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FISHERMAN PHOTO—SEAN GRIFFIN

Carrying a banner in support of the Kitsilano Coast Guard base, fisherman Ritchie Hagbert joins other fisherman in sailing past the base in Vancouver harbour (background at right) as part of a rally against the Coast Guard cuts June 2 at the False Creek docks. Marineers across the coast have opposed the closure of the Kits base, which would leave the busiest port in the country without a full-time Coast Guard presence. (Story page 2.)

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Keep base open, UFAWU demands

Closure of Kitsilano Coast Guard base will mean cost in lost lives

The UFAWU-CAW called on Fisheries Minister Keith Ashfield to reverse the government's decision to close the Coast Guard Station in Kitsilano and the Marine Traffic and Communications Service stations in Vancouver, Comox and Tofino.

In a letter to Ashfield last month, UFAWU-CAW president Irvin Figg added the union's voice to the outcry against the closures, warning that the government's action was taken without any consultation with the marine community.

"We have been unable to find anyone out on this coast who was consulted before these closures were announced," Figg said in his letter June 11. The facilities are slated to be shut down by the Tory government following boating season this year.

"Given that Vancouver is the largest port in the nation and that marine traffic is only going to increase at a fairly rapid pace, we cannot fathom the reasons behind the closure of the three MCTS stations on the West Coast. While you may be convinced that your investments in the latest technological advances for the stations in Victoria and Prince Rupert will ensure safe traffic management for the Port of Vancouver and the areas covered by the other two stations, our fishermen believe there are times when there is no substitute for the on site information provided by these stations."

Figg rejected the minister's claim in the House of Commons that the Kitsilano Coast Guard base's rescue operations could be replaced by the Sea Island-based hovercraft and the volunteer auxiliary.

"The hovercraft base on Sea Island, augmented by auxiliary vessels and crews in Metro Vancouver, cannot fill the gap that will be left by the closure of the Vancouver base," he said. "Not only will response times to incidents be increased, perhaps to the point of risking lives, the hovercraft based at Sea Island is not suitable to many of the duties tasked to the cutter currently employed in Vancouver. Auxiliaries are just that. They were never meant to be the primary rescue teams in this location. They have a mandate of being to their stations within 30 minutes and generally can make it in 20. However, that longer response time, and the fact they are not as well trained as Coast Guard personnel, may indeed have unfortunate outcomes."

The closure of the coast guard base in Kitsilano has drawn sharp criticism from across the south coast, especially since Vancouver is the largest port in the country, with extensive marine traffic. Last year, the station handled 300 distress calls, many of which would have involved serious loss of life without a quick response from a rescue vessel and trained on-duty personnel.

On June 2, fishermen at False



B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair (top, right) addresses rally at False Creek as Fr. John Eason offers fleet blessing. Below, gillnetter Mike Emes took media around the harbour in his boat Oceans Best to underline the critical importance of the CCG base.

Creek dock, just east of the Kitsilano base, organized a rally and sail-past to protest the closure, in conjunction with a traditional fleet blessing to open the salmon season.

B.C. Federation of Labour president Jim Sinclair, Vancouver city councillor Geoff Meggs, False Creek Harbour Authority president Don Sananin, B.C. Conservative party leader John Cummins and UFAWU-CAW president Irvin Figg all spoke out in opposition to the closure, after which Mission to Seamen priest Fr. John Eason offered a blessing to the fleet.

Meggs told the crowd that mariners had "the full support of Vancouver city council in fighting to keep the Kitsilano base open."

After being hammered by criticism over the decision for three weeks, Ashfield made a trip to the

West Coast June 26, when he continued to insist that the plan was "operationally sound" and to announce a \$100,000 grant to the volunteer Royal Canadian Marine Search and Rescue. He told reporters that volunteer organizations together with other boaters would fill any gaps in rescue capacity."

But that's like asking people in the neighbourhood to fill in for trained firefighters in the middle of the night, said Dan Clark, president of the Canadian Union of Transportation Employees, representing Coast Guard workers.

"It's the same as your neigh-

bour coming out to your house on fire with a garden hose," Clark said. "It's very nice but I want the fire department to come."

Clark also challenged the minister on the downplaying of distress calls, pointing out that the Kitsilano base has been responded so far this year to 55 calls that involved potential loss of life.

Mike Cotter, manager of the Jericho Sailing Centre, which has an group of rescue volunteers, said they already help out wherever possible. "We already pull 250 people from the water each year. But we can't handle Coast Guard calls," he said.

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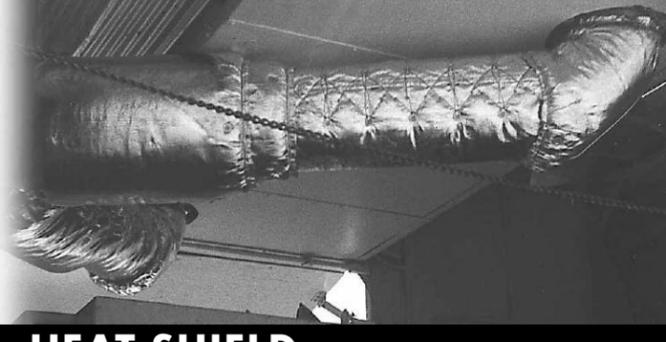
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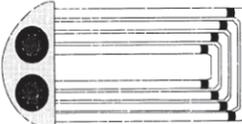
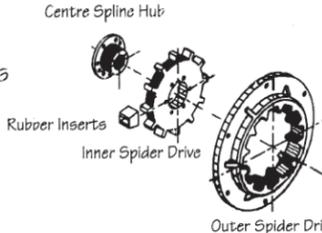
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Shoreworkers back list merger deal

Oceans' workers move over to Canadian Fish as company consolidates operations

UFAWU-CAW shoreworkers in Prince Rupert voted 86 per cent last month to endorse a merger of seniority lists at Canadian Fish and the former Ocean Fisheries plants as the union and the company continued to work out details of the Canadian Fish buyout of Oceans last summer.

Canadian Fish announced June 1, 2011 that it was taking over the fishing and processing assets of Ocean Fisheries Ltd., bringing the 49-year-old company into the Jim Pattison Group, the owner of Canfishco. At the time of the sale, Canadian Fish operated the Oceanside cannery in Prince Rupert, a fresh fish pro-

cessing plant in Seal Cove and the Home plant fresh fish operation in Vancouver while Ocean's operated the Royal fresh fish plant in Prince Rupert and a cannery in Richmond. Except for Ocean's Richmond cannery, all plants are certified with the UFAWU-CAW.

