



RESPONSE TO PETITION

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

PETITION No.: **421-03052**

BY: **Ms. DUNCAN (EDMONTON STRATHCONA)**

DATE: **DECEMBER 7, 2018**

PRINT NAME OF SIGNATORY: **SEAN CASEY**

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 the implementation of sustainable fisheries management practices that protect our aquatic ecosystems and biodiversity, including the conservation of west coast sturgeon populations. We treat the issue of by-catch very seriously, and the Department of Fisheries and Oceans takes into consideration any impacts on non-target species when prescribing the type of gear that can be used by harvesters participating in a fishery. Moreover, the Department imposes strict fishery opening and closing times to mitigate the risk of by-catch, and catch monitoring procedures. These fisheries management decisions are based on the best available science, and are taken in consultation with all stakeholders and Indigenous peoples.

We recognize the importance of our fisheries as a source of good, middle class jobs in coastal communities, as well as their importance to Canada's economy as a whole and to Indigenous groups. Expanding on this success, we recently announced a new British Columbia Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, which will invest \$100 million over six years in federal funding, to support innovation, clean technology adoption, and infrastructure investments in BC's fish and seafood sector. A one-time \$5 million contribution to the Pacific Salmon Endowment Fund to support community-led wild salmon conservation projects was also announced. These investments will help to ensure the recovery and sustainability of iconic wild pacific salmon stocks, and aquatic ecosystems in general, including other fish species.

Four white sturgeon populations are listed as endangered under the Species at Risk Act. In 2014, the Recovery Strategy for white sturgeon was released, and identified many threats affecting their recovery, including indirect harvest of sturgeon as by-catch, but also: habitat loss, prey availability, invasive non-native fish species, and pollutants. Work is underway to address these threats, most notably we have invested over \$14.7 million to restore aquatic habitats in British Columbia through the Coastal Restoration Fund, a key pillar of our Ocean Protection Plan which is the largest investment ever made to protect Canada's coasts and waterways. In closing, the Government remains committed to the recovery of sturgeon populations and the protection of British Columbia's ecosystems in general, so that future generations of Canadians can enjoy and derive benefit from our aquatic resources.