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Chair

Mr. Rodney Weston

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• (1105)

[English]

The Chair (Mr. Rodney Weston (Saint John, CPC)): I'll call this meeting to order.

I'd like to thank our guests for joining us here today. We certainly do appreciate your taking the time out of your schedules to appear before our committee to make some remarks and also to answer questions that committee members might have for you following those remarks.

I would ask that you try to keep your responses as concise as possible when responding to committee members. They're constrained by time limits, so if you could try to respect that as much as possible, we certainly would appreciate it.

I assume the clerk has advised you that we generally allow about 10 minutes for opening remarks and comments. Outside of that, I think we're ready to proceed.

Mr. Samson, I believe you're going to go first. I understand that you have to leave partway through our meeting. We appreciate your being here today and giving us what time you can.

Mr. Samson, whenever you want to proceed, the floor is yours.

Mr. Ward Samson (Past President, Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation): Thank you.

Can everybody hear me? I'd like to say good morning to some and good afternoon to others. I think you can hear me. Can anybody acknowledge that?

The Chair: Yes, we can. We can hear you fine, Mr. Samson.

Mr. Ward Samson: Okay. My understanding of the purpose today is to take a look at what we call recreational fishing in Canada. In Newfoundland, the Canadian government has labelled recreational groundfishing as recreation. I'd like to remind the rest of Canada that it's not necessarily recreation. We're dealing with food.

Right now we can take five fish per day. We'd like to see that increased. We don't want to see any tags, increasing the time limit, increasing the boat limit, or whatever.

For many years what we've been doing is, in September mostly, when the fishing is reasonably good and they're not on the bottom—uncluttered, as we call it in Newfoundland—we will go out and catch fish. If we took 50 in one day, that was fine. If we took 60, that was fine also, because we kept some for ourselves to salt for the winter and some we gave away. With five fish a day and the cost of

gas, we can't give any away. So the older people in our province who would like to have fish [*Technical Difficulty—Editor*]

The Chair: I guess we have some technical difficulties. We've lost Mr. Samson.

Mr. Fordham, would you like to start with your remarks?

Mr. Ward Samson: Am I still here?

The Chair: He's still there. Sorry. We lost the video of you. There you are.

You're back, Mr. Samson. Please proceed.

Mr. Ward Samson: Thank you.

What I was saying is that we don't necessarily want a recreational fishery here. It's a food fishery. We do this for food. It's the same with respect to anything we hunt and fish in Newfoundland. It's done for food. I know this is called recreational, but we basically still hunt and fish for food. At least the people I represent do.

The cod fishery is like five tags per day, but for the length of the season, it's just not practical anymore. In our inland cod fishery, the number of cod that Newfoundlanders take out of the ocean is extremely limited.

We never ever sell codfish, never. What I'm suggesting to Ottawa, and to the powers that be, is that if someone is caught selling a codfish, you basically charge them. It's simple. We don't do that.

With respect to salmon, currently this is the only province in Atlantic Canada and Quebec where you can keep an Atlantic salmon to eat. We don't necessarily hook and release. Hook and release kills fish. They may survive the hooking and they may survive the releasing initially, but afterwards they die. If you hook and release fish, right now we have four fish per day that we can hook and release. Actually in some cases it's six fish. I can retain two and release four. New Brunswick, Nova Scotia and Prince Edward Island have hook and release only for salmon.

Our position is that if we can't hook and keep a salmon, then close the rivers. If the rivers are in that bad a shape and you can't retain a salmon to eat, then close it, period, no ifs, ands or buts. I have read in numerous studies that sometimes small fish, if they're caught within a small timeframe, can be released and some of them do survive. There's a website that shows you how to release salmon and that salmon can be released. It may go to the spawning grounds, but does it spawn? I have not seen any study that shows me that a released salmon will spawn when it goes to the spawning bed.

Newfoundland and Labrador Wildlife Federation will never support hook and release of salmon. Now, we have four tags on some rivers, and some rivers two. The river I fish has four tags. I've caught a lot of salmon in my day. I've been fishing since I was 11 years old. Four tags, I can live with that. We would like to have not an additional tag, but we would like to have probably a tag with a colour that's provincial. I know that's provincial now and you get jurisdictions mangled across the board. We would like to have an extra tag that can be put on a large fish but is interchangeable. If you don't use it for a fish over 63 centimetres, then you can use it for a fish under 63 centimetres. That's where we're coming from, fishing for fun. Initially, catching a salmon, hooking a salmon is fun. Landing a salmon is not a big deal.

• (1110)

I'll tell you now that I've been fishing since I was 11 years old. I can stand in the river and I can hook and release all day. Nobody will charge me with anything if I use a barbless hook. I can use a smaller leader. I can let the fish go. The fish can escape from me, no problem. I can hook all day and release salmon all day. It is not enforceable. Hooking and releasing salmon is not enforceable. Catching four fish a day, again I'll tell you, is not enforceable.

We've already asked for two licences, the way it is in Quebec, a hook-and-release licence and a hook-and-retain licence like the one we already have, but again, there's provincial jurisdiction. Nobody is willing to accept that. We're willing to go that far and see how many people would take up a hook and release licence. If salmon fishermen out there believe so much in hook and release, then give them a hook-and-release licence. Ask them to buy one and make it cheaper, if you want. There won't be any tags involved.

Seals eat salmon. I worked with DFO for a number of years. Seals do eat salmon, not necessarily in tremendous amounts, but they do eat salmon, and we do have a salmon fishery off the south coast, the only section of the south coast where COSEWIC has determined that the salmon is in dire straits.

Also on the south coast we do have aquaculture of wild Atlantic salmon, open-pen aquaculture. It has been proven that closed-pen aquaculture can be done. It may be a little more expensive but it can be done. From B.C. the fish are on the market. People are buying them. Closed containment salmon farming can be done. Just recently, the Newfoundland government, which monitors aquaculture on the south coast, gave an exorbitant amount of money to increase the production of open-pen fish farming on the south coast. We are suggesting that we have feasibility studies and pilot projects on closed containment on land. We can do those on the south coast. We can do them inland and we have a pilot project to do the same.

It is not rocket science. It is already done, yet we're pouring an exorbitant amount of money into open-pen farming and, guys, it doesn't work. Those fish are diseased. Also, you don't need any money. Basically, if the fish are diseased—they get ISA, which is a salmon disease—the federal government takes the salmon, kills the salmon, and gives you some money. So you're not losing anything. You don't lose anything.

• (1115)

The Chair: Mr. Samson, I have to ask you to conclude at this point.

Mr. Ward Samson: Yes, thank you. That'll be my conclusion.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Samson.

Mr. Fordham, the floor is yours, sir.

Mr. Barry Fordham (Public Relations Officer, Newfoundland Federation of Hunters and Anglers): Good day, Mr. Chair, and members of the committee. My name is Barry Fordham. I represent the Newfoundland Federation of Hunters and Anglers. I'm a co-founder and public relations officer of this group. I feel both very honoured and privileged to have this opportunity to speak to you today about the recreational food fishery and representing my province, Newfoundland and Labrador.

Here in this great province of Newfoundland and Labrador the cod fishery represents a traditional way of life that keeps us tied to our historical roots. Our once abundant cod fishery supported a large rural population province-wide. Residents and their communities were independent and economically secure.

Cod has and always will be an important traditional food source to the people of Newfoundland and Labrador. Fishers are not simply catching fish for recreation, they are carefully processing it as part of their traditional winter food supply.

The cod fishery is also important because it provides a cultural bridge to pass on history, names, stories, events, and skills we feel are important for our youth to learn. They can share this knowledge with their kids, which will ensure our historical legacy is passed on generationally and never forgotten. You might say, "Forgotten? A crazy idea. That's absurd." We feel this can be the case.

The example I will use is the commercial inshore fishery. Before the moratorium, the inshore fishery was mostly a family-based operation, where sons would fish with their fathers and grandfathers, and learn all the skills necessary to have the experience to strike out on their own. They were then able to teach their sons, thus ensuring the knowledge and skills were being passed down.

The inshore fishery has been closed now for almost 23 years. There has been a huge lapse of time that has passed, and at least three generations or more of experience, knowledge, and skills may have been lost to the point that if the commercial inshore fishery were reopened today, there may not be enough people to participate in it because of the loss of knowledge or interest.

After the moratorium was announced, in 1992, a black cloud of uncertainty fell over rural Newfoundland and Labrador. The federal government provided the fishers with monetary assistance for a period of time, but eventually people got restless and they began the emigration process for employment and a new life. Our once vibrant communities were beginning to become like ghost towns in some areas.

Then DFO announced a recreational food fishery for codfish, with laws and regulations such as dates and bag limits. There was a period of time when licences and tags were the system for a number of years, but this was eventually abandoned.

During the recreational food fishery, there is a high percentage of our population that participates in it. Our once seemingly ghost towns become vibrant once again. Old friends meet at the local wharves and there's hustle and bustle. Kids are listening intently to old stories, learning new skills, such as how to catch and process the fish, and making new friends. People are now planning their annual family vacations around these dates. Local businesses are profiting. It's attracting tourists in droves. Commercial fishers, whom we have the utmost respect for, are benefiting by taking tourists and locals alike out to their fishing grounds. This provides a huge economic boost to the provincial economy annually, especially at the gas pumps and local sporting goods stores.

