



RESPONSE TO PETITION

Prepare in English and French marking 'Original Text' or 'Translation'

PETITION No.: **421-02293**

BY: **MR. DONNELLY (PORT MOODY-COQUITLAM)**

DATE: **APRIL 30, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **TERRY BEECH**

Response by the Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

SIGNATURE

Minister or Parliamentary Secretary

SUBJECT

Fishing industry

ORIGINAL TEXT

REPLY

The Government of Canada is committed to protecting our fish for future generations and we understand and share concerns around steelhead returns. While steelhead is a provincially-managed fishery, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is taking action to help conserve this important species.

All directed salmon fisheries that have the potential to incidentally intercept steelhead are currently required to implement measures to reduce the chances of intercepting steelhead and/or minimize the potential harm to any steelhead that are incidentally caught, and to release these fish. Those fisheries which have been assessed to historically have the largest impact on Interior Fraser steelhead have already been drastically reduced, with time and area closures in place designed to avoid the majority of the Interior Fraser steelhead migration. They are also required to implement selective measures such as brailing of catch in seine fisheries, and the use of revival boxes. While there is still some impact of various salmon fisheries on interior Fraser Steelhead due to post-release mortalities, existing management measures have greatly limited these impacts.

While chum salmon fisheries can contribute to Interior Fraser Steelhead mortality, other sources of mortality have not been adequately assessed, including impacts during the freshwater phase of the lifecycle.

In the interim, the Department has identified the conservation of Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead Trout as a key priority for salmon fishery planning this year. The Department is reviewing the impacts of all salmon fisheries in the Fraser River and approach areas for the 2018 fishing season, and new management measures to protect Interior Fraser Steelhead for the 2018 draft South Coast Salmon Integrated Fisheries Management Plan.

The Department of Fisheries and Oceans is currently developing a Recovery Potential Assessment as part of the Species at Risk Act emergency listing process. This assessment will consider the impacts of threats to Thompson and Chilcotin Steelhead populations.