



NEWS RELEASE

MLA candidates commit to BC coastal communities: Activists call for action

October 16, 2020 - Fisheries for Communities conducted a survey of all 2020 BC MLA candidates to determine whether they would support BC seafood and fish harvesters, and coastal communities in their platform. A total of 48 MLA candidates responded, and party statements were received from the NDP, BC Liberal, and Green party.

Candidates were asked if they will work to build more resilient coastal communities; include local seafood throughout BC's food security programs; support independent harvesters building viable enterprises and providing local jobs; implement the Wild Salmon Advisory Council Recommendations, including enhancement of economic, social and cultural benefits from wild fisheries; and if they would commit to building leadership in managing our ocean and our seafood. The results were unanimously supportive. A full record of survey responses by candidate and by party can be [found here](#).

The 2020 election comes at a time when there is a need for strong provincial leadership to support the livelihoods of seafood harvesters, the health of our marine ecosystem, and the current and future wellbeing of First Nations and coastal communities of BC. Current fisheries management in BC is not meeting the needs of fish harvesters, and is creating an increasingly desperate situation in rural coastal communities.

The BC Green, NDP, and Liberal parties have all voiced support for building resilient coastal communities, independent harvesters building viable enterprises, and implementing Wild Salmon Advisory Council Recommendations, all areas in need of immediate action.

On reading the survey results, Jim McIsaac, Executive Director at the TBuck Suzuki Environmental Foundation says, *"This shows resounding support across all party lines for our coast, now it is up to all new MLAs to put this support into action for our coast, our communities, and our fish harvesters."*

Tasha Sutcliffe, Senior Policy Advisor for Ecotrust Canada and member of the Wild Salmon Advisory Council says, *"The benefit and opportunity provided by every single fish that is pulled from waters off our coast, whether that be food security, jobs, or the social fabric that a connection to our local marine environment provides, should remain as local as possible. We have lost this focus and we need Provincial leadership to help get it back. I am encouraged to see all parties express a positive response when asked if they will support our coast and our harvesters, now we need to see action."*

Quotes from the Parties

The BC Green Party, *"We hold fisheries and wild salmon at the heart of our work...[We] have learned that six Ministries all have a 'lead role' ... From a provincial perspective, we urgently need better coordination and accountability."*



The BC Liberal Party, *“Ensuring our coastal communities are resilient is key to rebuilding B.C. and restoring confidence...We are committed to taking a leading role in protecting our coastal resources while managing responsible resource development.”*

The BC NDP Party, *“The BC NDP funded a network of local food hubs across the province that gave local farmers, fishers and food producers the ability to value-add their products and contribute to the local food economy...Part of the BC NDP Party’s plan for economic recovery after the pandemic includes more than \$25 million towards more food hubs, investing in local food processing capacity and funding innovative technology for more sustainable practices.”*

About Fisheries for Communities

Fisheries for Communities is a network of Indigenous and non-Indigenous people, active fish and shellfish harvesters, small businesses, fishmongers, chefs, restaurateurs, fishing families and citizens. We have grown tired and frustrated with the continued destruction of our shared resource, coastal communities that are becoming ghost towns, and the corporatization and Wall Street style selling of valuable quotas.

For more information:

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