After operating on a business as usual basis for the 2011 season, CFC announced a series of changes in April, including an expanded processing operation at Oceanside and Seal Cove, and the closure of Ocean's Royal plant in Prince Rupert.

UFAWU-CAW northern representative Joy Thorkelson said Canadian Fish told union staff and stewards that all fish formerly processed at the Royal plant —

groundfish, salmon and herring — will now be unloaded and processed at Oceanside and Seal Cove. All Canfishco-caught B.C. salmon destined for the can will be canned at the Oceanside cannery, including fish formerly canned at the Ocean's plant in Richmond.

Fraser River salmon will be shipped to Prince Rupert for canning while fresh fish will be dressed in Prince Rupert and sent to the Home plant's cold storage for freezing. The canning line at the former Ocean's plant in Richmond has been taken out although Canadian Fish is expected to consolidate its labelling operations at that location and maintain groundfish and some other fresh and frozen fish operations there as well.

The closure of the Royal plant — including an expected mothballing of the plant's freezer and cold storage — meant that the seniority lists at the Oceanside,

Seal Cove and Royal plants had to be merged, Thorkelson said.

She said it was "a really tough set of negotiations," pointing out that some areas of CFC operations are expected to see an increase in work, while others will see fewer jobs as the company consolidates its processing operations. With the Oceanside cannery now the only commercial cannery in B.C. (outside the St. Jean's custom cannery operation in Nanaimo), there will be more cannery jobs as fish formerly canned at Ocean's Richmond plant will be butchered and canned in the Oceanside facility. But the consolidation of herring freezing work at Canadian Fish operations will see retention of only half the 140 jobs previously available at combined Ocean's and CFC operations. Cold storage work will shift to Vancouver with the closure of the Royal freezer.

The herring operation "was the toughest to make fair," because of the roughly equal numbers of workers at the Ocean's and CFC plants and the consolidation of the work, Thorkelson said. As with other areas, however, the

final formula was a compromise.

The merged list provides for an overall master seniority list that includes everybody by date of hire, as well as four departmental core lists — cannery, fresh fish, warehouse and eggs and the dock — that will be used in addition to the master list.

"In the end it was a compromise agreement that balances all the groups in the plants," she said.

The merger committee — which had spent weeks developing a proposal and negotiating with the company — had recommended a yes vote on the agreement. Without a deal, the merger of the seniority lists would likely have ended up with an arbitrator or the Labour Relations Board for final resolution. The 86 per cent vote easily gave the necessary majority of both Ocean's and CFC workers.

The agreement provides for the inclusion of some improved language that had been part of the collective agreement at the Royal plant. They will only be in effect until the current contract expires next April, at which time they would have to be re-negotiated.



THORKELSON

Make sure fuel cost is on ROE, fishermen told

Now that he's not fishing, Richard Secord is on a bit of personal mission these days — to make sure that seine fishermen are getting all the information that should be on the form when they get their record of employment (ROE) from the fish buyer or the buyer's accountant.

"Fishermen should make sure that the fuel expense shows on the record of employment along with the grub and Employment Insurance, just as it does on the salmon settlement," Secord told *The Fisherman* this month.

If that sounds like a minor point, it's not. In some cases, the missing information can result in a fisherman not having enough income to file an EI claim — which is what happened to Secord himself in 2009. And if the fuel payment is not shown as an expense on the ROE, the amount a fisherman receives from EI will also be less.

Secord explained that that fuel and grub expenses charged to the crew and the boat are calculated on the basis of a predetermined settlement share, along with EI premiums.

"But some settlements are made where only the grub and EI are shown on the individual crew settlements," he said. "The fuel is taken off the top (gross stock) and never shows back as a expense to each individual fishermen, even though each crewman has paid his share of the fuel cost."

When that information is transferred to the ROE at the end of the season, the fuel expense isn't included. As a result, each fisherman's crew share — as reported on the form for purposes of EI — is

reduced by an amount equivalent to his share of the fuel costs. (Crew members' income from fishing — for the purposes of determining EI eligibility — is based on each member's share of total fish sales before fishing expenses are deducted.)

Secord pointed out that whether the fuel costs are taken off the gross stock or off the boat and crew shares doesn't change a crew member's actual payment on the salmon share settlement. But if his fuel payment isn't shown on his ROE, his income is effectively underreported — which could mean the difference between being able to file an EI claim or not. It could also affect EI benefits.

After the 2009 salmon season, Secord himself found his crew share short of the amount needed to qualify for an EI claim. When he checked his ROE, he found that his crew share of the fuel payment had not been reported on the form. If that payment was included, he calculated, he would have been eligible for EI.

He appealed the ruling, enclosing copies of his salmon settlement, which showed the missing fuel payment. After a couple of rounds of correspondence and the inevitable delays, EI eventually re-calculated his fishing income and allowed his claim.

"The regulations require that the record of employment show the grub, fuel and EI payments when the form is made up by the fish buyer," Secord said. "Salmon seine crewmen should make sure that the information is there when they get their ROE. If it's not, the record should be corrected by the buyer."



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Moving ahead with improved benefits

Annual meetings held during the UFAWU-CAW convention adopted a number of positive changes to the Fund bylaws.

Among the changes to the United Fishermen's Benefit fund:

- A 25 per cent reduction in yearly deductibles for both extended health benefit and dental plans
- An increase in the benefit plan limit to \$100,000
- An increase in weekly indemnity rates from \$350 to \$500 per week
- A 25 per cent reduction in annual premiums for honorary members.

Changes to the Shoreworkers' Benefit Fund include:

- An increase in weekly indemnity benefits from \$450 to \$500
- Improvements in the Travel Assistance benefit for those requiring emergency or specialized services not available locally.

Further details are outlined on page 10 of this edition of *The Fisherman*.

A reminder to Fund members: please ensure claim forms are signed before you submit them.

fish & ships

Almost everyone had a hilarious story to tell, ranging from practical jokes over locked hotel doors to novel methods of handling disagreeable members at union meetings. But when all was said and done, there was no question that long-time fisherman and UFAWU Local 1 president **Nick Carr** had drawn an impressive list of people to the podium when he marked his 90 years on this earth at an event May 17. Some 60 people turned out at the CAW Hall in New Westminster for a surprise lunch organized in honour of the long time fishermen, union activist and Benefit Fund trustee.

