

## Samantha Paulson

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**From:** Joy Thorkelson <president@ufawu.org>  
**Sent:** August 30, 2019 4:28 PM  
**To:** officeclerk@alertbay.ca; info@campbellriver.ca; municipalhall@csaanich.ca; town@comox.ca; info@cumberland.ca; clerks@delta.ca; duncan@duncan.ca; info@esquimalt.ca; info@gibsons.ca; villageofgoldriver@cablerocket.com; info@ladysmith.ca; general@lakecowichan.ca; lcondon@highlands.ca; WebInfo; info@tol.ca; district@lantzville.ca; enquiries@mapleridge.ca; vom@mhtv.ca; info@mission.ca; info@metchosin.ca; jan.kemp@nanaimo.ca; postmaster@newwestcity.ca; info@northcowichan.ca; admin@northsaanich.ca; info@parksville.ca; info@pittmeadows.ca; citypa@portalberni.ca; info@portalice.ca; office@queencharlotte.ca; info@portedward.ca; general@porthardy.ca; reception@portmcneill.ca; info@powellriver.ca; cityhall@princerupert.ca; qbtown@qualicumbeach.com; cityclerk@richmond.ca; clerksec@saanich.ca; village@saywardvalley.ca; info@sechelt.ca; dhill@secheltnation.net; admin@sidney.ca; info@sooke.ca; reception@villageoftahsis.com; office@tofino.ca; info@ucluelet.ca; info@vancouver.ca; mayorandcouncil@victoria.ca; info@westvancouver.ca; cao@zeballos.com; clerks@burnaby.ca; municipalhall@csaanich.ca  
**Subject:** Disaster Assistance for commercial salmon fishermen and allied workers.  
**Attachments:** Dis Ass FN and Local Govts 30-08-19.pdf; CSAB disaster relief request[ Aug 15\_19.pdf; Simpson-Hajdu Letter-20 Aug 2019.pdf  
**Follow Up Flag:** Follow up  
**Flag Status:** Flagged

Please find attached in PDF format the following letter. I am also attaching as background, a letter from the Commercial Salmon Advisory Board to the Ministers. We have had no response from any Federal Minister but have received notification from the Province that they are lobbying the Federal government on our behalf, and I am also enclosing a letter from Provincial Minister Shane Simpson to Federal Minister Patricia Hajdu.

Please copy us if you are able to write on behalf of your commercial fishermen and allied workers.

Thank you  
Joy Thorkelson

August 29, 2019  
Hereditary Chiefs, Chief Councillors and Councillors  
First Nations Governing Councils  
Mayors and Council and Regional District Directors  
All BC Coastal Communities  
By email

Dear Leadership of Coastal Communities,

Re: Climate Change Disaster Assistance for commercial fishery participants



The commercial salmon fishery in the whole of BC was a total failure this summer. Commercial fishermen and allied workers have made no money, as there have been few fisheries and the handful that did occur were extremely poor. Fishermen either did not fish at all or, worse, geared up and sailed for the fishing grounds, spending money on fuel, to find that the fisheries they expected remained closed.

Preseason predictions by DFO were for low average to average salmon returns in most areas of BC, sufficient for modest commercial fisheries. However, the salmon have returned well below spawning requirements in many areas – and on the Fraser and Skeena Rivers, sockeye salmon have returned in numbers lower than at any time in decades. Although there are many other issues which could be adding to the disaster, climate change is the major reason for the low returns. We would like to make it very clear that salmon spawning numbers were, in all cases, well above what was needed to produce decent fisheries in 2019, so ‘over fishing’ is not to blame.

Commercial fishermen and allied workers (shoreworkers, net menders, gear business etc.) all have had negligible incomes - earnings that would have been spent in their communities. Many owner operators may not be able to maintain their vessels in workable shape over the winter as they have had no fishing income or are in debt due to gearing up and travelling.

We are asking the Federal government for Climate Change Disaster Assistance: income support (EI?) and financial assistance to allow vessel owners keep their boats ship worthy over the winter. We are also asking the Department of Fisheries and Oceans to engage in meetings with commercial fishermen and create a Climate Change Adaptation Plan so that fishermen and processing plants and workers will be able to adjust to future changes.

We respectfully request that you send an urgent letter in support of our requests to Prime Minister Trudeau, Minister Wilkinson (Fisheries and Oceans), Minister Hajdu (Employment, Workforce Development and Labour), and Minister Bennett (Crown-Indigenous Relations) with copies to Premier Horgan, and BC Ministers Lana Popham (Agriculture), Shane Simpson (Social Development and Poverty Reduction) and Scott Fraser (Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation).

Thank you for your consideration,

Tony Roberts Jr  
President, Native Brotherhood of BC  
[tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com](mailto:tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com)

Joy Thorkelson  
President, UFAWU-Unifor  
[president@ufawu.org](mailto:president@ufawu.org)





*Native Brotherhood of British Columbia*

CANADA'S SENIOR INDIAN ORGANIZATION [Founded in 1931]

#710 -100 Park Royal South ~ West Vancouver, BC V7T 1A2

Email: President - [tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com](mailto:tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com) Secretary-Treasurer - [pamelaleelewis@shaw.ca](mailto:pamelaleelewis@shaw.ca)

Telephone 250-202-4919



**UFAWU | UNIFOR**

United Fishermen & Allied Workers' Union

1st Floor 32612 Street New Westminster BC V3M 4H6

Tel: (604) 519-3630 Fax: (604) 524-6944

Email: [officeadmin@ufawu.org](mailto:officeadmin@ufawu.org)

August 29, 2019

Hereditary Chiefs, Chief Councillors and Councillors  
First Nations Governing Councils  
Mayors and Council and Regional District Directors  
All BC Coastal Communities  
By email

Dear Leadership,

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The commercial salmon fishery in the whole of BC was a total failure this summer. Commercial fishery participants have made no money, as there have been few fisheries and the handful that did occur were extremely poor. Fishermen either did not fish at all or, worse, geared up and sailed for the fishing grounds, spending money on fuel, to find that the fisheries they expected remained closed. Shoreworkers and processing plants were idle.

