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December 2, 2020

The Honourable Bernadette Jordan
Minister's office
200 Kent Street
Station 15N100
Ottawa ON K1A 0E6
Dear Minister,

I write to you at this time mindful of and respecting that Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) is consulting with First Nations in the Discovery Islands regarding aquaculture licenses set to expire in December. Given the broad body of science that demonstrates significant risk to wild Pacific salmon from open-net-pen aquaculture, including findings from our own Strategic Salmon Health Initiative, Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) supports measures to remove these open-net-pen fish farms in the Discovery Islands with urgency.

We say this because Pacific salmon populations are experiencing very significant declines, and there have been severe ecological, cultural, economic and social consequences that cause us great concern for the future sustainability of Pacific salmon. Fraser River sockeye had the lowest returns on record in 2020, and in a recent assessment, only one of 16 populations of southern B.C. Chinook was assessed as "not at risk." These are just some examples of the current state of some salmon populations that migrate through the Discovery Islands. The need for action with urgency to reduce risks and improve conditions for our wild Pacific salmon is greater than ever.

As we said in September, we believe DFO's consultations in the Discovery Islands can be consequential for the recovery of wild Pacific salmon if the consultations mark the first step towards implementing your mandate letter commitment to transition to closed-containment by 2025. We welcome your appointment of Terry Beech, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister and Member of Parliament for Burnaby North – Seymour, to develop an interim report this spring to inform your decisions on the path forward.

PSF remains committed to assisting DFO, the Province of British Columbia, and First Nations in this transition process. We look forward with anticipation to your decision about the Discovery Islands, as it will be seen as a signal to British Columbians as to the urgency you and your Government plan to bring to this critical issue for wild Pacific salmon and all who depend on them.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in blue ink, appearing to read "Michael J. Meneer".

Michael J. Meneer
President and CEO

cc. Terry Beech, Parliamentary Secretary to the Minister and Member of Parliament for Burnaby North – Seymour