One of the biggest obstacles to fishing in Newfoundland and Labrador is the weather, namely the high winds and seas that accompany them. It's so windy in Newfoundland and Labrador that it's a wonder we're not referred to as the Chicago province of Canada. This unsavoury weather cancels our fishing trips, which then results in a lost opportunity. Our fall season last year, for example, was a bust for the most part because of high winds, even though there was an extension to the season granted for a few days.

Our season this year is set to commence on July 18 until August 9, and then on September 19 until September 27, for a total of four weeks plus two days. The bag limit is five cod per person per day, with a maximum boat limit of 15 cod. Retention of mackerel does not affect our bag limit.

In some Quebec and maritime jurisdictions, the season length is open four, five, or six weeks that run concurrently. The bag limit is 15 groundfish per person per day. It is important to note that not more than five in this limit can be cod.

As well, there is a shoreline recreational season in the southern gulf region with a zero cod retention, but mackerel can be retained. This means if you fish from a boat, you can be no further than 50 metres from the shore. If you are fishing from the shoreline, most likely with a rod and reel, you cannot catch further than 50 metres. Good luck with that one.

• (1120)

The season opened this year from April 15 until October 4, for a total of 172 days. We, the Newfoundland Federation of Hunters and Anglers, want the season length extended and combined for several different reasons, keeping in mind that most people work Monday to Friday and may only have a Saturday or Sunday to participate.

The first and most important reason is safety. As I have stated, the weather plays a major factor here in Newfoundland and Labrador. Fishers are sometimes taking risks by journeying out in questionable weather conditions because of the lack of time. Some fishers are travelling out in sometimes questionable watercraft, which is an additional safety risk. There have been drowning fatalities during the recreational food fishery annually, as reported by the media.

Next, it reduces the opportunities that a fisher has, because not everybody has a boat these days. I can go see a friend who has just

returned from fishing and ask if he can take my son and me out fishing. If he says he has another commitment, that results in another lost opportunity.

We also want the season extended and combined to give us equality, to make it similar to Quebec and the Maritimes. I'm not attempting to take anything away from them, but why can't our seasons at least run concurrent, like theirs do?

We would also like to see the shoreline recreational fishery in the southern gulf region introduced in Newfoundland and Labrador with the same zero cod-retention limit during the closed portion of the Newfoundland and Labrador recreational food fishery season. As lads growing up in an outport community, we were always fishing on the rocks or off the wharf. This was a favourite pastime. We learned fishing skills, how to tie a knot and catch and release a fish. We learned life skills and forged friendships. We have memories that will last a lifetime. We would like our youth to have that same privilege to experience what we did when we were young. If you were to walk on most wharves today, you might not even see a youth with a fishing rod. They're not allowed to fish during the closed season of the recreational food fishery.

That, gentlemen, is beyond ridiculous. We feel that by not having this season, our kids are missing out on one of nature's finest experiences.

The short season, factored in with time lost due to the weather, adds the extra pressure to get out for a few days to get the required five fish for the day. For my family's needs, we require approximately 40 cod. If I go solo, it would take me at least eight successful days. I may not be lucky enough; once again, it comes down to time, weather, and opportunity. Unless I have my own boat, I may not even be able to get enough fish to put away for my winter food supply, which is important to my family.

We firmly believe that by extending and combining the season, we would not witness an increase in fishers or days fished. Usually at the beginning of each season there is the traditional big rush. But fishers would get accustomed to the new season. We could choose the time that is safe and convenient for us instead of feeling rushed to get out fishing or to take chances on the weather.

As for claims of people catching too much fish if the season is extended, a recent report indicates that in the 2014 recreational food fishery, the total catch was approximately 1,500 tonnes. Compare that with the total overall catch of approximately 11,000 tonnes. Our own provincial government, through its own news releases, has petitioned DFO about the unfair treatment of Newfoundland and Labrador compared with our sister provinces concerning the recreational food fishery, to no avail. Federal fisheries minister Gail Shea, when interviewed on CBC's *Here and Now—Newfoundland and Labrador* the day before the 2014 recreational food fishery, admitted that she would be open to discussing ways to make the recreational food fishery safer.

I hope that both Minister Shea and you, this committee, are listening now. The time is long past due and the present is here. Now is the time to make things right for the future. This important decision could prevent another drowning fatality this year. As this is the last year of the 2013 to 2015 DFO management plan, grant us this extended combined season with the same bag limit that we have always had. Next year we can sit at the table and iron out an agreement that is acceptable, respectable, and makes common sense. Do this for our safety, our success, our heritage, our historical legacy, and for the respect that Newfoundland and Labrador deserves in our place in Canada, our country.

• (1125)

If I have any time left over I'd like to address an issue on the recreational salmon fishery here as well.

The Chair: Very quickly, Mr. Fordham.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman. Very quickly, indeed.

First of all, I'd like to say that the Newfoundland Federation of Hunters and Anglers supports catch-and-release here in the province of Newfoundland and Labrador. We also support retentions for other fish for the table.

I want to say a couple of words about catch-and-release. Catch-and-release does not have a high mortality rate. It is a common practice here in Newfoundland and Labrador now. It is the way for the future if the stocks are going to be conserved. Closing the rivers is not an option because it takes legitimate fishers off the rivers and then opens the door for unsavoury characters or poachers to go in and deplete the stocks further.

I have been a fishing guide in Labrador on one of the most famous rivers, Eagle River. I saw thousands of fish released over the years that I was working there and did not witness a high mortality rate. So catch-and-release, we think, does not have a high mortality rate when practised properly.

Thank you very much for the opportunity to speak here today.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Fordham.

Now we'll move into the question and answer period.

We'll start off with Mr. Cleary.

Mr. Ryan Cleary (St. John's South—Mount Pearl, NDP): Thank you to the witnesses.

I remember back in 1992 when John Crosbie shut down the northern cod fishery. I was a journalist at the time, and one of the questions he was asked was whether or not, after the commercial fishing moratorium, Newfoundlanders and Labradorians would still be able to fish for their tables. His response is one that I haven't forgotten. What he said was that if the day came that Newfoundlanders and Labradorians couldn't fish for their table, couldn't fish for their supper, the cod stock would be beyond saving.

The day came when Newfoundlanders and Labradorians were restricted from cod fishing for their tables, but now we can fish. But as you've both outlined, the recreational or food fishery—although I think you're both leaning towards the words “food fishery”—is restricted to a narrow period of time.

Gentlemen, what I can gather from both of you is that there are safety concerns in terms of limitations on when you can fish, and there are also food security concerns. Then there are also cultural concerns in terms of passing on fishing knowledge to future generations.

The bottom line on cod stocks is that they are still delicate. Mr. Samson, you brought up the fact that you don't believe in tags, and we don't have a tag system right now. I understand from my last estimate that 1,500 tonnes were caught in the food fishery last year, and 11,000 tonnes were caught overall between the food fishery and the commercial fishery, which pales in comparison to the 1.1 million tonnes of Atlantic cod that were taken from everywhere across the Atlantic and off the coast of Canada.

The question for both of you is this. Unless you keep track of what's being caught, how do you know what's being taken? Again, cod stocks are in a delicate shape. How would you both respond to that?

• (1130)

Mr. Barry Fordham: I'll let Mr. Samson answer first.

Mr. Ward Samson: Thank you.

We send out tags, but I do understand your question, Mr. Cleary. Most of us would not participate in this fishery for food basically until September. I think that if you're from Newfoundland you understand that people are not going to go for the food fishery basically until September. June, July, and August are for small gillnet fish or trap fish, and they're basically glutted, and they're pretty watery if you dry them.

With respect to tags, I'll have to take it back to the board to see, but I think we can manage to live with that, but not tags per day, or per boat.

If you were willing to grant maybe 40 or 50 tags to individuals, and if they could capture those in one day.... Because where I'm from, and where Barry is from we go out and we capture 20 or 30 fish, say. Now we're only permitted to take five. People are high-grading. If you don't catch a fish that's basically a certain length or weight, they're high-grading, and they're going to leave it.

Mr. Ryan Cleary: Mr. Samson, I'm sorry to interrupt. I'm moving to Barry now because I have limited time.

Barry.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, I would like to say that our inshore stocks for the past number of years have seemed to be in very good shape. I'm not sure about the offshore stocks, but it does seem that the inshore have certainly rebounded.

As for conservation measures, which is what we'd like to see, we need to keep better track of things other than simply dockside monitoring. I'd like to call it the food fishery as well, even though the study's on the recreational fishery in Canada. Through participation, we have people themselves with eyes and ears out there on the water.

To further promote the conservation, there should be some kind of size limitation developed for the fish. As well, each fisher should have a logbook filled out with pertinent information on their daily activities, the number of fish caught, what they've seen, different species, catch-and-release, etc., which would then give the Department of Fisheries and Oceans extra valuable information which they normally would never have in the first place from people who are right there with their eyes and ears on the water itself.

Mr. Jack Harris (St. John's East, NDP): I have a question for both of you. I know there's a lot of discussion about the recreational versus food fishery. You both have talked about the food fishery side of it but, of course, there is a combination of people who engage in this program, some purely recreational, whether it be tourism-related or, as you talked about, families getting together. You seem to be talking about a more serious thing. Both of you mentioned 40 or 50 fish for your winter supply. In your case, Mr. Samson, you said September fish are the ones that are best for food.

