

Reasons why Yukon Salmon Committee should support or reject the continued transfer of Yukon salmon genetic material for use in the net cage farming industry

On the last day of the workshop, the Yukon participants were asked to provide reasons the Yukon Salmon Committee should support or reject the continued transfer of Yukon salmon genetic material for use in the net cage farming industry. Invited speakers were asked beforehand to not participate in this session, and most were not present during this session. The facilitator used two large 4X8' working boards to collect reasons for rejecting or supporting the continued transfer of material. All Yukon participants were free to provide their comments, which written and posted. The facilitator limited the discussion to encourage the flow of ideas. The following is a summary of the comments from the Yukoners.

A. Reasons to Reject the Continued Transfer of Genetic Material of Yukon River Salmon

- Keep Yukon fish in the Yukon (come to the Yukon to get Yukon Chinooks!)
- There is no benefits to Yukoners currently, so why should Yukon provide genetic material
- Obligations in the Yukon River Agreement are reasons to reject transfer of genetic material to fish farm
- Under the Umbrella Final Agreement there is no private ownership of wildlife – the same restrictions apply to salmon
- First Nations do not play with fish
- Need to respect First Nation views and the communities
- The First Nations spiritual world is compromised by allowing genetic material to be used in fish farming. Dooli Traditional Laws show this to be disrespectful
- Transfer of genetic material is against Traditional Laws and the Salmon Policy of Northern Tutchone People
- Fish Farming will cause loss of employment to Alaskan fishers
- Ecological concern that fish farming is disrupting the natural environment and the animals on the BC coast
- There is no good studies about health of fish farms – need much more research
- Inhuman conditions of fish farms
- Fish farming will cause negative impacts on the environment in the future
- The more money that is spent on fish farms will reduce the money that goes into supporting wild Yukon River Chinooks
- Not all the negative aspects of the fish farm companies were presented at the workshop
- Concerns about where fish farms sites are located on the coast
- Concerns about disease transfer to wild fish
- Concerns about farmed salmon escaping and breeding with wild Chinook stocks
- Concerns that fish farm wastes are polluting the oceans
- Concerns about the use of biocides, antibiotics and chemicals on marine environment

The following comments were conditions that should be met before transfer of genetic material could be supported:

- Only support decisions that encourage wild salmon on the Yukon River
- Brood stock should be frozen until ownership is certified by First Nations
- Ecological harm of fish farming first must be addressed
- Need clear benefits agreements to Yukon and this should be part of any bargain
- Consult First Nations before any agreement – allows for best management decisions
- No more export until there are accepted policies and guidelines in the Yukon
- Restate conditions on release of genetic materials in the first place (related to the concern about genetic ownership stated in the Convention on Biological Diversity)
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B. Reasons to Support the Continued Transfer of Genetic Material of Yukon River Salmon

- Takes the pressure off wild salmon stocks
- Provides back-up genetic bank for Yukon River salmon
- Provides economic opportunities to BC people involved in fish farms
- Provides the world with healthy food from fish farm
- Yukon already has a relationship with Creative Salmon company – need benefits returning to Yukoners
- Dealing with the flagship fish farm company – Creative Salmon is the best company around
- Creative Salmon company has proven integrity
- Economic opportunities for Yukon by developing a partnership with Creative Salmon company
- Willingness of Creative Salmon company to share information and research with Yukon
- Develop guidelines with Creative Salmon – the company already possesses Yukon River Chinook genetic material – work with them in partnership
- Helps in research disease – the wild Chinook stocks in the Yukon River are depleting increasing the risk of disease

The following comments were conditions that should be met before transfer of genetic material could be supported:

- Consultation with all affected Yukoners including communities and First Nations
- Genetic materials should not be sold by Creative Salmon to other interests
- Yukon needs to get control of the name “Wild Yukon River Chinook Salmon” because of the high commercial value