusively on private funds.

So, now the world is opening up again to travel and day-to-day life has essentially returned to normal, we need to get SVIAC back on track. Re-build our membership and pick up on the fundraising. Today, it is more important than ever for SVIAC to be able to stand strong.

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Why? Because right now, our South Vancouver Island salmon fishery is in a very delicate state, after years of decline and increased DFO regulations. Our Chinook and Coho fishing opportunities are obstructed by struggling Fraser River stocks of concern and those Chinook are not making any meaningful recovery so far. A mountain of new, which some suggest are unnecessary, restrictions relating to endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales have been foisted upon our area too. And there is an emerging and urgent need to stand up for Canadian anglers’ rights at the reconciliation table, as the Canadian government seems willing to gift our fishing opportunities away to others without rationalization.

Add to all that an exceptional Sooke Chinook sea pen project that has significant annual cost and this year needs an additional infusion of funds to cover inflation, maintenance, net replacement, structural repairs and relocating the storage container, not to mention increased operational costs.



So, right now, SVIAC needs to be at its best, making every effort possible from a fisheries advocacy perspective and equally generating enough money to keep the society and its commitments well-funded.

So, what is the board of director’s plan to turn things around?

MEMBERSHIP - expect a membership campaign in early 2023 to build the annual memberships back up, no doubt with a sign-up prize contest in there too. SVIAC will go back to having an in-person exhibit at the Victoria Boat and Fishing Show expected to be in mid-February 2023, where we meet the show goers, offer a raffle draw and sign up members as well. Reach out to the local angling clubs to seek new members from their ranks. And now that COVID is over, we plan to re-establish our member loyalty program again, where showing your SVIAC membership card at select local stores can provide discounts or special services.

FUNDRAISING – (*beyond membership dues*) we plan to ask all of our membership for donations. We will also send letters to previous donors and sponsors updating them on our societies progress and seek their support again. In addition, the society will send out

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donation requests letters to key individuals and organizations to seek their support too. In addition, we will continue to host fishing derbies as fundraisers twice a year.



Finally, SVIAC has engaged the services of a professional fundraiser and we plan to run an online fundraising event. It will be either an online auction or a 50/50 or both. These efforts outlined above are all aimed at helping SVIAC cover the anticipated \$75,000 the society needs to operate the Sooke Chinook Enhancement Initiative and run the society.

SO HOW CAN YOU HELP – Here are some different options:

- If you are an existing member, thank you for your loyalty and we would be most grateful if you renew your membership for 2023.
- If your membership has lapsed, we'd really appreciate it if you purchase a \$40 membership again to help us achieve our goals and carry on the important work we do.
- If you have never been a member before and you are concerned about your fishing opportunities in the future, seriously consider joining SVIAC as we work for the betterment of all of our fisheries.
- Recommend buying a SVIAC membership to your friends to help us have a greater reach and a stronger voice.
- Have your company, or the company where you work, sponsor a prize for our online auction.
- Recommend someone or a specific company where we can send a donation request letter,
- Come visit us at the Victoria Boat and Fishing Show to chat with us, buy a membership or enter the contest at the booth, and;

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- Make a donation to SVIAC to support our advocacy efforts and the Sooke Chinook sea pen project.

In addition to the above, the SVIAC board will create two new active committees. One for communication and a second for fundraising. We are seeking individuals who have experience in these two fields and can take on leadership roles. For the communications committee individuals with computer, copywriting, and/or social media skills would be an asset. For the fundraising committee we are seeking a person who has knowledge of fundraising plan development, grant writing, event coordination and requesting donations.

