



SPORT FISHING
INSTITUTE
of British Columbia

July Update

Meetings and Dates

July 5, 2012

While the summer fishing season is well underway, we thought we'd take this opportunity to update you on some the issues we've been working on here at the Sport Fishing Institute.

Last week, a delegation of SFI directors had the opportunity to meet with Fisheries Minister the Hon. Keith Ashfield during his trip to the West Coast. Our meeting with the Minister was scheduled shortly after his high-profile session with groups opposed to the closure of the Kitsilano Coast Guard Station and just prior to his presenting the Family Fishing Society of BC with the 2012 National Recreational Fisheries Award.



Fisheries and Oceans Canada Minister Keith Ashfield sits with Rob Alcock, President of the SFI. Randy Kamp, MP, Owen Bird, Gerry Kristianson and Martin Paish stand behind them left to right

We explained to the Minister that the west coast recreational fishery is unique in Canada and creates 42% of the GDP produced by all fisheries and aquaculture in BC (with less than 15% of the catch) and \$1.2 billion of the \$8.5 billion generated nationwide.

We also reiterated that unlike the commercial sector which is comprised of a small number of direct harvesters holding quazi-property rights in fish stocks, the recreational sector is comprised of 300,000 annual license holders and a few hundred service-providing businesses. As a result, it has no means of gathering funds to support specific activities like catch monitoring. While the sector likely has an appetite to pay more (if it could be demonstrated that those funds were being used in the region and for purposes that would sustain or enhance resources) the specific funding model remains elusive. We pointed out that the recreational sector currently funds approximately 50% of management activities....substantially more than other sectors.

We outlined our concerns about the halibut allocation model and the considerable problem inherent in the experimental license program. As we have argued in the past, the recent changes to the halibut allocation model and the expansion of the experimental license program have done little to address the problems in the recreational fishery.

Ashfield and his colleague Randy Kamp were clearly interested in our presentation and seem increasingly aware of the level of our concerns and our determination to find solutions that will ensure that the recreational fishery can grow and thrive in BC...we often mistakenly believe that a minister from the Maritimes can intuitively understand the importance of recreational fishing on the west coast.

We believe we provided good information that leads to a greater understanding of the need to find other ways of supporting the research and science that is so important to our fishery. It is early days, but we hope that our presentation made an impact on the Minister.

On another topic, we'd like to echo a recent notice from DFO seeking participation in their new

efforts to gather information on sport fishing. DFO in conjunction with EKOS Research and Associates is testing a random voluntary internet survey of a portion of BC Tidal Waters Sport Fishing licence holders. The survey is intended to collect data on recreational fishing activity and catch in the tidal waters of British Columbia. The information collected will be used to assess the merits of this type of data collection and how it might be used in the future to improve our current catch monitoring and reporting programs. We support this effort and encourage your participation in it. As we have said before, better catch data will both fend off attacks from our sector's opponents and help ensure that DFO can keep providing fishing opportunities based on sound science.

We will keep you updated as we learn more from our discussions with key decision makers.



**Save the Date: December 6 Policy Conference and Big Splash
at the River Rock Hotel and Resort**

As you may know, the Sport Fishing Institute of BC hosts an annual policy conference and Big Splash Fundraiser. This year we have scheduled the two events to take place on **Thursday, December 6, 2012** at **River Rock Hotel and Resort** in Richmond, BC.

Please put the date on your calendar and we will provide more information in the coming months.

We hope that your season progresses well and that the weather and the fish cooperate.

Tight Lines



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