Among them were B.C. Federation of Labour president **Jim Sinclair**, UFAWU-CAW executive board member **Don Sananin**, former seiner and Canadian Labour Congress staffer **Gordie Larkin**, Gulf and Fraser Credit Union (now G&F Financial) chair **Vince Fiamengo** and current and past UFAWU-CAW presidents **Irvin Figg** and **John Radosevic**. And then there were letters from shoreworkers local in Prince Rupert as well as B.C.-Alberta CAW area director **Susan Spratt**.

Most of them weren't even born when Nick started his fishing career on the B.C. coast

after World War II. But it's a testament to his long standing in the industry — and a memory that's legendary even among fishermen — that he knows on a first name basis most of those with whom he's worked over five decades, whether it was on the seine deck, or on a union committee.

The long-time president of Vancouver Fishermen's Local 1 for much of its history, Nick has also been a member of the union's general executive board and numerous salmon and herring bargaining committees, all in addition to co-ordinating the annual UFAWU herring sale for the 50 years its was held. Even today, he chairs of the board of trustees of the **United Fishermen's Benefit Fund**.

Still, he was clearly caught unawares by the event, which was organized as a surprise. "How is it that no one let the cat out of the bag about this, not even my wife?" he asked, looking just a little accusingly around the room. Then, true to tradition, he proceeded to fact-check the stories, pointing out details that the teller had missed. Even at 90, you can count on Nick to have the accurate account.

Nick also asked us to express

his gratitude to the many people who helped organize the event and made presentations.

We wish him many more good years and good health.

Fishermen and shoreworkers working hard to prevent Enbridge's **Northern Gateway** pipeline from imperiling the fishing industry on this coast will be heartened to see the campaign that U.S. fishermen have mounted against what they see as a similar threat — the Pebble gold and copper mine that mining developers want to build in the watershed that feeds Bristol Bay's rich sockeye rivers.

In April some 77 fishermen's organizations from the state of Alaska to Maine on the east coast signed a statement to the U.S. administration, calling on President Barack Obama to block the development of the massive mine that could put the \$350 million sockeye fishery at risk from toxic mine waste.

"Today, commercial

fishermen from across America stand shoulder to shoulder in support of the most valuable wild salmon fishery on earth, and the thousands of commercial fishing jobs threatened by

development of the Pebble Mine," said **Bob Waldrop**, a leader of **Commercial Fishermen for Bristol Bay**, the group established to take

losses to fisheries habitat even during construction and normal operation but could cause catastrophic damage if toxic mine waste were to spill into Bristol Bay's river system. The mine would spread over 5.5 kilometres of landscape and is expected to store some 10 billion tons of toxic mine waste behind earthen dams.

Fisherman are calling on the EPA to move under the authority of the U.S. Clean



Fishermen across the U.S. have rallied to protect the Bristol Bay salmon sockeye fishery from the proposed Pebble copper and gold mine development.

the campaign to Washington.

Fishermen's concerns about the dam's potential impact are supported by an initial scientific assessment from the U.S.

Environmental Protection Agency, which found that the mine would result in major

Water Act and block mine permits once the comment period on the environmental assessment expires. With that date coming up July 23, fishermen on both sides of the Canada-U.S. border will be watching the outcome.



Nick Carr (centre, leaning on table) with some of those who joined him May 17 at the CAW hall to mark his 90th birthday. L to r, John Krgovich, Vince Fiamengo, Don Sananin, Dennis Brown, Doug Coppendale, Irv Figg, John Radosevic, Bill Procopation.

FISHERMAN PHOTOS-SEAN GRIFFIN



Irvin Figg with a plaque "presented to Uncle Nick in appreciation of his dedication and service to the UFAWU-CAW, the members and the fishing industry."

The Fisherman

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Enbridge pipeline project threatens multi-million dollar fishing industry

Earlier this year, the UFAWU-CAW made its formal written submission to the Environmental Review Panel studying the Enbridge Northern Gateway pipeline proposal. The submission outlined the socio-economic value of the commercial fishery industry on the North Coast, its vital importance to the people and the economy of the coast and the devastating impact that an oil spill like that from the Exxon Valdez could have on communities and the fishing industry. The following are excerpts from that submission, which comprises over 440 pages of text.

The chart to the right shows the value of the wild seafood industry to B.C.

The union has provided information to show that the central/north coast production is huge; except for hake and a few other small fisheries, the north and central coasts produce well over half of the total wholesale value of \$811 million.

We have made a best effort to estimate what percentage of the fleet works on the central and

there was the largest pink run in written history in Area 6. The fishery was right where the ferry sank and right where the tankers intend to travel. The fleet harvested over 6 million pink salmon in that one area. There were not enough seiners to harvest all the pink salmon. The plants ran out of workers and many shoreworkers worked four weeks of 12 hour shifts with no time off.

Because the largest (and now only) production cannery in B.C. is located in Prince Rupert,

cannery. Seasonal cannery workers were employed until October, an unusual experience as northern runs are usually over by the end of August.

First Nations

The federal government did not encourage coastal First Nations to develop other industries in their communities. Quite the opposite. The Department of Indian and Northern Affairs or its equivalent and DFO developed many programs to persuade First Nations individuals to buy into the fishery and First Nations' Band Councils to invest in the fishery or in fish processing.

When the government limited the number of fishing boats and licences in 1969, it created reduced fee licences for indigenous fishers. A First Nations fisherman would pay a lower annual licence fee to the government but

Species	Production	Landed value	Wholesale value
	'000 tonnes	(\$millions)	(\$millions)
Wild salmon	23.1	69.3	237.8
Herring	10.1	11.8	35.8
Groundfish	97.6	111.9	275.1
Wild shellfish	14.0	108.9	188.0
Tuna and other	29.0	28.1	74.9
Capture fisheries Total	173.8	330.0	811.6

— Data from B.C. Ministry of the Environment, Ocean and Marine Fisheries

Company and Cassiar Packing Company were bought by the government and passed on to these two First Nation controlled corporations. A special category of licence was also created for the NNFC boats, the N licence, which permits the NNFC to own and lease out the licences without owning vessels. A regular salmon licence must be attached to a boat. At present the NNFC owns 254 salmon gillnet licences that can only be leased to First Nations fishermen.