Please get in touch with Christopher Bos, SVIAC president, if you are interested in either of these opportunities or would like to find out more. Contact information chris@anglerscoalition.com or phone (778) 967-2363

2022 SALISH SEA SALMON CHALLENGE

This year's SVIAC run Salish Sea Salmon Challenge, which took place on Saturday September 3rd, was our best participation so far. Another great day on the water now in the books. Although at tad windy first thing in the morning on derby day, our 128 derby entrants ventured forth and vied for the biggest fish prize. The fish weren't as cooperative as the day before, but a number of wily anglers were able to boat some nice ones. There were 13 fish brought to the scale, ranging from 10 to 20.9 lbs. Congrats to John Echle, who weighed the biggest fish (20.9 lbs), he took home



\$3,000 cash! Sadly, John wasn't in the Skippers Challenge side bet, but Ryan Mace was happy to get the \$1,550 cash in that pot. Also, congrats to the \$3,000 Random Draw cash prize winner Orry Wendland.

As always, a special thank you to our good friends at Cheanuh Marina for their hospitality and again another shout out to

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our generous sponsors Island Outfitters, Trotac Marine, Scotty Manufacturing, Custom Kraft Tackle (Kripple KC Lures) and Cheanuh Marina. Of course, a great big thank you goes out to all our contestants who have helped raise money for the Sooke Chinook Sea Pen Project. All told, the net proceeds were almost \$4,000 from the day – A GREAT JOB BY ALL INVOLVED!!



2022 Salish Sea Salmon Challenge

PRESENTED BY
SVIAC
 We Care about Fish
 South Vancouver Island
 Anglers Coalition

ISLAND OUTFITTERS

Scotty

CHEANUH MARINA

**SATURDAY
3rd SEPTEMBER**

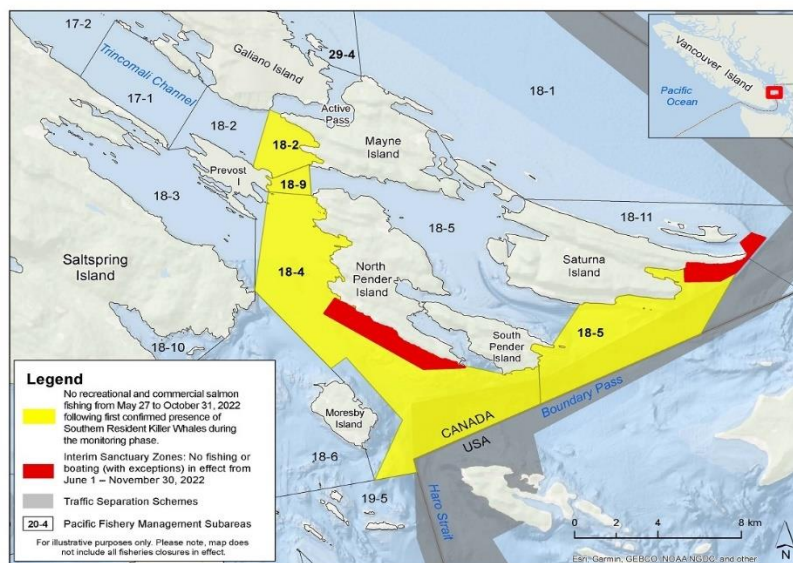
Cash and Random Draw Prizes - Derby Proceeds Support the Sooke Chinook Sea Pen Program
 Rod Tickets are \$70.00 Each and can be Purchased at Island Outfitters, Cheanuh Marina and Trotac or Online at anglerscoalition.com

SVIAC hosts two fishing derby events per year, which are primarily fundraisers for our society. There is a core group of anglers who come out and support our fundraising and fishing events. Reports back to us indicate the contestants have fun and enjoy these events. We hope to increase the number of derby tickets sold in the future, as each ticket sold increases the prize pool by 2/3rds of the ticket value. So, if you haven't entered one of the SVIAC derbies yet, give it serious consideration next year. The fishing will be fun, you might win a prize and you'll know you are supporting a good cause when you buy a ticket.

We hope to see you out there for the Salish Sea Spring Fishing Derby, which will likely be on Saturday March 25, 2023!

INTERIM SANCTUARY ZONES FOR ENDANGERED ORCAS – DO THEY WORK?