Would you be able to guesstimate either what percentage or how many in Newfoundland and Labrador participate in the way you both talk about, in terms of a food fishery, a winter food supply, hoping to get 40 or 50 fish to put away some and, obviously, eat some and have some for the table? It seems to me that if you're talking about a food fishery, that may be a different system, and tags may be inevitable if you're talking about a quantity of that nature.

• (1135)

Mr. Ward Samson: Jack, who would you like to have answer the question?

Barry, I answered last, so you go first this time.

Mr. Jack Harris: Anybody can go ahead, whoever wants to go first.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, the study here today is the recreational food fishery, although we like it here to be referred to as the food fishery itself.

As for the number of fish, that would vary from person to person and family to family. Some people may only want to go out and have one meal of fish per year. Others require more. Speaking on my own behalf and my family's, we have fish processed and frozen in the freezer to eat once every two weeks throughout the year.

We're not fishing for recreation. Some are, but most aren't. Most are fishing for food.

Thank you.

Mr. Ward Samson: I'd like to respond to that and agree with Barry. Most people are fishing for food. They're not fishing for recreation.

I salt some of my fish—still do. It's not necessarily healthy, but I do salt some of my fish and I leave them for the winter, and we have some fish in the fridge.

We're not asking for an exorbitant amount. For most of the people in Newfoundland... You know, if you ask Newfoundlanders if they're going to give you anything, they'll basically tell you...if you ask fishers, obviously, most of them, the majority, 95% are going to tell you the truth.

Right now, it's mind-boggling. You can't simply go out in a boat and catch your fish. You have five fish per day, 50 per boat. We had a process years ago. We got rid of the tags.

I understand a monitoring system to some degree, but most people are going to tell you the truth. They're not going to tell you...

I'm saying that if people are out there catching codfish and selling codfish, DFO should basically mandate their employees to charge them. You don't sell fish. You catch fish. You eat fish. You keep fish for the winter. Some you salt, and some you freeze, and some you put in the fridge. It's not a lot. For me, it's 40 or 50 fish, maximum.

The Chair: Thank you very much, gentlemen.

Mr. Leef.

Mr. Ryan Leef (Yukon, CPC): Thank you, Mr. Chair, and thank you to both our witnesses.

Mr. Fordham, I'm the member of Parliament for Yukon, about as far west from Newfoundland and Labrador as you can possibly get in this country, so forgive me for not being completely familiar with the regulations you deal with. I'll ask some questions around that just so that I and other members of the committee might have a full appreciation of some of the specific provincial and federal legislation that you work with.

Before I ask that, I was just wondering how many members of the Federation of Hunters and Anglers there are in Newfoundland and Labrador.

• (1140)

Mr. Barry Fordham: Our membership right now is not very high as we are a relatively new group starting up, Mr. Chairman. We are constantly looking for new members. However, we are a registered not-for-profit group. We want to see a fair and safer system for the recreational food fishery, so our membership may not be all that strong, but our voice certainly is.

Mr. Ryan Leef: Fair enough. I know groups and organizations like yours are very important. As you say, a small group can be mighty in their sweat equity contributions and their personal financial investments. We've heard that from a number of witnesses right across the country, that even small groups can make a significant contribution to fisheries.

I know you spend a lot of time speaking about groundfisheries, which are clearly important for you. I'm wondering from a recreational point of view, are there any inland freshwater fisheries in your province that people pursue with species other than salmon in the ocean and the groundfisheries?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, indeed there are, sir. Here in Newfoundland and Labrador, we have a great inland fishery for such species as brook trout—trophy record brook trout—lake trout, pike, ouananiche, Atlantic salmon, etc.

Speaking about that issue, I feel that with respect to the inland waters, there should be more conservation measures and policing efforts, etc., established to keep better management and conservation measures in place.

Mr. Ryan Leef: Has your group had any opportunity, or do you know of any group in your province, that has had the ability to utilize the recreational fisheries conservation partnerships program that our government introduced a couple of years ago? It's on the inland side.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, I can't speak for other groups. There are other groups here with fishing in particular, outdoor conservation groups, that have great integrity. I'm sure they would be aware of that and would be taking advantage of it, as I believe they already have.

Mr. Ryan Leef: Great. Would you happen to know the number of annual licences sold in the province for the recreational piece, the inland fisheries? Do those licence sales just go into general provincial revenues, or is there any direct allocation back into the enhancement of inland fisheries conservation? I guess that would be a provincial decision, but we're just curious.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, as it stands here now, to the best of my knowledge, residents of this province of Newfoundland and Labrador do not require an inland fishing licence for such species as trout, etc. We do require a licence for Atlantic salmon fishing. Non-residents coming here require a non-resident licence for salmon, but they also require, to the best of my knowledge, a non-resident licence for trout fishing as well.

It would be great, sir, to agree that the moneys that go from here from the sale of licences go into conservation measures and future conservation efforts, but you probably know as well as I do that the money gets funnelled somewhere else never to be seen again. We would like to see more conservation measures and more money poured back into the conservation funds where they could do more good to enhance fishing for our future generations.

Thank you.

• (1145)

Mr. Ryan Leef: That's a fair point.

When you were talking about the recreational food fisheries portion and about extended seasons and total allowable catch, does that total allowable catch and the season extensions and the licensing apply relatively equally to non-resident and resident anglers, or is there a difference between the two? I know there's a non-resident licence, and I would assume there's a different licence fee for that, but are non-residents subject to the same catch and possession limits as residents?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, to the best of my knowledge the licences themselves will be quite similar or the same, except it would say "non-resident" or "resident". As for the regulations, sir, I haven't been a fishing guide now for a number of years. I used to know all the regulations, or most of them. Back in the day when I was a guide, sir, the non-resident, when I used to be a fisherman with outfitters in flying country, had the same retention and catch-and-release limit as residents did. If that has changed now, sir, I stand to be corrected, but that may still be the same for salmon fishing.

Mr. Ryan Leef: How about for groundfish?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, for groundfish, sir, I'm not quite sure what that is. I don't think the non-resident requires a licence. Through my own knowledge and

experience, I fished side by side with non-residents and they had the same bag limit as I had, which was five fish per day.

I cannot speak on behalf of the tourist boat operators, because I'm not quite sure what they have, although we do support their having a bit more of a quota because it is their business. It's what runs their business. It's what they earn their living at. Also, it provides economic fuel to the rest of the community where they are.

Thank you.

Mr. Ryan Leef: That's a fair point. Thank you.

So I have a handle on the differentiation between catch and possession limits, if you catch and possess your allocation and you hit five a day and then there's a certain period you're allowed to have them in your possession, once you bring those fish back to your home and they are in your freezer, or salted, or processed in one way or another, is that still in your possession limit, or does that eliminate your possession and you could have more? How does that work in your province?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Sir, I imagine you're talking about the cod fishing now.

Mr. Ryan Leef: Correct, yes.

Mr. Barry Fordham: My limit is five fish per day with a total boat limit of 15 fish per day, which means that if there are four of us out, we can only catch 15 fish between the four of us. However, if I go out and catch my five fish and bring them in and process them to bring them home, I'm done for the day. I cannot go out again.

If I am the captain of the boat, we can go out and I could take you and your friend. That would be three of us. We could go out and catch 15 fish, five fish per person for the three of us. As captain of the boat, as I understand it, sir, I can go back in, process those fish and I could take out another two people with me, but I could only catch 10 fish now, five per person for each of those two people who weren't out already. I cannot catch my fish, five fish, over again, sir.

I hope that answers your question.

Mr. Ryan Leef: It did, thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Leef.

Mr. MacAulay.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay (Cardigan, Lib.): Welcome, Mr. Fordham. It's a pleasure to have you at the committee.

On that item that allows you to catch five per day, what's the total limit for the season?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, my daily bag limit, sir, is five fish per day. If I get the five fish, I'm done for that day. I can go out the next day and get five fish. According to the regulations, there is no possession limit as such, as I understand it, sir. If I fished every day of the recreational food fishery season, I would have 160 fish, I believe.

• (1150)

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Now, what I would like to—

Mr. Barry Fordham: Also, that would be legal for me to have.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Legal to have, but I don't know if there are any statistics on how many of the fish are caught and sold. Is there any information, or are there any statistics, on how many fish you think are sold? My understanding is it's illegal to sell them.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chair.

In response to the member, yes, sir, it is illegal to sell cod during the recreational food fishery. As for the stats, or if anything like that is going on, sir, I cannot say. I don't know from experience, and I don't think I'm the right person to answer that question.

Thank you.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Thank you very much.

So, you do not believe this activity takes place, or it's very limited in Newfoundland.

In your quite interesting presentation, you also indicated a lot of young people were not interested in the fishery. They have a lack of knowledge and do not know anything about the fishery. What needs to be done in order to bring back the interest of the young people?

Also, when you're answering me, on the boat charters that go out, you're talking about the season not being long enough. Does that season also need to be extended?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chair, in response to the member's question about the young people, in my statement I was talking about the inshore fishery, which was a commercial fishery itself, where the skills and knowledge are not being passed down to the sons who would normally strike out on their own.