The federal government also set up the Native Fishing Association, a lending institution to encourage First Nations fishers to buy their own boats and licences.

From 2008 to 2012 additional funds to the ATP program have been made available through the Pacific Integrated Commercial Fisheries Initiative (PICFI).

These extensive programs have encouraged First Nations as governments and as economic development agencies to invest in

commercial fisheries as well as individual First Nations people to take up fishing or shoreworking as a career. This federal government policy is not a relic of antiquity; it is an ongoing policy actively updated and executed anew the past five years to further increase First Nations participation in the commercial fishery.

It is somewhat puzzling that the same federal government which has been funding, historically since 1969 and presently since 2008, First Nations economic development in the fishery, is supporting the Northern Gateway Pipeline. The federal funding for aboriginal fisheries will be wasted if there is an oil spill.

To engage First Nations in an industry that is renewable, close to home and indigenous to their culture makes a lot of sense. It makes no sense to ruin this industry and put federal and First Nations' Band and individual investments at risk with no possible benefits from the oil industry.

Impact of spill could last decades

"The proposed Enbridge Northern Gateway project brings the potential of a spill of crude oil to this relatively pristine ecoregion. Crude oil contains COPCs [Contaminants Of Potential Concern] that have been well studied in many fish species, and these components can cause acutely lethal, and chronic sublethal effects that may persist for decades...Toxic effects from COPCs in oil can include death, morphological and

histopathological effects, genotoxicity, immunotoxicity, developmental and reproductive effects, amongst others. A spill of the magnitude of the EVOS (Exxon Valdez oil spill) in this area will undoubtedly have extremely large biological impacts on the region, impacts which will affect the entire ecosystem and its components for decades; recovery to pre-oil spill conditions is unlikely to ever occur."

— Kennedy, C.K., Report on Fate and Effects of Crude Oil in the Marine Environment. 2011. Prepared for UFAWU-CAW by BioWest Environmental Research Consultants

north coasts in the tanker route area based on information from published DFO, the 2011 Analysis and union member local knowledge. It may be fewer or more, but the numbers of fishermen that make a living in this area are substantial. Many live in small coastal communities where there are no other job opportunities.

The capital investment by fishermen is extensive. The commercial fleet is worth hundreds of millions of dollars that will be imperiled if there is an oil spill like that in Prince William Sound.

Our communities

The coastal communities, large and small, First Nations' or mixed, have grown up with the fishing industry. And the fishing industry has grown up with the communities. There are other jobs in other fields yet the fishery still holds a large part of our identities.

The fishing industry payroll in the City of Prince Rupert, in spite of all the increased employment due to the container port, still makes a major impact on the local businesses.

At present, there are over 2,000 shoreworkers and fishermen employed on the north and central coasts in a good year. In 2009,

besides its own fish, it custom cans for other B.C. and Alaskan fish buyers as well. When the incredible Fraser sockeye run of 2010 was harvested, hundreds of thousands of pounds of fish were trucked and shipped from the Fraser River to the Prince Rupert

the licence could only be sold to another indigenous fisher.

In 1982, The Northern Native Fishing Corporation and the Gitksan Industries were created and the ownership of the salmon gillnet boats and licences from BC Packers, Canadian Fishing

Value of coastwide fisheries and percentage of licences fished on north/Central coasts

Fishery	Aggregate vessel, licence and quota value	Average vessel, licence and quota value	Number of licences on Central and North coasts (number/total)	Percentage of licences that operate in Central and North coasts
Salmon seine	\$170,697,058	\$659,062	108/276	39%
Salmon gillnet	\$197,592,327	\$147,347	641/1405	46%
Salmon troll	\$120,440,411	\$225,967	282/538	52%
Roe herring seine	\$182,786,184	\$725,342	10/252	4%
Roe herring gillnet	\$191,741,888	\$151,216	60/1268	5%
Herring spawn on kelp	\$26,239,200	\$672,800	13/40	33%
Halibut	\$423,970,500	\$974,645	100/435	23%
Sablefish	\$201,312,000	\$4,194,000	20/48	42%
Rockfish-outside	\$47,243,500	\$248,650	191/262	73%
Schedule II	\$39,304,076	\$83,804		
Groundfish trawl	\$395,230,000	\$2,823,071	30/140	21%
Crab	\$182,232,600	\$828,330	68/222	31%
Shrimp	\$22,448,166	\$94,718	15/237	6%
Prawn	\$177,288,449	\$717,767	61/247	25%
Geoduck/Horseclam	\$185,035,510	\$3,364,282	40/55	73%
Red Sea Urchin	\$19,162,000	\$174,200	80/110	73%
Sea Cucumber	\$37,332,000	\$439,200	66/85	78%

—Data from Nelson, S. West Coast Fishing Fleet: As at March 32, 2011. Analysis of Commercial Fishing Licence, Quota, and Vessel Values; DFO database, Integrated Fisheries Management Plans and UFAWU-CAW.

Fleet backs renewal of Safest Catch

New components added as funding ensures future of fisherman-based training program

The commercial fishing industry has spoken with unanimous support, and the future of the Safest Catch program has been confirmed.

Over the last three years the Safest Catch program was funded by the Search and Rescue New Initiative Fund. This valuable program trained fishermen as safety advisors who then worked with other fishermen to organize their vessel specific, on-board safety programs. This program has gained the acceptance from the Fishermen on this coast and in the past three years has seen 200 vessels participate along with more than 700 fishermen.

More important, the program has been credited by these same fishermen as having a key role in saving lives. Two examples are the skipper of the crab vessel who had a crewman fall overboard and the crew of the trap vessel that capsized in Hecate Strait. Both of these crews told how the drills they had done with a Safest Catch Advisor prior to the fishery enabled them to act more quickly in the emergency they faced and



Safety
John Krgovich

to save the lives of their crew members.

The value of the program was recognized by not only fishermen but also by those who pay the WorkSafeBC levies to fund Fish Safe program. The Seafood Producers Association approved an increase to the Fish Safe funding which would see the continuation of the Safest Catch Program.