For more than fifteen years, SVIAC, the South Vancouver Island angling community and the SFAB, amongst other groups, have strongly requested DFO implement a comprehensive recovery plan for Fraser River Chinook stocks of concern. Besides their importance to our salmon fisheries, these large early-running Chinook are also important to endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW). Historically entering the Salish Sea in the spring each year, when the Early Fraser salmon were migrating through the area, SRKW were known to focus on these salmon. Those same salmon also supported the once vibrant early season public salmon fishery in the Southern Salish Sea.



2022 Gulf Islands management measures

Canada

In recent years, the focus on endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales (SRKW) has exponentially grown, resulting in a massive federal government effort to stem the tide of their decline, following a public statement by Prime Minister Trudeau. As often is the case, when government bureaucrats act upon political directives, it leads to outcomes that can be considered erroneous after the facts are in. The Interim Sanctuary Zones, in our opinion, fit that bill.

Much of the politics of fisheries management is optics ... what can government show the public and tell the media that they are doing. Unfortunately, Canadian anglers have become easy targets as fisheries closures are trumpeted by DFO bureaucrats as effect remedies, yet history tells us they rarely work.

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With urging of the environmental community, DFO SRKW Recovery Team identified the public salmon fishery as a threat to the endangered whales. Since 2018 “closed to salmon fishing” areas have been implemented while SRKW are in the Salish Sea during summer. Sanctuary areas have also been set up, where no boating and no fishing can occur ... *quiet zones where frightened whales can dash into to avoid the noise and disruption of pesky sailors and anglers* (note the sarcastic tone).



In reality, the noise and disturbance from small crafts like those used by anglers has little to no impact on the SRKW or their behaviour. And there is no evidence that the Interim Sanctuary Zones work at all. DFO eggheads suggest it will take as long as 10 years to evaluate the efficacy of the *interim* sanctuary zones. Sadly, common sense and years of on water experience tells us they won't work. A soon-to-be-published study by the Orca Behaviour Institute backs that conclusion. The study reveals that SRKW rarely swim through the designated sanctuary, “swim through”, not stay there for safety or foraging, there is no evidence of that either. So why interrupt the publics' access to Salish Sea areas to appease the SRKW that only use those areas 7% of the time while they are in Canadian waters. Much better to use a 400-metre avoidance protocol, as is in place in other areas of the Salish Sea.

Since the SRKW annual measures have been implemented, we have seen vast areas of the coast closed to salmon fishing for months at a time, with little defensible scientific

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data to justify the action. Salmon fishing in Juan de Fuca Strait was closed between June and October to allow SRKW to feed in peace and avoid being “pestered” by the Chinook and Coho anglers in their little boats. In the absence of data, zealous environmentalist bureaucrats claimed these closures were critical. Now as real data comes in the Juan de Fuca closure has been overturned as it has no meaningful value to SRKW. So, closures without data supporting the management action, must be pushed back on vigorously.

We cannot permit our way of life, our right to fish and our opportunity to catch a salmon be taken from us based on sketchy policy that is not anchored by defensible scientific data. We need effective advocacy to protect our fishery from those who want us off the water.

THE XQR HALIBUT LICENSE IS A BOONDOGGLE

According to the definition in the Political Dictionary (www.politicaldictionary.com) ... a “**boondoggle**” is “a wasteful or extravagant project with no practical value. Usually, a boondoggle makes use of public funds and carries at least a whiff of corruption”. There is one continuing DFO absurdity related to halibut, its known as the Halibut XQR License, that one might suggest fits the *boondoggle* moniker, although there is no evidence of any corruption.

The SFAB has expressed that they cannot understand why DFO persist in providing this ill-advised special license as what seems like an appeasement to a meagre few. A handful of people literally get to buy commercial halibut quota for hundreds of dollars at market rate from a commercial halibut fisher, so they can go fishing and keep a larger fish than the regular Public Fishery license size limit allows. By doing so, the person armed with an expensive piece of paper can go fishing as if they are a recreational angler and keep a halibut larger than a normal Canadian angler can take home. If they are successful, they are supposed to account for their catch by using



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the quota they purchased to *balance the books*, so to speak.