Sir, with respect to the recreational food fishery, we believe by extending and combining the seasons it would give the youth more opportunity to learn all there is they need to know, all we feel they should know, and all we feel they are missing out on. By educating the young, and especially adopting this gulf recreational fishery for Newfoundland and Labrador, it would allow our youth to fish off the wharves and the rocks, within safe locations, of course. That would teach them all these skills. Then we get them back on track with our history and our culture.

Thank you.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: On the tourism or the boat charters that go out, if I understood you correctly, they can take a bag limit of 15. Also, the length of time, if I understood you correctly, didn't seem to be long enough. As well, this is a very important industry to your economy.

I understand how important it is, because we have a recreational tuna fishery in our area. I can assure you that stores, restaurants, gas bars, hotels, and everything benefit from this.

I would like you to elaborate on what needs to be done, or how the limit needs to be changed, in order to make this.... I know you can't do anything about the wind, but other than that I would think this is valuable to the economy in Newfoundland. How can it be improved?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chair, in response to the member, you're absolutely right, sir. It is very valuable here to the economy.

We cannot do anything about the winds. We cannot do anything about opportunities, but what is common sense, sir, for the federal

DFO to do is to extend the overall season. By extending the overall season, sir, we are now allowing people to be able to choose when to go out and when not to go out.

Some people say, "Oh, you're going to extend the season. You're going to have every Tom, Dick, and Harry out there fishing in every kind of vessel, every day, all day long." I've had some talks with other conservation groups, and we believe and feel if the season is extended.... Usually, as I said in my preamble, at the beginning of each season there is a big rush. Everybody has been waiting all year to get out to get a few fish, to experience what we always had, and to smell the salt sea, as we say. By extending the season, it now gives us more opportunity to get out there.

We believe there is not going to be a big influx of people out fishing. Maybe it would in the first week, sure. After that, when people get used to the new season, they're going to say, "I'm not going out this day. I'm not going out that day. I'm going to shoot ahead to one day next week." Extending the season is promoting the safety to our provincial fishers and making it fairer and safer for everybody to get out and experience this wonderful joy we have here in this great province of ours, Newfoundland and Labrador.

● (1155)

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Thank you very much.

You indicated that certain people need licences to fish and, if I understood you correctly, certain people do not need licences to fish. You also indicated that the money disappears into a black hole somewhere and you do not see the benefit of whatever dollars come in on the sale of licences.

Would you have any comment on how things would be if everybody had to have a licence? Let's say the fee was increased and with that there would have to be coordination between your organization and the provincial government. How would you feel if that money went to groups like yours and others to make sure that habitat was protected and that type of thing? That's what I'm getting at, if everybody had to pay, and even if everybody had to pay a bit more, but the dollars went into something that was going to make sure the fishery was improved and was better. I'd like you to elaborate on whether you think that would be a good thing.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, first of all, when I referred to the money going into a black hole, that happens everywhere, not only here in Newfoundland and Labrador of course.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Excuse me, I'm certainly not inclined to defend the government, really, since I'm an opposition member, but I believe there are examples across the country where there has been a program put in place and the funds were used for a specific cause. That's what I'd like you to focus on, if you could.

Mr. Barry Fordham: The money should be allocated and put towards not only the conservation of the stocks, but also public education, including public education aimed at teaching our youth skills that have been lost over the years.

I'd like to speak about the licence for a second, Mr. Member. I must say our group was in favour of the licence. We may still be, but I have to say that when Nova Scotia, New Brunswick, and P.E.I. publicly say that they are not in favour of having a licence, why should a licence have to apply to Newfoundland and Labrador?

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: I guess that's a fair comment.

Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. MacAulay.

Ms. Davidson.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson (Sarnia—Lambton, CPC): Mr. Fordham, thanks for being with us this morning.

Certainly we've heard some interesting comments and we've heard some comments that have been different from those we've heard from other regions of the country, and I appreciate that.

I have some very fond memories of going cod fishing many years ago in Newfoundland. At that time we also thought that we might do some inland fishing. I don't know what your rates are today, but I know for non-residents at that time, which was probably 25 years ago, they were pretty steep and so we didn't do that. But I do have some fond memories of cod fishing and certainly you have a beautiful part of the country and I enjoy it.

My riding is in southwestern Ontario and we sit on Lake Huron, one of the Great Lakes. Our area is quite different from the areas that you experience.

I want to talk a little bit about the food fishing days. I believe those were eliminated at one point and then they were brought back. Is that correct? Is that when the limits were initiated?

Mr. Barry Fordham: I'm sorry, I didn't get your question, Ms. Davidson.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: For what you're calling the food fishing days, I believe at one time people were not allowed to catch the cod for food. Is that correct? Is that what you were saying? Then the program was reintroduced and people were then allowed to have the daily catch, the five fish.

• (1200)

Mr. Barry Fordham: When the moratorium on the commercial inshore fishery was called in 1992, the overall fishery was shut down altogether, both commercially and recreationally.

It wasn't really referred to as a recreational fishery back in the day when the commercial fisheries were on the go. It was more like a God-given right. We now see that it may be a God-granted privilege to be able to do it.

As for when the recreational fishery actually opened up, I don't have that statistic here in front of me, but it is open now.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Okay. And the recreational fishery was opened, then, because of the increasing health of the fish industry, was it?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, I will point out that before the commercial fishery closed down in 1992, we Newfoundlanders and Labradorians had no limit, no season, no restrictions on us whatsoever. We were allowed to go out and catch fish for ourselves and our families and process them and bring them home. There were no guidelines as such.

After the moratorium was announced, and then when the recreational food fishery opened a number of years later, there were

restrictions on dates when I could go out and bag them and on how many fish I could retain.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Moving on, then, from that, you said the season should be extended for many reasons and you talked about safety issues. Can you tell me why the season is set the way it is, why it's fragmented, why it isn't a continuous season?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, I'll say on a positive note that we can't understand why for the life of us.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Okay. Can you elaborate a bit more on the reasons you think it would be beneficial to extend it on a continuous basis and what timeframes you think would be good timeframes?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, we would like to see the season extended to not quite three months. It would take in a lapse of time from sometime in July to sometime in September. It promotes safety, promotes fairness, promotes opportunity. It promotes our learning our history and culture again. It promotes families coming home for family vacations. It promotes youth education, and it promotes public education. My God, I could keep on going.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: That's good. Thank you.

Mr. Samson did not seem to be too much in favour of catch-and-release and was quite concerned about the mortality rates with catch-and-release, but I think you made the statement that catch-and-release, when practised properly, does not have a high mortality rate, from what you have seen.

Could you elaborate more on that and on what you mean by "practised properly"? Are there those who try to educate people, or how do people learn how to do it properly?

Mr. Barry Fordham: Mr. Chairman, in response to the member, yes, there are outdoor conservation groups, fishing conservation groups with high integrity, such as, here in this province, SPAWN, the Salmon Preservation Association for the Waters of Newfoundland, out of western Newfoundland; the SAEN group; and, very infamous in Atlantic Canada, the Atlantic Salmon Federation. They have videos that promote the proper way of catching and releasing the different types of fish.

In my opinion, catch-and-release does work. It is the way of the future. It promotes conservation. It teaches our youth the proper ways to be doing things.

In our society today, we don't need to be out hunting and fishing so much for food. Hunting and fishing is very important here in Newfoundland and Labrador, but for the salmon themselves, what I have witnessed—and I've worked on a very famous river in Newfoundland and Labrador. If you say to anybody who is an Atlantic salmon fisherman "Eagle River", they will practically shake at their knees. We've witnessed thousands of fish. There are various outfitters there who are talking about weeks on end of fishing, with thousands of fish being released, because it's such a magnificent river that holds such high numbers.

We don't see fish floating belly up going down the river. In the case of most sport people, if the fish is going to be released and it's done properly, the fish swims away. If the fish upon release is not doing well, we as ethical recreational fishers would retain that fish. There's no sense letting it go just to let it go to waste like that.

If there were a high mortality rate, then it would be more on public display, I believe. It would be in the newspapers. It would be on the TV. It would be everywhere, and you would see all of these fish floating downriver belly up. Well, guess what? We're not seeing that. That's why we think that catch-and-release does work. However, we at the Newfoundland Federation of Hunters and Anglers support the retention of a fish for the table as well. It's very important that people understand that.

• (1205)

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Okay.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Catch-and-release is the way of the future.

Our great Lee Wulff, who is a very famous fly-fishing pioneer, has said, and if you look at his home shows and his writings from years and years ago he was saying the same thing, that catch-and-release is the way of the future.

Mrs. Patricia Davidson: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Ms. Davidson.

Mr. Fordham, on behalf of the committee I want to thank you very much for taking the time today to bring your remarks to us and for answering questions from the committee members. It certainly is appreciated.

The committee will suspend for a few moments while we set up for our next witnesses.

Mr. Barry Fordham: Thank you very much, Mr. Chairman.

• (1205)

_____ (Pause) _____

• (1210)

The Chair: I'll call this meeting back to order.

I'd like to thank our guests for joining us here today and taking the time to meet with the committee to share your thoughts and answer committee members' questions. You're no doubt aware that we're studying recreational fisheries in Canada. We appreciate your taking the time to be with us.