While the main focus of the program is on the decks of the fishing vessels where Safest Catch Advisors are busy working with

fishermen on their safety programs, the program has evolved to include fleetwide safety events. The Herring Drills Day is in its second year and the Prince Rupert Drills Day is scheduled again for this July. The "Show Us Your PFD" day event has also grown from last summer's PFD day during the Fraser gillnet fishery to include the herring fishery and more recently the crab fishery which took place on June 18, 2012 in Area 1. By participating in this event, fishermen have shown ownership of their safety and leadership in their fisheries. We look also to continue and grow these events to include other fisheries.

Along with adding events to the Safest Catch program, industry workshops have been created. One is a cold water survival workshop which aims to provide fishermen with the most up to date theories on what to do if they end up in the water. A PFD workshop looked at issues such as performance, wearability, regulations and options for fishermen when it comes to PFD wear. And finally the UFAWU-CAW Beachline safety workshop was dusted off and revitalized for delivery on July 4 at the Gulf of Georgia cannery. Three former UFAWU-CAW safety directors, Bruce Logan, Darryl Enger and John Krgovich, along with former UFAWU organizer John Katnich met and updated the original beachline safety course. Like other Fish Safe programs, the beachline workshop came at the request of fishermen who knew its value and wanted to ensure new fishermen had access to it.

What else is new with the



UFAWU-CAW vice-president Nick Stevens shows off his PFD during PFD Day on the Fraser River.

Safest Catch Program? More tools and resources have been created for the fishermen to promote onboard safety. A Safest Catch log book is a new addition to the Safest Catch program, available to all fishermen who participate in the Safest Catch program. It is a mini safety management system for the vessel that has provision navigational notes, a place to document skipper's orders, safety orientations, drills log, maintenance logs, and other components that allow fishermen to begin a self-audit the crew's onboard safety. There is also a easy-to-use reference section included in the log book which provides Information on lights, buoys, rules of the road

and weather along with some tips from fishermen, which make it a great addition to every fisherman's wheelhouse.

Also new is the Fish Safe emergency kit, which was created with the small boat in mind. It includes important emergency equipment to be used by punts or small boats that may not have room or places to affix this equipment but still need to have it on board should they find themselves in an emergency situation. It is available through participation of Safest Catch events or available at a reduced rate for fishermen at the Fish Safe office.

The last new addition to the Safest Catch program is the new video, Safest Catch-Fishing Safety Management System. This video was created to support the nationwide distribution of the Safest Catch program. It captures the delivery of the Safest Catch program and features all the tools that have been created for fishermen and their onboard safety programs. It is a great way to see what is involved in a Safest Catch vessel visit and is particularly useful for fishermen who are interested in working with a Safest Catch Advisor but are uncertain about what is involved.

The B.C. fishing industry has spoken and they are willing to move forward with the safest Catch program. If you are one of the many fishermen who have already been involved in this great program, make sure you give us a call so we can provide all the updates and tools you may use to support what you already have in place. If you haven't yet taken advantage of the Safest Catch Program, what are you waiting for? Call John Krgovich at 604 261-9700 to set up your free Safest Catch vessel visit.

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Habitat threatened by Tory legislation

Changes will give green light to mining and other development

The federal Conservative government has passed into law some sweeping changes to federal environmental protection laws, including the fish habitat protection provisions of the Fisheries Act.

Although the changes to the Fisheries Act still appear to cover fish habitat that “supports fisheries,” the new wording could significantly reduce current fish habitat protection and put B.C. fishery jobs in jeopardy.

For years, the Fisheries Act has had clear wording to prohibit the “harmful alteration, disruption and destruction” of fish habitat. The focus on habitat acknowledges the complexity of what fish need, particularly the freshwater habitat for juvenile and spawning salmon.

Instead, the Fisheries Act will prohibit “serious harm to fish” that are part of a commercial, recreational or aboriginal fishery. This includes prohibiting permanent alteration or destruction of fish habitat. But it will no longer be against the law to temporarily alter or harm fish habitat.

This critical change in wording ignores the extremely sensitive biological needs of salmon through different phases of their life cycle: the need for pristine spawning channels with no disruption of salmon eggs through winter months, an adequate water flows at all stages in freshwater systems, no sedimentation or other water quality degradation, undisturbed rearing areas for juvenile salmon, and no impassable blockages in any part of a stream or river system through the entire migratory corridor during both in-migration for spawning adults and out-migration of

juvenile salmon.

Temporary alteration or disruption of any one of these habitat functions could create significant harm to an entire run of salmon to a particular stream system. Some salmon species remain in freshwater for one to two years and cannot survive with any of these habitat functions disrupted.

Also troubling are changes that will make it possible for the government to exempt certain activities from the prohibition against serious harm to fish. It will also be possible to exempt particular waterways from fish habitat or pollution prevention provisions. All of this points to a well-funded developer and industry lobby that has been bending government’s ear in Ottawa — and now is finally getting what it has been asking for.

In bending so far backwards to make it easier for developers, industry owners and polluters, the fisheries minister seems to have ignored how the Fisheries Act actually operates in practice. By framing the changes to the Act so as to only protect habitat for fish that supports a “commercial, recreational or Aboriginal fishery,” he seems to be looking out for the various sectors who fish for a living or otherwise. But it is likely that this change in wording will actually make it very hard to identify what must be protected as it is often very difficult to prove that fish in the interior of the province are fished 500 kilometres away in open ocean.

Tying fish habitat protection to a “fishery” means that in practice, the onus will be on commercial, recreational and aboriginal fish harvesters to document and prove that particular upstream fish are involved in a specific fishery that



Environment
David Lane

may be very far from the spawning grounds or juvenile rearing areas. A chinook caught in the recreational fishery off Haida Gwaii or a pink salmon caught by the commercial fishery in northern coastal waters could have come from any number of watersheds. And although DNA testing over the years has created a general picture of the timing and location of specific spawning stocks, literally thousands of streams in B.C. have not been studied enough to make a definitive link to a fishery.

Other issues are left very unclear. Does the new wording only relate to “fisheries” that are currently conducted? If so, it

ignores and thereby does not protect habitat in salmon river systems that were historically fished but have been closed for some years. An example would be the Owikeno River and tributaries feeding into Rivers Inlet that at one point twenty years ago produced millions of salmon and supported the third largest commercial salmon fishery on the B.C. coast.

The sockeye salmon runs of Rivers Inlet are slowly rebuilding and could yet again sustain a fishery, but may be excluded from habitat protection and could be seriously damaged through forestry and other impacts.

