



HOUSE OF COMMONS
CHAMBRE DES COMMUNES
CANADA



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March 27, 2023

The Honourable Joyce Murray
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans, and Canadian Coast Guard
House of Commons
Ottawa, ON
K1A 0A6

Dear Minister Murray,

We write to you on behalf of the community of Port Renfrew regarding protection efforts for the Southern Resident Killer Whale (SRKW) population and the potential closure of Tidal Area 21 by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans (DFO). We understand that there are growing frustrations within the Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce regarding how the DFO consults with the local sport fishing community and imposes SRKW protection measures.

First, it is important to state that we have shared concerns for the protection of the SRKW population, and that it is important to ensure that decisions made in this regard need to be made with meaningful consultation and information gathering from those who will be impacted.

In 2018, the DFO launched a consultation process during the peak of fishing season, when those most-affected would be unavailable to comment. MP Alistair MacGregor wrote to then-Minister LeBlanc highlighting the frustrations of his constituents. We have attached a copy of said letter for your reference. Unfortunately, the relationship between Port Renfrew's fishing community and the DFO has only worsened, and the DFO's continued and unchanged processes cause uncertainty and anxiety for those most impacted by abrupt fishing closures.

It is important to note that the Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce, on behalf of their members, are prepared to take legal action against the DFO, should action not be taken to enact a consultation process. For your reference, we have attached a letter from the Chamber further outlining their position.

Minister, as Vancouver Island and the community of Port Renfrew work diligently to recover from the debilitating effects of the pandemic, it is obvious that the DFO's policies are causing unnecessary strain on people whose livelihoods are already in repair. As such, we ask that you allocate the resources required to, at minimum, properly consult with the Port Renfrew Chamber of Commerce and the Port Renfrew sport fishing community to collaborate on solutions such as, mobile avoidance zones, avoidance bubble strategies, and the synchronization of US and Canadian policies by implementing a 400m sonar free exclusion zone whenever SRKWs are present.

Thank you for your attention to this matter. We look forward to your reply.

Sincerely yours,

A handwritten signature in black ink, appearing to read "LMBarron".

Lisa Marie Barron, MP
Nanaimo-Ladysmith
NDP Critic for Fisheries, Oceans, and Canadian Coast Guard

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Alistair MacGregor".

Alistair MacGregor, MP
Cowichan-Malahat-Langford