Committee members are constrained by certain time limits for their questions and answers, so I'd ask you, when you're responding to committee members' questions, to try to keep your responses as concise as possible, because they try to get as many questions in as possible in that timeframe.

Having said that, we're prepared now to hear opening remarks and comments from each of you. The clerk no doubt has advised you that we generally allow about 10 minutes for opening comments and remarks and then will proceed to committee members' questions following that.

Ms. Negus, if you want to, start off with your remarks, and then we'll follow with Mr. Regan.

Any time you're ready, the floor is yours.

Ms. Heather Negus (Spokesperson, Nova Scotia Salmon Association): Excellent.

Thank you for the opportunity to speak this afternoon. I'm representing the Nova Scotia Salmon Association. The association is a leader in the conservation and wise management of salmon and trout resources in Nova Scotia. The association is a province-wide organization that works with the regional DFO office, on both science and management, through the NSLC Adopt A Stream program, which it runs on behalf of all recreational anglers in Nova Scotia.

The association currently has 17 direct affiliate groups, with over 1,000 members, and works with a growing number of active river groups. Funding for this program comes from two main sources, the Nova Scotia sport fish habitat fund and the NSLC. The Nova Scotia sport fish habitat fund is a source of dedicated funding contributed by anglers via a levy on the recreational fishing licences. In Nova Scotia this currently comes only from freshwater licences, as there is no licensing for the coastal fishery. Those are some potential funds that could be directed toward the restoration habitat that Adopt A Stream is currently taking on. Other funding for projects comes from DFO's recreational fisheries conservation partnership program, which is fantastic, the fish habitat compensation through the Fisheries Act and HAT offsetting, and other corporate donations and support.

In Nova Scotia, salmon fishing is still a healthy contributor to local economies where rivers flow into the Northumberland Strait and into western Cape Breton Island. The recreational fishery in the province is worth an estimated \$88 million, according to a 2013 study. However, the reality is that the issues surrounding wild Atlantic salmon are the same issues that are affecting our recreational fishery in the province. Healthy fish populations are the key to creating a strong and viable recreational fishery. Some of these issues include the loss and degradation of habitat and fish passage as a result of culvert work, dams, in-stream work, and poor land usage. Further impacts come from acidification and rising aluminum levels in our rivers and effects from open net pen aquaculture on the adjacent river systems.

Finally, one of the issues impacting our wild Atlantic salmon here in Nova Scotia is the cuts to DFO's staffing and funding, combined with policy changes over the last five years that have led to some of the offloading of conservation activities, such as training, advising, and other tasks on NGOs and programs like Adopt A Stream, local river associations, and volunteer groups who are taking on some of this work.

Without proper habitat and fish passage, the salmon and trout populations cannot grow to the levels needed to sustain an active recreational fishery in the province. Loss and degradation of habitat caused by poorly planned development, inadequate impact assessment, poor enforcement, and lack of expert resources are some of the key issues we need to address in order to overcome this. This could result in increased productivity and contribute significantly to the recovery of endangered salmon and trout in the province.

The NSLC Adopt A Stream program is currently involved in all habitat restoration work in the province. At present this includes planning, design, oversight, and offsetting administered by the program. In order to meet the province's habitat restoration design, watershed planning, and biological and technical needs, the program needs DFO as a partner. DFO needs to help us by redeveloping its habitat restoration expertise and allowing funding for staff to provide restoration design and expert advice to community groups and offsetting projects. This needs to be combined with long-term funding for the NSSA's NSLC Adopt A Stream program as the basis for salmon habitat and stock restoration implementation. We really need that partnership in order to make that effort successful.

All of Nova Scotia's rivers suffer from physical habitat problems that are limiting productivity for salmon and trout. Fish passage and habitat access is one issue that is currently limiting productivity. We have over 600 dams, fewer than 100 functioning fishways, and tens of thousands of culverts that either do not let fish pass, are partial barriers, or do not meet current standards for fish passage in the province. The NSLC Adopt A Stream program now is providing expert advice on culvert guidelines, developing fish passage mitigation techniques, which it's implementing across the province, providing advice on fishway repairs, and convincing landowners to allow the program to help them fix those when those fishways fall into disrepair.

DFO fisheries protection could use its enforcement powers to require owners of these fishways and culverts to comply with design guidelines and maintain these structures on their property. Regulatory backup and management decisions from the responsible department will give the NGOs the support they need to achieve success and increase fish passage.

- (1215)

The first priority when we look at habitat restoration is to make sure that the fish are able to reach the habitats that they need to complete their life cycle and become full-grown fish. Part of this is for them to be able to get up the watershed as far as possible and in order to do that, we need clear fish passage.

In addition, acid rain may be one of the single largest contributors to the decline of wild Atlantic salmon in Nova Scotia. In the southern upland, pH levels in the rivers have dropped well below those required for salmon rearing. Aluminum levels now exceed maximum levels for parr in some rivers and exceed maximum levels for smolt in most rivers in the region.

Similarly, in the inner Bay of Fundy, salmon are listed as endangered under the Species at Risk Act. Currently the DFO biodiversity centre is maintaining the genetic stock in the region. This needs to be supported until reasons for the loss in this area can be better understood and until mitigation actions can be taken to help us increase those pH levels and restore fish stocks in that area.

If we are to counteract the effects of acid rain in Nova Scotia and return our rivers to productive sites for salmon and trout fishery, there needs to be a commitment to long-term funding and support for liming projects focused on the watersheds with the highest value. In the 2013 southern upland recovery plan, DFO identified 13 rivers that would be prime candidates for liming in that area, and it would really help us bring those populations back to life.

The West River acid mitigation project is managed by the Nova Scotia Salmon Association and is currently the only large-scale liming project under way in Nova Scotia. This year it celebrates its 10th year of liming and has demonstrated that liming can have a positive impact on Nova Scotia's rivers. Liming on the West River alone has restored the brook trout fishery in the area and raised the salmon smolt count from 2,100 in the beginning to 10,000 per year over that 10-year span.

Proper habitat, acceptable fishways, and water quality are all important factors in restoring wild fish populations and contribute to the creation of a sustainable recreational fishery for Nova Scotia.

In addition to the environmental factors at work in Nova Scotia, open net pen aquaculture has been demonstrated to have a major effect on the adjacent rivers and is a contributor to the overall decline of wild Atlantic salmon. The impact of escapees, disease, and parasites from aquaculture sites have significant impacts on wild fish. This occurs through things such as interbreeding and the spread of disease and parasites to fish which have already been weakened in rivers where acidification has damaged the fish population and contributes to the overall increased mortality due to those impacts that we're getting when we have those big aquaculture sites in our oceans.

In order to protect our wild fish, enforced regulations need to be put in place to protect the coastal ecosystems against the impacts to salmon, trout, and other critical marine species such as lobster and other species that are in that ecosystem and to make it all work nicely to grow our salmon and fish populations. This should include zoning to protect rivers on the southern upland. They are already severely damaged by acidification. In Nova Scotia the Doelle-Lahey report that was released last year provided some very comprehensive recommendations for how those risks could be mitigated. The NSSA fully supports the implementation of those in full with support from DFO. It's the only way that we make those regulations actually stick.

Successfully addressing these issues would result in increased productivity and contribute significantly to the recovering potential of endangered populations. The Nova Scotia Salmon Association and affiliates are working to address these concerns, but more substantive gains in conservation and restoration requires the increased involvement and commitment through a DFO partnership with the NGOs to truly affect the wild fish populations in Nova Scotia in a way that will allow us to restore and maintain a recreational fishery.

We need to put the fish first. We need to take a comprehensive view of the issues and employ management techniques that address all the stressors. Only then will we see a strong and positive response in Nova Scotia.

Thank you.

• (1220)

The Chair: Thank you very much.

Mr. Regan, the floor is yours whenever you are ready, sir.

Mr. Walter Regan (President, Sackville Rivers Association): Mr. Chair, the Sackville Rivers Association is a not-for-profit, volunteer-based, community group concerned with the health of the Sackville River watershed. The SRA's mandate is to protect and where necessary restore the river and environment of the Sackville River watershed. The Sackville River flows for over 40 kilometres before discharging into Halifax harbour. The 150-square-kilometre watershed contains 13 lakes, many wetlands, ponds, streams, and feeder brooks. The population on the watershed is currently over 60,000 and increasing daily.

The Sackville River is a historic Atlantic salmon river. In the mid-1800s, a salmon hatchery was established at the mouth of the river and was closed in the early 1960s due to deteriorating water quality and diminishing salmon returns caused by development in the watershed.

The SRA, in partnership with the Department of Fisheries and Oceans, participated in a stocking program to restore the Atlantic salmon to the Sackville and Little Sackville rivers, which was stopped in 2013 due to budget cuts. SRA has continually counted Atlantic salmon since 1989. In 1996 we counted over 750 adult Atlantic salmon in the Sackville River.

The SRA uses the wild Atlantic salmon as a biological indicator of water quality, a canary in the mine. If we can keep the salmon in the watershed, all species of fish can live in the river. The Sackville River is used extensively by recreational fishermen, and by commercial and aboriginal fishers.