The Fisheries Act changes also allow DFO to give its authority to other federal departments or to provincial governments, who would then have the power to authorize habitat destruction. In B.C. this could mean handing over habitat protection to a provincial government moving full steam ahead to make mining and other destructive industries the core of its economic development plan.

These changes couldn’t have come at a worse time, with Fisheries and Oceans staffing and budget cuts over the last ten years making it increasingly difficult for

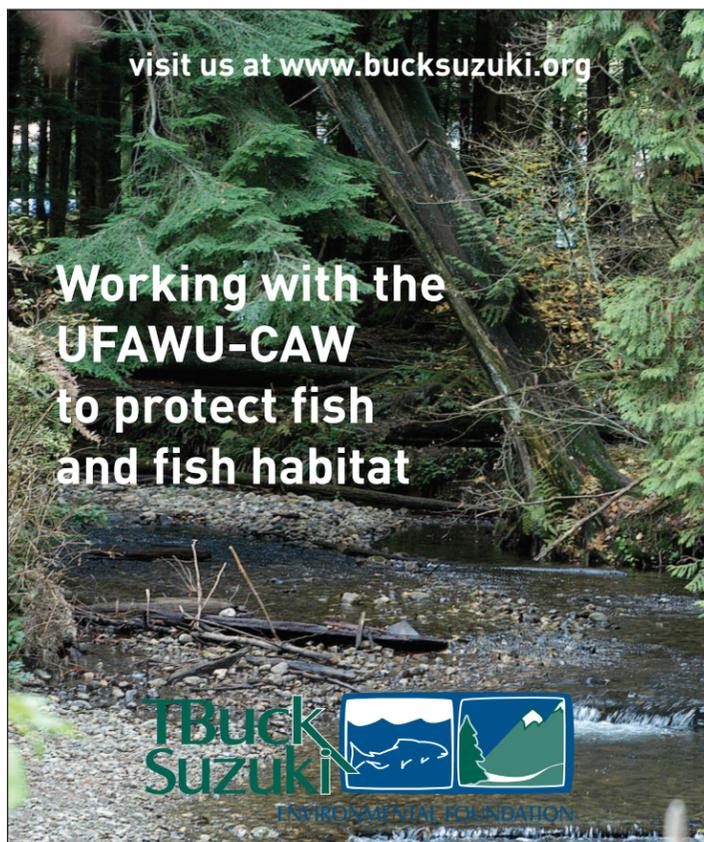
the department to keep up its scientific research, its habitat monitoring and its enforcement capabilities.

Reducing the scope of the protection of the habitat provisions of the Fisheries Act could lead to a further reduction in staffing levels to the point where the department is no longer able to do its job.

And let’s remember that it has been the strong wording of the habitat provisions of the current Fisheries Act that has given the department the clout to negotiate habitat protection at the development planning stage, and this important role may be seriously undermined.

Despite these changes being passed into law, it is still important to let your local Member of Parliament know that fish habitat matters and that the strongest possible habitat protection is important to our fisheries and coastal economies.

If our politicians don’t hear loud and clear that these changes are in the wrong direction they will think that it is okay to further weaken our laws that protect habitat and continue to slash staffing and budgets desperately needed to ensure adequate environmental protection and healthy fish stocks for the future.



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More than fishing at play in eulachon drop

Populations still depressed in trawl closure area

El Niño and La Niña both have their effects on ocean temperature, with El Niño causing warming while La Niña indicates cooling. Both also have an effect on eulachon cycles.

The strongest-ever La Niña occurred in 2010-11, so we're expected to be entering a cooling period in the North Pacific. That could be a positive sign for the eulachon biomass. Records show that during ocean warming trends, eulachon populations tend to decline and then rebuild during the cooling trend.

Some of the northern rivers, notably the Skeena and the Nass, had good eulachon returns this spring and there was even a fair showing on the Fraser River. But since there was no test fishery, any harvest opportunity, at least for First Nations, was missed. At this time, First Nations fisheries are severely limited and a commercial fishery is non-existent.

Size at age shifts could also be related to the cooling and warming trends but more research is

required to learn about the eulachon life cycle. We're still very much in the dark when it comes to understanding life cycles and requirements for survival and growth.

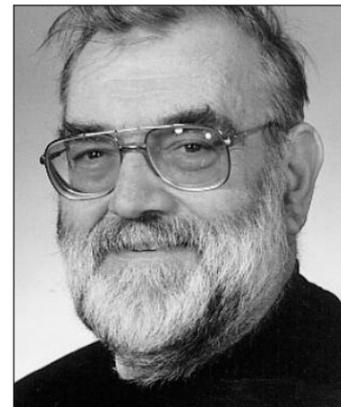
River channelization and increased flows may also have an impact on eulachons and other species. When the flow increases, it can force the eulachon larvae out into higher salt water areas too fast. Salinity greater than 16 parts per thousand is lethal to incubating eulachon eggs and even when they survive the larvae/fry may not be able to adapt to the higher salinity.

There are many big knowledge gaps, including water quality, the presence of agricultural chemicals in runoff, as well as logging and bark drop from moored booms. We need to know more about spawning habitat and then ensure that critical habitat is protected. We also need to know what effect aquaculture has on eulachon.

The eulachon biomass has dropped off significantly since 2006, having begun a slow decline in 1946. The decline on the Fraser system has been particularly steep and the stocks are now considered endangered. There are a number of First Nations meetings and summer meetings coming up. I hope that Fisheries and Oceans will be open to input from fishermen as promised.

Just because we seem to be entering a La Niña phase doesn't mean that climate change is moving to cooling. Global warming is still a factor in our future survival and biodiversity. The ocean's pH levels are still dropping past neutral making ocean waters more acidic and raising concerns about the survival of shell-building animals. Many of these creatures are the food that sustain the species higher up the food chain that we depend on for fishing.

When the issue of the eulachon action level (the level at which eulachon bycatch triggers shrimp fishery management action) came up at the Fraser River meeting this year, the concern over excess bycatch by the trawl fleet on the West Coast of Vancouver Island



Fisheries
Joe Bauer

was eased a bit. It was determined that there isn't enough information to provide an accurate assessment of bycatch effects, leaving the trawl fleet off the hook when it comes to determining a definite cause for the coastwide decline of eulachon populations.