Unfortunately, most of the largest halibut are very productive females that need protecting as they provide the future progeny to keep the stock renewing. The license system is also fraught with opportunity to get away with nefarious and illegal acts. Acts such as overfishing, as well as easily flouting the law. And the license incurs excessive and unnecessary cost to Canadian tax payers for administration and enforcement. Moreover, Canada’s fishing and hunting opportunities should be based on fair and equitable access for all, definitely not access to the fish resource based on the size of ones’ wallet.

It can’t be stated loudly and clearly enough, the Minister of Fisheries must instruct his Pacific staff to discontinue this license and stop this unnecessary loop-hole fishery.

SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND SFAB COMMITTEE REORGANIZATION

While the Sport Fishing Advisory Board carries on being an important grass-roots process for anglers to present their wishes, concerns, advice and recommendations to government, there are currently changes taking place. Some good and some definitely not so good!

The SFAB is going through a modernization process. Structural and technological



improvement will better help the DFO staff and volunteer anglers use their time in the best way possible in the advisory process. The goal is to make the process more efficient and focus on being species centric, rather than on the current regional structure. While this is a good thing, one asks aloud if the department will go back to listening to the sage advice provided by the SFAB anglers, or, as some believe, ignore the pleas and prudent recommendations of those anglers at the SFAB table. In other words, will we witness

our once vibrant ocean and river salmon fisheries continue to slowly disappear regardless of how the advisory process is structured.

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On another front, it appears a fishing club on Vancouver Island wrote a letter to DFO indicating their dissatisfaction with the SFAB local committee structure, essentially because they felt the location of their club’s members and where those members fished did not align with the boundaries of the local SFAB committee to which they were assigned. In addition, it was suggested the nature of the fisheries within the Southern Gulf Islands were different and warranted a separate committee.



Consequently, DFO has jumped on this as a priority “must deal with”; heaven knows there aren’t any other important issues to deal with except a re-boundary drawing exercise at a time when the public salmon fishery is in the toilet and the number of stocks of concern seems to endlessly grow in number.

Suggesting the existing Port Renfrew, Nitnat, Cowichan committee area and the boundaries of the Victoria and Area committee were somewhat cumbersome, DFO has started looking at re-districting in earnest. Although those same boundaries have worked well for 50 years or more. It appears the department wants to carve out Cowichan region from its existing committee and the Southern Gulf Islands from the Victoria and Area committee, so as to form a new committee in that area of the two portions combined. In principle, this might not be a bad decision, but ... trying to short circuit the existing system may not be wise, which DFO appears to be doing.



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There is a troubling, or definitely not so good aspect to DFO's efforts on this subject. In an attempt to hold costs down, instead of having the new area have a new local committee chair who would have travel expenses covered to attend Regional SFAB meetings, the department has its eyes on taking away the second voting seat from Victoria and giving that seat to the newly formed committee, if their plan goes ahead. Under the guise of avoiding the extra costs, the department would prefer to remove a vote at the South Coast SFAB table from Victoria and Area Committee.

The second seat in the Victoria Committee has been there a long time and has been historically held by the Amalgamated Conservation Society, and was duly re-established in the early 2000s after the department recognized it had been incorrectly removed and the historic records showed the existence of that seat 50 years ago.

A move like that by the department would be ill-advised and would most likely be considered malevolent by many South Island anglers. The second seat in the Victoria Committee has been there a long time and has been historically held by the Amalgamated Conservation Society, and was duly re-established in the early 2000s after the department recognized it had been incorrectly removed and the historic records showed the existence of that seat 50 years ago. In addition, the South Island area covered by the Victoria and Area SFAB Committee is quite large, is home to thousands and thousands of anglers and the Victoria area, is rumored to have the most licenses sold in the province each year. So, besides the historic records verifying the presence of two voting seats in the Victoria Committee, there seems ample justification not to arbitrarily take it away.

Some large communities like Vancouver and bigger cities in the Fraser Valley have a few anglers that suggest they too should have a second voting seat as their population is large, not unlike Victoria. Under those same circumstances, the department really should provide additional voting seats to those large angling communities along the coast.

