



For Immediate Release

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Poll: Salmon Iconic, 85% Support Salmon to Become a BC Symbol, Public Concerned About Well Being

Vancouver, BC – Ninety-five per cent of British Columbians named Pacific salmon as B.C.'s most iconic fish, according to a recent poll commissioned by the Pacific Salmon Foundation and the Fraser Basin Council. Moreover, 85% of those surveyed said they support a proposal to designate wild Pacific salmon as an official symbol of the province. The telephone survey of 502 people across the province was conducted by the Mustel Group between October 5 and October 15, 2010 and the results are considered accurate within a $\pm 4.4\%$ margin of error.

Starting last July, two non-profit organizations, Pacific Salmon Foundation and Fraser Basin Council, invited public comment on a proposal to designate wild Pacific salmon (chinook, sockeye, coho, chum and pink salmon, as well as steelhead trout and cutthroat trout) a provincial symbol. The proposal was championed by former B.C. Lieutenant-Governor Iona Campagnolo and former Vancouver Sun columnist Miro Cernetig. A key reason for the proposal is to raise awareness of the importance of wild Pacific salmon and deepen public commitment to its future. Organizers said they will deliver a synopsis of public comments and the public survey results to the B.C. Minister of Environment in the spring. Until then, citizens are encouraged to comment on the proposal at **www.ThinkSalmon.com**.

The survey also revealed that the public has an enduring concern about the future of Pacific salmon even during a year of strong returns, organizers said. The survey interviews were conducted in October, at a time when record sockeye returns were being widely reported. When asked about the state of salmon's well-being, 43% of survey respondents said they perceived it as poor or only fair, 34% as good and only 14% as excellent or very good.

"The survey provides an overwhelming message that people support Pacific salmon as symbol of B.C. and that they are concerned about salmon in our future. Within the Foundation, we've heard this from thousands of community volunteers, but these results send a message from all British Columbians," noted Brian Riddell, President & CEO of Pacific Salmon Foundation.

"Based on the strong results of the poll," said David Marshall, Executive Director of Fraser Basin Council, "there is clearly public support for wild Pacific salmon as a provincial symbol. The designation appears to strike a chord with people, and perhaps some understanding that our own health and well-being are connected with salmon and their watersheds."

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For more information about the public survey results or designating salmon a BC symbol, visit www.ThinkSalmon.com. If you would like to interview a representative from Pacific Salmon Foundation or Fraser Basin Council, please contact: Megan Moser at mmoser@psf.ca or 604.664.7664.