The areas that were closed to the trawl fleet for 10 years in an effort to protect eulachon stocks have shown no significant rebuilding during the closure. The natural warming and cooling cycles may be as much a key to population fluctuations as bycatch.

On another note, we have a natural ally in our concerns over the environmental effects of open netpen salmon aquaculture.

With the introduction of an alien species — farm-raised Atlantic salmon — came another alien species, infectious salmon anemia, or ISA. It caused major havoc in Chile's salmon farms and many thought it had turned up on some of British Columbia's open netpen farms. But it turned out that the outbreak that hit B.C. farms this spring was IHN — infectious hematopoietic necrosis. IHN is also a deadly salmon disease, but on this coast the virus exists in the wild and is one to which native B.C. species have developed immunity.

The outbreak should add even more pressure on the aquaculture industry to convert open netpen farms to closed containment systems that can be better controlled for these infections.



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CAW, CEP launch new union project

Unions poised to create new vision for labour movement

CAW members across the country are poised to take the next step in what is expected to be one of the most ambitious union organizing initiatives in the Canadian labour movement. They'll vote this August on a proposal to unite with the Communications Energy and Paperworkers in launching a new Canadian union encompassing both their memberships.

"This is not a merger. It's not just about CAW and CEP — it's about building greater union density in Canada and creating a more vibrant movement," CAW president Ken Lewenza told the union's Canadian council, which voted in April to move forward with what has been called the CAW-CEP New Union Project.

The two unions launched the project in February with the aim

of creating a new union that would have greater strength in all regions and economic sectors across the country. A key objective for both CAW and CEP was to give the new union a strong mandate for organizing and the flexibility to develop new approaches for workers not directly involved in bargaining to be members of the new organization.

They set up a Proposal Committee, co-chaired by CAW secretary-treasurer Peter Kennedy and CEP secretary-treasurer Gaetan Menard, which met several times before putting the final touches on the resolution that will go to the CAW and CEP conventions.

"The committee unanimously endorsed the resolution at our meeting in Montreal June 25-27," said CAW B.C.-Alberta area director Susan Spratt, a member

of the committee. "Now it will go to the CAW convention in August and then the CEP convention in October for a full debate and a vote.

"If it's endorsed by both unions, we'll be moving to establish the committees and then hold a founding convention some time in 2013."

CAW delegates will be voting on the resolution at the union's constitutional convention in Toronto August 20-24. The CEP convention is slated for Oct 14-17 in Quebec City.

"It's amazing that we've been able to do this," Spratt said, pointing out that the immediate impact, if the resolution is endorsed, will be to bring the 190,000 members of the CAW together with the 130,000 members of the CEP.

But it's more than the sum of the two parts, she emphasized. "We're going to have a critical mass in every sector of the economy and a strong regional presence, with more research and media capacity in each of the regions." As part of the structure for the new organization, the resolution calls for regional councils in B.C., the Prairies, Ontario and Atlantic Canada. Quebec will have its own region.

"We particularly looked at decentralizing the union, making it less Ontario based and more responsive to the regions," she said. "The issues in B.C. will be dealt with in B.C. If we make decisions about protecting fish habitat, for example, we can roll out a campaign here on a regional basis."

Spratt said the finance proposal calls for 10 per cent of the budget to go to organizing — more than triple the three per cent currently earmarked by CAW.

"The expectation is that a lot of people will be interested in joining," she said.

That objective — to create a new momentum for organizing at a time when unions have been hammered by job losses and economic insecurity — was a major factor in launching the new initiative and in exploring new ways that workers can participate even

when they don't have bargaining provisions.

"It's not just about increasing membership but also about connecting with communities," Spratt said. She noted that committee members spent considerable time talking about how the unemployed, as well as workers in precarious employment and other non-affiliated workers could be participants through a form of associate membership. "We still haven't figured out all the details," she added, "but we all want to find a way that they can be part of a movement."

Leaders of both the CAW and CEP have emphasized that the new union will have to create a stronger force for working people in order to challenge the Harper government which is undermining environmental protection, dismantling public pensions and other social programs and deepening economic insecurity.

The leadership structure outlined in the resolution going to the conventions calls for three elected national officers, president, secretary-treasurer and Quebec director, as well as three elected regional directors for the Atlantic, Ontario and Western Canada. They will be part of a 25-member executive board, which will be made up predominantly of rank and file members.

Convention urges talks on UFAWU-Brotherhood unity

Delegates to the UFAWU-CAW voted earlier this year to urge union officers to explore some form of organizational unity with the Native Brotherhood of B.C.

A resolution adopted by the union's convention in February called on the union to "initiate talks with the NBBC seeking unification of the two organizations."

It also authorized officers to meet and explore with the NBBC new cooperative measures within the framework of the CAW, provided the membership has the final say in any structural changes that may be proposed.

"We may need to start by holding hands with the Brotherhood, but that's something we've already been doing in the North," UFAWU-CAW northern representative told union delegates. "If we're going to survive in the fishing industry, Native and non-Native people can't exist without one another."

Although it has sometimes been an uneasy relationship, the UFAWU-CAW and the Native Brotherhood have cooperated in price bargaining in past years and both organizations have trustees on the board that administers the United Fishermen's Benefit Fund. But there has never been any formalized organizational unity.

Native Brotherhood president Chris Cook, who attended the convention along with vice-president Bill Duncan, said the dialogue between the union and the Brotherhood was important "so we can look at the issues involved and look at what would be to the



Native Brotherhood president Chris Cook (front, left), with vice-president Bill Duncan at UFAWU-CAW convention.

benefit of coastal people.

"Everywhere the little guy, the independent fisherman is getting cut out," he said. "We have the same problems and the same issues — we need to find some answers together."

UFAWU-CAW president

Irvin Figg agreed that many the groups among seiners and gillnetters that used to have power "have lost most of it" as the industry has consolidated over two decades.

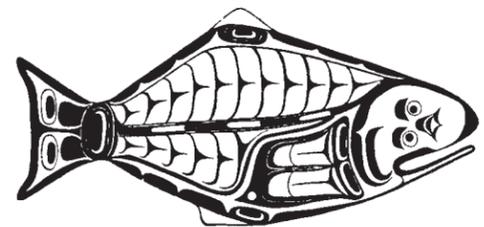
"We need to look at all the ways that we can to begin to get it back," he said.