After all, some smaller SFAB local committees barely attract five anglers to their in-person meetings and are remote in location, plus their areas are sparsely populated, yet they get a vote at the south coast table. Consider this ... while much of the voting on fisheries motions at the South Coast SFAB table are unanimous, however, when a contentious vote comes up before the board, is it fair that the vote of a committee chair who represents a

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anglers from a remote part of the coast that fish six months of the year and only represents a few hundred residents actually carries the exact same weight as the chair of a committee who represent a major city on the coast where the committee has thousands of constituents fish year-round?

What is apparently happening before us, just doesn't seem right or fair and to the crew at SVIAC, it seems plain wrong!

CHANGING CONDITIONS

This new reality of peculiar unpredictable and often extreme weather has caused upheaval all over the planet and is certainly wreaking havoc in the Pacific North West. Atmospheric rivers, massive flooding, extended periods without rain, warmer temperatures than normal and seasonal changes that seem out-of-whack with the normal calendar, are all new realities that we must survive in BC. As humans, we are capable of adapting and making changes, even re-building where necessary after catastrophic destruction occurs. However, much of our region's fish and wildlife, plus the ecosystems they rely upon, are suffering, some severely.



November 2021 Flood Devastation in Southern British Columbia

Salt water anglers are witnessing this in more dramatic fashion in Southern BC. Over two decades ago, the once vibrant year-round salmon fishery in the Georgia, Haro and Juan de Fuca Straits was excellent. Yet today, a number of declining salmon stocks, especially those of Fraser River origin, leave us with a world of hurt regarding restrictive regulations governing our fishery. Since 2008, DFO's steadily increasing regulation regime has

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reduced Chinook fishing by four months during the peak of spring and early summer season. And apparently there is no positive change in sight.

Certain stocks of Chinook, Coho and Steelhead in Southern BC have experienced significant decline and some have all but collapsed. Stream-type salmonids, those spending two years in their natal rivers before going to ocean, are among the worst impacted by these changing climate conditions and major weather events. As young salmon, they are experiencing change to their riverine habitat so drastic that fewer survive. Warming oceans have created changes to the marine food web too, consequently the ocean conditions the salmon experience often provide a less productive environment for survival from juvenile to spawning adult.

For those anglers that follow DFO’s actions on fisheries management and fish recovery, you have witnessed a steady increase in restrictions on all fisheries and a reduction in opportunity to keep a salmon or two over the past two decades. This approach, couched



BEFORE	2022 DRY FALL	AFTER
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as a recovery strategy by the department, has been cheap and easy to implement while providing great optics in the media that something is actually being done to address the salmon declines. However, as a methodology for recovering the salmon, it has historically proven to be ineffective in producing results. It does however, significantly impinge on Canadians access to fish and impacts their rights. At some point, the root cause of the decline has to be addressed or a new strategy has to be adopted to see meaningful fish

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recovery. Government also has to stop defaulting to closing fisheries and instead, work hard for the Canadians to maintain fishing opportunity.

In 2021 then Fisheries Minister, the Honourable Bernadette Jordan, announced a new initiative, the Pacific Salmon Strategy Initiative (PSSI), with great fanfare. The stated ambitions of this \$647.1 million program are to stem the steep decline of many Pacific salmon populations and to protect and rebuild stocks where possible by implementing a series of immediate and long-term solutions. Solutions that focus on four areas: (i) conservation and stewardship; (ii) salmon enhancement; (iii) harvest transformation; and, (iv) integration and collaboration.

Solutions focus area “(ii) Salmon enhancement” sounds good. But will that be enhancement to improve fisheries for Canadians? Likely not, more likely conservation hatchery enhancement to rebuild threatened stocks, if the ideologically-driven hatchery salmon haters have their way. And some skeptics might ask what actually is “harvest transformation”? We all hope it is a strategic move to increasing abundance that permits fisheries to return to historic normal. With the salmon fishery around South Vancouver Island already decimated by years of ever-increasing restrictive regulations, one wonders how long it will take government to see any return to the “good ol’ days” for BC resident anglers.