If the youth of today are our future, we need to educate and encourage them to go fishing. We need to promote recreational fishing in Canada much better than we are doing. Our youth know how to shop in a mall and play electronic games, but they do not know how to catch a fish. We must get our youth into a more active lifestyle that includes the outdoors and fishing.

Urban rivers must be highlighted, enhanced, and protected, so that the increased population now living in nearby cities can have access to recreational fishing. It is our youth who are the ones we want to have out fishing, and by doing so increase the future of the recreational fishery, and not have them hanging around their rooms and in malls playing electronic games. We need those urban rivers protected.

Due to a lack of access to wild Atlantic salmon eggs for our educational fishery program in schools for grades 4, 5 and 6—teaching about 500 children a year—we had to start using speckled trout eggs. This limits the effectiveness of the program. DFO has to change its policy and provide salmon eggs for this valuable education program.

We are desperate for a marine recreational fishing licence. This licence would cover shellfish, groundfish, striped bass, shad, grass prawns, and smelts. It is estimated that over 8,000 people alone spend over \$5 million a year on marine recreational fishing, just for striped bass in the Bay of Fundy.

How do you manage a fishery with no catch data, no fishing network information? The licence would provide funding information for studies, habitat restoration, species management, and science. This would also be consistent across Canada, as British Columbia now has a tidal waters fishing licence.

Set DFO free to go to sea. Coastal and marine ecosystem changes must be studied and DFO must be given the resources to focus studies that would determine why salt water mortality for wild Atlantic salmon is happening, what ecosystem changes are occurring, and recovery actions needed to be implemented to stop this mortality. DFO must be allowed to do at-sea research to find and stop the black hole.

It's clear, so it must be clean. Wild fish need good water quality. Acid rain may be the single largest reason for the decline of wild Atlantic salmon in the 73 Southern Upland rivers in Nova Scotia. Due to the lowering of the pH and raising aluminum levels in the rivers, to overcome the negative effects of acid rain, Environment Canada and DFO should partner to lime the rivers that are affected in the Southern Upland on an ongoing basis.

At least 13 rivers of the Southern Upland are totally unsuitable for spawning or rearing based on the acidity and aluminum levels. This affects over 10 million square metres of wild Atlantic salmon habitat. Liming must be started and carried out to return these rivers to full production. The liming project at West River, Sheet Harbour initiated and maintained by the Nova Scotia Salmon Association for the past 10 years on a shoestring budget must be taken over and operated by both Environment Canada and DFO.

• (1225)

For example, in Norway and Sweden, over \$20 million a year is spent on liming rivers with a five-year payback from increased tourism. We live next door to 400 million tourists or fishermen. Many would come here if we had fish and promoted fishing correctly.

Another problem is, who looks after acid rain? Is it DFO or is it Environment Canada? This must be straightened out and resources provided to correct the problem, not just studies.

In 2007 there was an escape of aquaculture fish, farmed fish, rainbow trout. Several of these fish showed up in the Sackville River, hundreds of kilometres away. Rainbow trout is an invasive fish species here in Nova Scotia. What are DFO and the province doing allowing invasive fish to be raised in open net sewer pens where escape is possible?

DFO is a promoter of the aquaculture industry and the regulator at the same time. This is a conflict of interest.

DFO is mandated to protect endangered wild Atlantic salmon, but they do not use the precautionary approach when there isn't science to prove an activity is safe. Recently the Nova Scotia government gave the aquaculture industry \$25 million. DFO should give NGOs in Nova Scotia a similar amount to save the wild Atlantic salmon.

The volunteer is doing what he can where he can. Of the more than 550 watersheds in Nova Scotia, with 73 rivers known to have salmon, containing over 78 million square metres of Atlantic salmon habitat alone, this habitat is not just for salmon but for all fish species and must be protected and restored where possible. In-stream work required to address habitat issues is part of what will be required to reverse the declining population trends. This work is now being done by volunteer groups. In Nova Scotia there are about 25 groups actively doing in-river restoration. We need more groups and resources for those groups.

Thanks to the Province of Nova Scotia, the recreational fishing licence habitat stamp program, which funds a NSSA Adopt a Stream program every year, great work is being done to restore the fish habitat in Nova Scotia rivers. This program must be supported by DFO by funding an equivalent \$1 million a year, or by matching dollar-for-dollar from the province's habitat stamp.

Perhaps the time is right for a new green fund. Perhaps a habitat fund could be created where offsetting funds for all fish habitat losses could be placed to help the volunteer groups restore our rivers. This fund would be overseen by the present NSSA Adopt a Stream program, which is already up and running. Population viability analysis indicates that relatively small increases in either freshwater productivity or at-sea survival are expected to decrease extinction possibilities for Atlantic salmon, especially in the Southern Upland rivers of Nova Scotia.

While a freshwater productivity increase of 50% decreases the probability of extinction within 50 years to near zero, larger changes in at-sea survival are required to restore populations to a level above their conservation requirements. Acidification and barriers to fish passage in rivers are thought to have reduced the amount of freshwater habitat by over 40%.

What happened to the wild Atlantic salmon when it reached the culvert? It got hung up. With an estimated 100,000 culverts or more in Nova Scotia watersheds and the fish passage failure rate of 50% to 80%, many millions of square metres of salmon habitat are inaccessible to wild Atlantic salmon. More inspections of culverts are required by more DFO inspectors and actions taken to correct issues, not just to inventory the losses.

This is and will be an ongoing problem until all culverts are installed correctly. Contractors should have to pay a fee or offsetting levy for the habitat destroyed to be used for stocking, liming, and for

restoration of Atlantic salmon and other fish stock habitats. Small-diameter culverts authorized under guidelines now do not have to fund offsetting work. This must be changed.

We need a Nova Scotia habitat credit bank fund, possibly funded by installation of culverts, that would allow developers to put money into the fund so they can get on with their projects and not unnecessarily be held up, delaying economic development. Those moneys collected could then be used to restore lost habitat and to lime rivers.

• (1230)

In addition, like a carbon credit, NGOs could sell their restored square metres to the developers at \$40 per square metre, and then use this money to further restore Nova Scotia rivers and damaged habitat to increase recreational fishing in Nova Scotia. Currently, DFO does not allow this habitat banking approach.

The present DFO RFCPP is a very good program and should be expanded and increased. Well done, DFO.

The Chair: Mr. Regan, I hate to interrupt, but could I ask you to start to bring your remarks to a conclusion. We're running short of time.

Mr. Walter Regan: DFO must start a river ranger guardian program.

What did the Atlantic salmon say when it hit the 50-foot concrete wall? "Dam." It's estimated that just in Nova Scotia rivers, five watersheds are impassible due to barriers that hit the tide and another 25 contain total barriers...upwards of 31 million square metres of habitat.

Grandfather clauses for dams must be removed, and all dams have been solved upstream, downstream [*Inaudible—Editor*]. DFO has lost most of its hatchery capacity. The eight hatcheries are down to just two. We need more hatcheries.

The recreational fishery in Nova Scotia is worth \$88 million. By not having these 550 rivers full of wild salmon and other species, we are removing millions from the federal economy due to decreased tourism.

In 1994, DFO and Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries carried out a research program. The cost of the lost Atlantic salmon habitat on Brierly Brook at that time was found to be \$40 per square metre, for all species. The same study said that every Atlantic salmon caught was worth \$536. Every day we're losing additional square metres of habitat. This means a loss of millions to the economy of Canada and Nova Scotia.

The present Atlantic salmon conservation fund is good, but it should be increased to \$50 million, which will help other river groups in six provinces.

Finally, to quote Don MacIver, a retired Environment Canada scientist, “think globally, act locally”.

Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Regan.

We'll move into an eight-minute round of questions.

Mr. Harris will start off.

Mr. Jack Harris: Thank you both for your presentations this morning.

I'm Jack Harris, MP for St. John's East, and I'm sitting in today for Robert Chisholm. He's asked me to sit in because he had to be at a funeral in the riding. I do have some questions, though.

First of all, let me say that I'm extremely impressed by the knowledge that you bring about the activities in your area, and also in bringing the voice of conservation and restoration to the debate. I am also extremely encouraged in hearing that there are solutions to this problem of the degradation of Atlantic salmon.

In fact, the numbers that were put forward by you, Ms. Negus, about the increase in the number of salmon over 10 years, from 2,000 to 10,000, by the activity of liming, obviously gives an optimism to the success that can take place if efforts are made. Thank you for pointing it out to us.

Mr. Regan, you mentioned some numbers at the end.

Could you expand a little on the economic value? You talked about the restoration of the Brierly Brook. Is that one of the Sackville rivers that you're working on? Would you be able to say what the value is of the restoration of the Sackville rivers within your bailiwick, your jurisdiction? Is there some study that's been done or some numbers you can extrapolate as to the economic value?

• (1235)

Mr. Walter Regan: The important thing with Brierly Brook is that DFO and the province hired an auditor to go over restoration figures. For the first time ever, 1994, they came up with \$40 per square metre in habitat loss. Every time you lose a square metre, you lose \$40 out of the local community. It was the first time that we could quantify habitat loss in dollars. You build a dam, it's a million square metres destroyed. You put a culvert in wrong, it's a thousand square metres.