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FISHERMAN PHOTOS-SEAN GRIFFIN

Protein for People president and past UFAWU-CAW president John Radošević talks to participants (photo, right) at a community forum and picnic in Vancouver's McLean Park June 16, one of several held around that province that have brought food bank recipients together with representatives from the labour movement. At left he accepts a certificate of appreciation on behalf of PFP from the Surrey Food Bank's Feezah Jaffer. Protein for People, the labour-food bank initiative that mobilizes labour movement donations to purchase union-processed canned salmon, will put more than \$80,000 worth of canned pink salmon into food banks this year, helping to meet a need that has grown sharply in recent months.

Fund sees improved benefits for 2012

Increased contributions for 2010 and 2011 boost members' plans

At a time when there have been cuts to health care and other services, it's particularly good news that the Benefit Fund is able to introduce a number of improvements to the United Fishermen's and Shoreworkers' Benefit fund plans. In part, finances are better because of the big sockeye run to the Fraser in 2010 and decent contributions to the fund in 2011. In reviewing the plans the trustees saw that the fund had been running well even in low years and that member benefits could be made better — and would be sustainable in the future.

As a result, improvements have been made to both extended

health plans and dental plans for United Fishermen's Benefit Fund members as well as weekly indemnity and travel assistance provisions for Shoreworkers' Benefit Fund members. The changes were endorsed at the annual meetings held in conjunction with the UFAWU-CAW convention in February.

For the United Fishermen's Benefit Fund, the following changes — retroactive to January 1, 2012 — apply to extended health coverage (Pacific Blue Cross Group No. E909800):

- The deductible has been reduced to \$75 (from \$100) per person, and \$150 (from \$200) per family per calendar year.



Benefits
Gary Prisner

- The Plan's "Lifetime Maximum payable by the Plan Limit" has been increased to \$100,000 (from \$15,000) per family member. Members who had been cut off the plan because they had reached the previous \$15,000 limit will be reinstated, and will carry the \$15,000 balance forward towards the new limit.
- Members undergoing cataract surgery will now be covered for soft lenses at the

plan's reimbursement rate of 60 per cent.

- Eye examinations will now be covered at 100 per cent to a maximum of \$100 every two years.
- With nicotine patches and gum now available free without a prescription, nicotine patches have now been deleted as a plan benefit.

Other changes to the United Fishermen's Benefit Fund are:

- A reduction in the Dental Plan deductible to \$75 (from \$100) per person and \$150 (from \$200) per family per calendar year.
- An increase in the Weekly Indemnity benefit from \$350/week for 10 weeks to \$500/week for 10 weeks.
- A 25 per cent reduction in premiums for Honorary Members. Premiums will now be \$375/year for single (member only) and \$900/year for a family of two or more. That's down from \$500 single and \$1,200/couple-family per year.

The Shoreworkers' Benefit

Fund annual meeting also adopted improvements to their benefit plan. They are:

- An increase in the Weekly Indemnity rate from the old maximum rate of \$85/day straight time earnings or \$425/week to a maximum of \$100/straight time earnings or \$500/week.
- An increase in the Travel Assistance benefit per diem allowance from \$40/day with a three-day maximum per claim to \$200/day with a five-day maximum per claim. In addition, deductibles will no longer be charged on Travel Assistance claims.
- A change to the description of dependent children in the Shoreworkers' Benefit Fund bylaws.

In the past, the dependent child's age has been used to determine their eligibility for certain benefit coverage. But after reviewing the description of a dependent child's age as outlined in Article 9, (Loss of Life), Section 4 (Dependants) trustees felt that the current wording did not explain the eligible years of a dependant clearly. The changes made in the description of a dependent child effectively add one year to their benefit coverage.

A dependent child will now be defined as follows:

- a dependent child 18 years and under or;
- a dependent child 25 years of age and under if he or she is in full-time attendance as a student at an accredited school, college or university.
- A son or daughter twenty-one (21) years of age or older who is incapable of self-support and is wholly dependent upon the member for support.

Members should note that the effective date of change for all of these benefits is January 1, 2012. If a member became sick, injured, was hospitalized or started maternity leave after January 1, 2012, benefits will be paid at the new rate.

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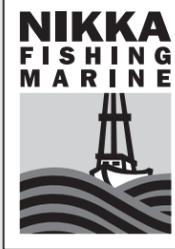
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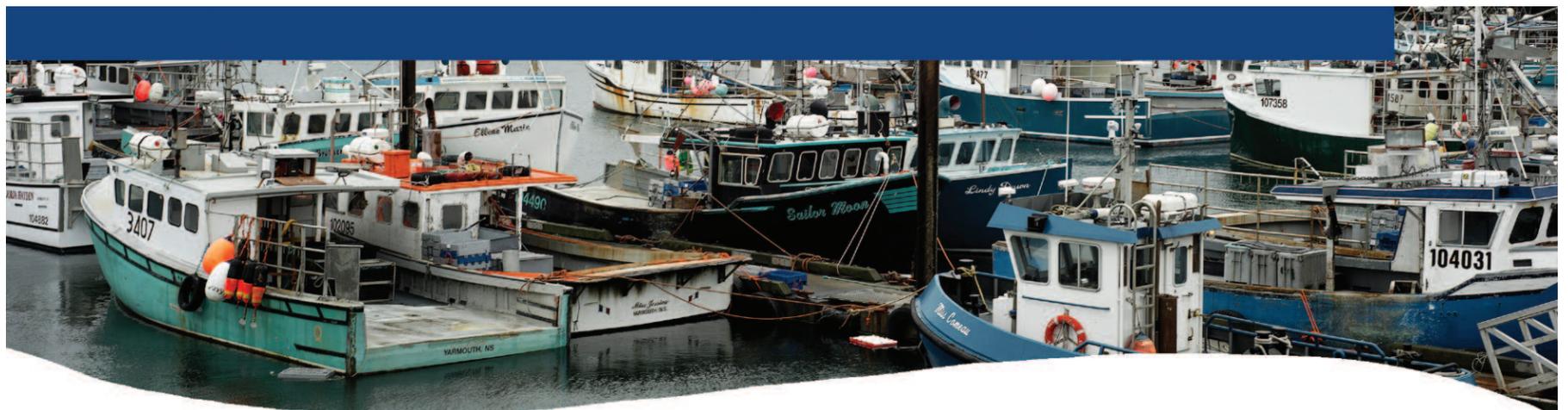
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