One thing is for sure, major weather events are more frequent now. In mid November 2021, the Fraser Valley endured massive flooding after days of heavy rains; that flood was dubbed by the provincial government as the worst ever agricultural disaster in BC. Conversely, let’s not forget this past fall, we all saw with our own eyes the extended very dry and warm period in Southern BC, where many streams awaiting salmon runs to appear, were all but dried up. Only a year later British Columbia, known humorously as the “wet” coast, was ravaged by drought. So, between habitat destruction, wildly fluctuating river conditions and warming oceans under today’s extreme climate fluctuations, one has to ask is the new PSSI too little too late for our irreplaceable Pacific salmon.

For example, in our backyard, the Sooke River is a classic example of a small coastal river that has taken a beating in the fall of 2022. Extremely low river flow levels and crystal-clear water were a recipe for disaster for returning Chinook in September and October. As the fish congregated at or near the mouth of the river, the predators moved in and day after day sea lions and a throng of hungry Harbour seals feasted on those Chinook,

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decimating the run. River otters also took their toll on staging Chinook by scoffing on the smaller Jack salmon. Warm low level river conditions were not ideal for any Chinook who made it into the river to spawn either. All in all, this year's chinook return can be considered a disaster with only 160 fish showing up in four separate swim counts.

The volunteer driven, privately funded Sooke Chinook sea pen project was implemented 2017 to improve the number of spawning salmon in the Sooke River and help provide additional large Chinook for the endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales. Now, with even more weather-related challenges facing the Sooke Chinook, this project appears more essential than ever.

Let's all hope that government is genuine in rebuilding struggling salmon stocks and the changing weather does not lead to further declines. With more frequent extreme weather events and changing climate conditions, having humans step up to aid natural spawning salmon runs survive will be increasingly important in the future, if our iconic Pacific salmon are to survive.

We urgently need your help. More than ever before. This is a fight for our salmon fisheries we cannot afford to lose. We must get our hatchery Chinook retention opportunities back and open up Chinook fishing where there are no wild stocks of concern. Equally, we must find funds to continue our Sooke Chinook Enhancement Initiative and keep releasing hundreds of thousands of salmon each year. The stronger we are and the bigger our voice, the more effective we will be. Please support us in any way you can. Buy a SVIAC membership, enter in our raffles, buy tickets to our fishing events and donate to the cause. ***We are counting on you.***

HOW TO SUPPORT SOUTH VANCOUVER ISLAND ANGLERS COALITION

Membership fees are \$40 dollars annually and can be purchased online at <https://www.anglerscoalition.com> or by phone at (778) 967-2363 or in person at SVIAC, Unit 3-774 Bay Street, Victoria V8T 5E4 or by snail mail to the same address – cash, debit and credit cards accepted.

Donations can be made in the same manner as above.

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PLEASE GIVE SERIOUS CONSIDERATION TO BECOMING A SVIAC MEMBER OR
MAKING A DONATION TO SUPPORT OUR FIGHT FOR YOUR SALMON FISHERY
AND OUR SUCCESSFUL CHINOOK SEA PEN PROJECT.

SINCERE THANKS TO ALL OF OUR SPONSORS

**Jeremy Petzing – Joe Milligan - Fred Welter – Les Johnson
Springtide Whale Watching and Eco Tours – Eagle Wing Whale
Watching Tours – Prince of Whales Whale and Marine Wildlife
Adventures – Five Star Whale Watching - Scott Plastics - Leigh
Garrod – Williams Scrap Metal - Pacific Salmon Foundation
Sandy Jadresko - The Amalgamated Conservation Society
Sidney Anglers Association – Puget Sound Anglers - Victoria
Golden Rods and Reels – Roy Yeske – Earl Kreutzer
Frederike Verspoor – Island Outfitters – Jenkins Marine
Dennis Zozula – Dennis C. Reid – Bruce Paddon - Tom and
Betty Cole – Otter Point Campground – Vancouver Island
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