We have a starting pointing. DFO can sit down with the developers and say, “You destroyed 10,000 square metres, so you pay \$40,000”, or “You pay \$400,000 to a river group to restore”. Now we're talking dollars to dollars, and these dollars are then converted to in-river habitat work.

Mr. Jack Harris: Does that require provincial or federal regulation or a bit of both?

Mr. Walter Regan: Mainly DFO, federal.

Mr. Jack Harris: Thank you.

Ms. Negus, you talked about a lot of complex issues and it shows a great understanding. Maybe you can both help me.

This is the first time I've heard extensive talk about acid rain. You mentioned acid rain and aluminum as having an effect on the rivers. Are they both connected and is the source international or local? Is liming the principal way of dealing with that?

Ms. Heather Negus: Yes, acidification and aluminum are connected. However, we do need further research on the aluminum aspect of things to determine what exactly the causes are. We know that is being leached out of the clay in some of those rivers, specifically in the inner Bay of Fundy. The mitigation that we performed with liming on the West River is actually only.... We've seen such great success there by only liming about 8% of that river on a branch where the population is not as densely concentrated.

In the past there have been projects in the province that have done gravel liming, but without the sustained liming in that method it hasn't actually produced the same amount of results that we've been able to produce with the doser. For something like a salmon run on the West River it would be estimated that you would be looking at about 50 years of liming until you got a full restoration there. That has to do with the five-year life cycle of the salmon. What we have seen there is that with the trout fishery they have a much quicker return from sea. We've been able to build that fishery up there. The study that was done identified about 13 rivers on the southern upland. The West River was one of those. What we would like to do in the future is take this model for liming and we're proposing a second doser in the coming years up on the Killag portion where there is actually a larger concentration of fish to demonstrate that this could be a viable model in Nova Scotia to mitigate the acidification effects that we've seen.

Mr. Walter Regan: To answer your question also, 80% of the acid rain comes from the United States presently.

Mr. Jack Harris: Thank you.

The figure that was given here of \$536 per fish, adult salmon, for a value of a commercial “recreational fishery” where the tourists are involved, certainly seems to provide at least one measure of what investment in restoration could provide.

Could either of you answer the following concerning the role of Fisheries and Oceans? Obviously you, as NGOs, would have some expertise and some staff who could participate in these projects, but to what extent do you rely on the expertise of DFO scientists and employees to provide advice on habitat restoration, management of projects, mitigation efforts, etc.? Are you satisfied with the amount of resources that DFO in Nova Scotia is applying to this effort? Have there been cutbacks in recent years, or do you know of any programs that have gone by the wayside as a result of insufficient resources?

•(1240)

Mr. Walter Regan: I know that DFO is needed on the rivers. We need their guidance. We need their regulation. But DFO since the early 1990s have been cut back drastically. When is the last time you heard the public demand that a bureaucracy or government department be expanded? We need more DFO scientists. We need more DFO staff, technicians on the river. We need them to say, "Walter, you're doing good. You're throwing rocks. You're putting the logs in correctly." We need more DFO budget. One figure I heard, which I believe, is that DFO local budgets have been reduced up to 90%. Why? Aquaculture funding has increased up to huge amounts of money. This is not right. Also, I'm told that DFO annually turns back lots of money to the Treasury Board. Couldn't that money be transferred sideways to help the habitat branch, the science branch, to get aluminum out of our rivers? Conservation officers are trained on catching poachers, but very few are trained on development or construction practices. We need more DFO on the river and we need more liming projects.

Heather.

Ms. Heather Negus: I would add to that. Although we have NGOs in the province who are working on providing the advice and putting together projects, what we really need is that expertise to be built up in a partnership with DFO. The NGOs can't do it alone. I think that if we had that partnership, it would lend credibility to what the NGOs are doing. It would give them a level of enforcement that they don't currently have to persuade the landowners and developers to properly install culverts and do the work they need to do in order to make an impact.

Mr. Jack Harris: Thank you.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Harris.

Mr. Sopuck.

Mr. Robert Sopuck (Dauphin—Swan River—Marquette, CPC): I am chair of the Conservative hunting and angling caucus and I'm very pleased that you both recognize the recreational fisheries conservation partnerships program. It's not generally known, but this was very much an MP-driven initiative. A number of MPs pushed to get this program going. I know people tend to always think about cutbacks, whether or not they actually happen, but the RFCPP is \$55 million of new money for habitat conservation.

Ms. Negus, you mentioned it first. How many RFCPP projects have there been in Nova Scotia that you are aware of, and what type of projects were they?

Ms. Heather Negus: Actually, I'm not really sure I can speak to how many projects there are. Our Adopt a Stream members would have a much better idea of that. I could get numbers for you as a take-away, if that would be suitable, unless Walter has an idea.

Mr. Walter Regan: No, I don't have the exact number, but we needed money to do good work and the DFO funding has been a great success, and valid.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Has the Sackville River Association applied to the recreational fisheries conservation partnerships program?

Mr. Walter Regan: Yes, and we've been successful three times.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Excellent.

One of the things that the RFCPP does is it removes fish barriers from streams. I know in Quebec there were 43 projects approved, primarily to remove barriers to fish. I strongly encourage Nova Scotia to access this great program.

In terms of acid rain, you mentioned that the source was from the United States. What is the critical pH for salmon, and what do you want to raise the pH to, to make it optimal?

Mr. Walter Regan: We work at 5.5 and above, and some rivers are hitting a pH of 3 now. We need the rivers raised to 5.5 on an ongoing basis, 7 being perfect of course.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Three, that's almost vinegar. I didn't realize the situation was that dire.

In terms of the Atlantic salmon, Ms. Negus, previous testimony talked about open ocean survival as being the linchpin causing the rapid decline of Atlantic salmon, at least in the Miramichi area. Can you tell us what you know about open ocean survival of Nova Scotia-produced salmon?

Ms. Heather Negus: I think from the perspective of the Nova Scotia Salmon Association, our position is that we don't really know what's happening at sea. We know that in the inner Bay of Fundy we have a lot of aluminum issues and we know that those salmon are leaving and going out. What we feel that we need is more research resources to be able to tell us why that mortality is happening, because that's one of the pieces of the puzzle that we can't quite put our finger on at this juncture.

•(1245)

Mr. Walter Regan: DFO has to go back to sea to do more research. Also, as mentioned earlier, intercept the fisheries, both at Greenland.... St. Pierre and Miquelon does not even have a salmon river but they're allowed five tonnes, and those fish definitely would come to Nova Scotia. We need DFO, through NASCO, to actively lobby to curtail the at-sea mortality but to find out what's going on.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I couldn't agree with you more. It does infuriate me that Canada produces these salmon and other countries exploit them.

The issue of striped bass came up with Atlantic salmon many times when we met with the Miramichi Salmon Association. What we've done is we've increased the retention fishery for striped bass. What do you know about the effect of striped bass on Atlantic salmon smolts in the Bay of Fundy? Have the striped bass populations increased with the same intensity that they have off the Miramichi?

Mr. Walter Regan: First of all, the DFO restoration program to bring striped bass worked. We now have increased numbers of the striped bass, and that's wonderful. In a natural system, the number of striped bass and salmon would co-exist. But the numbers of salmon are so low that they're another extensive predator of smolts going in the sea. I believe through education, I believe through increased test efforts, monitoring by DFO—again, we need DFO at the table—that we can control this. Striped bass numbers are good, but most people do not pay for a licence to fish in salt water. We need that licence to increase revenue.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: In terms of the Sackville River itself, you talked about poor water quality, Mr. Regan. What contributes to poor water quality in the Sackville River?

Mr. Walter Regan: There's acid rain. The second biggest pollutant is urbanization, particularly saltation and construction.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Is it also an agricultural watershed? I'm not familiar with the area. Are there any issues with agriculture and water quality that you're aware of?

Mr. Walter Regan: The biggest agriculture source on the watershed is horse farming. But the majority is urbanization and acid rain, which are wiping out the river.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: You talked about habitat offsets. Just summarize for us again what, in an ideal world, you would recommend to the government in terms of what you would like to see in a habitat offsetting program

Mr. Walter Regan: I'll give you an example. If a contractor puts a culvert in a brook and it's 10 square metres, he will pay \$400 times the length of the time the culvert in ground, so you're talking \$40,000 per culvert, which would go to an offsetting bank credit fund. Then he's out of the way and Adopt a Stream would then take on responsibility to do the habitat work. It would be audited by DFO, but we did spend the \$40,000 per culvert doing good in-river work. We need this money to do good work.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: Let's just say that it was impossible to recreate habitat that was lost along a particular stream. Are you suggesting that the policy be expanded to allow offsite mitigation so we can mitigate that habitat loss someplace else?

Mr. Walter Regan: If I understand your question correctly, it's never been done in Nova Scotia that riparian damage has been reflected in an offsetting, for example, if you cut down a tree next to a bank. That's never been done. We use the 3:1 ratio, so if you destroy one square metre, you restore three square metres in making up quantity for quality. I believe this can be done. It is being done, but we need the funds. We need a bank, and all the developers would put into that bank. We start at \$40 a square metre and then we negotiate up or down.

Heather, do you have any comments?

Ms. Heather Negus: No, I think that sums it up. Thank you.

Mr. Robert Sopuck: I really appreciated your comprehensive testimony.

Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Sopuck.

Mr. MacAulay.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Welcome, participants, to the committee. This is valuable information as Mr. Sopuck indicated.

I felt this study itself was vitally important. That's why I worked so hard to convince the government that this study needed to be completed. Finally, after a lot of arm-twisting, we got to the study.

Some hon. members: Oh, oh!

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: If they don't like to hear that, it's the truth. Sport fishery is a massive asset to the economy.

Now, you're telling me that for fishing in salt water there are no licence fees. I'd just like you both to elaborate on what should be done with the licensing. I would expect that you would agree that people should pay for a licence. I would like you to elaborate on whether licence fees should be even higher and whether everybody who fishes should pay for a licence and the fund should be directed to habitat restoration or whatever. I'd just like you to expand on that issue alone.

• (1250)

Mr. Walter Regan: I would like to see someone who goes and fishes for striped bass or mackerel from the shore on a recreational basis or from a small boat to pay a licence fee, \$50 a year, \$40 a year, plus a stamp on top of that. That money would then go to a habitat fund that we could draw upon to do good work. We're talking about millions of lost dollars, funds that would be directed to habitat restoration and science.

Heather.

Ms. Heather Negus: I would just add that currently we're doing that with our freshwater fishing licences. I think that the cost of the licences is fine; it's adequate. It's that levy we're getting that's going back into the restoration which is really benefiting the Adopt a Stream program and the work they're doing. I think we have a real missed opportunity here with the coastal fishing licences that could really help contribute to that.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: I thank you very much.

With regard to the acid rain issue, it costs a lot of money of course to lime the rivers. Has there been any improvement in the source? As you're fully aware, it's a global problem. I'd just like you to explain to the committee whether, if we continue to get acid rain, that will mean a lifetime of liming or how that works in order to get a proper pH level in the rivers?

Mr. Walter Regan: Traditionally, the disposition rate for long-range sulphur in Nova Scotia was about 16 to 18 kilograms per hectare. After the Clean Air Act, and after a number of coal-fired plants shut down, right now the disposition rate, and it depends who you talk to, is about 12 kilograms per hectare. The carrying capacity of Nova Scotia soils in the southern upland is eight. Acid rain has never left. If acid rain stopped tomorrow, the soils are so depleted it would probably take 100 years minimum to come back to where it was pre-industrial. We need liming to get our rivers back to their proper pH to keep the fish in the river.

Heather.

Ms. Heather Negus: I would add it's the sustained liming we're doing through the doser that's going to help with that. We have tried other approaches that haven't had quite as much success, but if we're able to do it on more rivers in the southern upland, the benefit would obviously be greater. I think initial start-up costs for a liming project do seem quite large, but I think when we're talking about \$30,000 a year to put lime into the river, the return on investment is there when we look at bringing those populations back.

Mr. Walter Regan: Don't forget that in Sweden and Norway, they're spending \$20 million American a year, but with a five-year payback. We have 400 million fishermen who want to come here.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Yes. I'd like you to elaborate a bit on the stocking of the rivers. I can understand the problem. We stock the rivers. We create the smolts. We send them out and somebody else gets the value for what we produce. We seem to have no control over it. When you look at what's going on in Greenland, they can take possibly what we would think is five times the number of salmon they should. It's pretty difficult for us to tolerate that, but that's a global issue.

On stocking the rivers then, if you had a moment...I think you did allude to the open net concept in the salmon fishery, if you wish to elaborate on that a bit.

Mr. Walter Regan: It's an important tool from the hatcheries. It's very important, but it's just one tool. Today's stocking, with DNA and science involved, is not hit or miss, but it does keep the resident fish DNA alive in that particular river. If used properly, it's a real thing to bring good numbers back, but that's only part of it. It's only a tool. Keep in mind when I first started playing on the river, in the early 1990s, there were eight Atlantic salmon hatcheries. Today there are only two. We need DFO to get back into the game. DFO needs resources.

Now let's talk about the open net sewage system. We are allowing millions of fish to directly discharge raw sewage into our small bays where there's poor circulation. We're putting pesticides and we're putting food sources into the ocean that should not be there. I believe aquaculture is not sustainable and DFO should not be both a promoter and the regulator of the aquaculture. The open sewage pen has to come to an end.

Another thing I'll ask is, how can DFO put an exotic species on the west coast? They have allowed the introduction of Atlantic salmon that do not belong on the west coast. That's wrong.

Heather.

•(1255)

Ms. Heather Negus: I don't think I can follow that up.

Thank you, Walter.

Hon. Lawrence MacAulay: Thank you very much.

The Chair: Thank you, Mr. MacAulay.

Mr. Weston.

Mr. John Weston (West Vancouver—Sunshine Coast—Sea to Sky Country, CPC): Never was so much information imparted in such a short time. Thank you both.

I have a couple of short snappers. Heather, you mentioned an acronym: NSLC. I wasn't sure what that was.

Ms. Heather Negus: It's the title sponsor for the Adopt a Stream program. It's the Nova Scotia Liquor Corporation in the province that provides \$100,000 annually for that program.

Mr. John Weston: Okay, got it. Is the Clean Air Act the act John Fraser brought in that was supposed to have put an end to acid rain? Is that what you were referring to, Walter?

Mr. Walter Regan: I don't know who brought it in for the United States, but it was in the early 1990s. It's really effective. It's cutting down on acid rain, but it hasn't stopped acid rain.

Mr. John Weston: Okay. That is disappointing. I know that was one of John Fraser's crowning achievements.

You both mentioned the partnership program. I was pleased to hear it has achieved desired results, or even exceeded best expectations. Can you elaborate on two or three ingredients of that program you think are effective and might be replicated in other DFO programs?

Mr. Walter Regan: First and foremost, the program exists. DFO is back in the game of giving funding for groups to do good work. That's very important. The program must continue. Please don't cut it off with a change of government.

The next thing is, it would help if the 50% matching was reduced. Some of the groups are having a hard time coming up with 50%—not all, but some.

We need more inspectors and habitat technicians on the river, because we have to apply after we have the training to do good work. Then the committee says yes or no, but DFO doesn't have the inspectors, doesn't have the staff. They've been cut back and slashed so badly. It would help to have more habitat specialists, especially ones that have a construction background, such as a professional engineer. That would be very helpful.

Mr. John Weston: Heather, before I respond to Walter, do you have anything to add to that? I was looking for sort of best practices or best ingredients that might be replicated.

Ms. Heather Negus: I think that one of the things that Walter mentioned is important, looking at having the expertise for habitat restoration and the ability for them to lend that advice to partners of the Adopt a Stream program. It would be a critical piece of that, being able to give Adopt a Stream an extra resource to lean on when they need to train community groups and show them the things that they need to do to make that happen. I guess that's what I would add to that.

Mr. John Weston: Let me start from a premise that government can never do enough, and we would all like to have more inspectors if we could afford them.

There was a fellow witness who spoke from Manitoba a couple of weeks ago who said that we can never have enough inspectors, never enough police, but that, if we encourage these partnerships, if we encourage recreational fishers on the ground to develop a culture where poaching is simply not tolerable in the community, and if we can encourage those people to help promote the best practices, then we may still not have enough inspectors, but we'll have gone a long way to helping the fish and promoting the fishery. What do you think of that?

• (1300)

Mr. Walter Regan: That's wonderful. It's like the stop smoking program. It took a generation, but it kicked in. It's effective today. It's the same with education; it's a long-term project.

It's very hard to get educational money from RFCPP because there's more habitat work to be done. It would be helpful to have an education section. It would be helpful if we had a promotion section, but again at the end of the day, you want square metres restored in the river.

Mr. John Weston: Yes.

Ms. Heather Negus: I would basically say that I do agree with your premise, with what you're saying. I think that in Nova Scotia in the angling community we really do have that. They are good stewards of our fish and of our wild populations.

I think what we need is, as Walter said, better education as part of that fishing program.

Mr. John Weston: My colleague here, MP Bob Sopuck, who's one of the architects of this program, tells me that there have been two million square metres of habitat restored across Canada through the program, so it is promising.

I'm really intrigued by what you said, Walter, about the matching and that being a challenge. I can understand it's a challenge, but it is also one of the key features of it being a partnership, and the fact that the local group has to put up some of the money means that they've well considered what they're proposing, and the government can be more confident then about matching it.

Do you want to reflect on that part? I think one of the vital parts of the success is that there is a partnership and it's not a government program exclusively.

Mr. Walter Regan: That's why I said reduce the 50%. The qualification that has been driving some of the groups is that you're not allowed to put in matching federal money of any sort. It has to be non-federal money.

There are not that many grants out there that we can apply for. There are some corporations elsewhere, but the non-federal fund qualifier is a sticking point, like the green fund at Environment Canada. That would really help.

Mr. John Weston: I appreciate your input. Thank you very much, Heather and Walter.

The Chair: Thank you very much, Mr. Weston.

On behalf of the committee, I'd like to say thank you to both of you for appearing today and taking the time to make presentations and to answer committee members' questions. We certainly do appreciate it as we consider the future of recreational fisheries in Canada. At this time I'd like to say thank you on behalf of the entire committee.

There being no further business, this committee stands adjourned.

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