Preseason predictions by DFO were for low average to average salmon returns in most areas of BC, sufficient for modest commercial fisheries. However, the salmon have returned well below spawning requirements in many areas – and on the Fraser and Skeena Rivers, sockeye salmon have returned in numbers lower than at any time in decades. Although there are many other issues which could be adding to the disaster, climate change is the major reason for the low returns. We would like to make it very clear that salmon spawning numbers were, in all cases, well above what was needed to produce decent fisheries in 2019, so 'over fishing' is not to blame.

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Thank you for your consideration,

Tony Roberts Jr  
President, Native Brotherhood of BC  
[tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com](mailto:tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com)

Joy Thorkelson  
President, UFAWU-Unifor  
[president@ufawu.org](mailto:president@ufawu.org)





August 20, 2019

The Honourable Patricia Hajdu  
Minister of Employment,  
Workforce Development and Labour  
House of Commons  
Ottawa, ON K1A 0S5

Dear Minister,

As you are no doubt aware, commercial fishers in British Columbia are facing an extraordinarily difficult year as a result of the poor sockeye salmon returns and fishing restrictions aimed at protecting endangered species including Southern Resident Killer Whales. Because of these challenges, many fishers and shore workers are facing significant economic hardships which impact their families and the communities in which they live.

Similar to the impacts resulting from new measures to support the recovery of the South Mountain Caribou as well as the recent downturn in the forestry sector across the province, British Columbia is also experiencing the impact of challenges facing commercial fishers.

I am writing to encourage you to consider providing targeted assistance to this sector. The federal government has done this in several other cases, notably in assisting those affected by curtailments in Atlantic fisheries.

I strongly urge you to consider providing specific Employment Insurance enhancements aimed at assisting commercial fishers and shore workers in BC's fisheries-dependant communities who will have little or no opportunity to fish this season.

Sincerely,

Shane Simpson  
Minister



# **Commercial Salmon Advisory Board**

August 15, 2019

Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson  
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans  
200 Kent St  
Station 15N100  
Ottawa ON K1A 0E6  
By email: [min@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:min@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

Honourable Lana Popham  
Minister of Agriculture  
PO Box 9043 Stn Prov Govt  
Victoria, BC V8W 9E2  
By email: [AGR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:AGR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Dear Minister Wilkinson and Minister Popham,

## **Re: Climate change disaster relief**

This year's salmon fishery has been a disaster for commercial salmon fishermen of all gear types. Salmon have returned well below DFO pre-season's predictions. Many fishermen geared up in expectation of reasonable fishing opportunities which have turned into meager catches and then into closures for conservation purposes. Other salmon fishermen will have no opportunities at all in their licensed area.

The poor returns are exacerbated by commercial closures intended to conserve southern resident killer whales and interior Fraser steelhead.

The impacts go beyond those to commercial salmon fishermen. Rural and Indigenous coastal communities are hurting. Processing plants and shoreworkers are idle and tendermen and their vessels are tied up.

This is not the fault of the commercial industry. We fish to Total Allowable Catches set by the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. Ocean conditions and fresh water habitat are reacting to climate change - but the impacts are being borne by the salmon commercial fisheries and allied workers and the many businesses in our communities that rely on the fishery.

We are calling on the Federal and Provincial governments to supply immediate climate change disaster relief for the 2019 season to commercial salmon fishery participants and our community partners. We would like to meet with you as soon as possible.

We also would like to engage with both governments about long term planning in light of continuing climate change issues so that commercial fishermen can regain viability. In addition, the Fraser blockage north of Big Bar will have serious ongoing consequences to upper Fraser salmon stocks, intensifying future climate change impacts.

Sincerely,  
CSAB

Area A seine: Rick Haugan  
[richardjhaugan@gmail.com](mailto:richardjhaugan@gmail.com)

Area B seine: Bob Rezanoff  
[bob.rezanoff@telus.net](mailto:bob.rezanoff@telus.net)

Area C gillnet: Mabel Mazurek  
[nnfc@citywest.ca](mailto:nnfc@citywest.ca)

Area D gillnet: Barry Crow  
[johncrow@shaw.ca](mailto:johncrow@shaw.ca)

Area E gillnet: Darrel McEachern  
[grandpadarrel@hotmail.com](mailto:grandpadarrel@hotmail.com)

Area G troll: Roger Paquette  
[roger@hubcityfisheries.ca](mailto:roger@hubcityfisheries.ca)

Area H troll: Peter Sakich  
[sakich@island.net](mailto:sakich@island.net)

NBBC: Tony Roberts Jr.  
[tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com](mailto:tonyrobertsjr@gmail.com)

UFAWU-Unifor: Joy Thorkelson  
[president@ufawu.org](mailto:president@ufawu.org)

Processors: Phil Young  
[phil.young@canfisco.com](mailto:phil.young@canfisco.com)



Cc

Honourable John Horgan  
Premier and President of the Executive Council  
By email: [Premier@gov.bc.ca](mailto:Premier@gov.bc.ca)

Dr. Andrew Weaver,  
Leader of the Green Party,  
By email: [andrew.weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca](mailto:andrew.weaver.mla@leg.bc.ca)

**Honourable Catherine McKenna**  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
By email: [ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca](mailto:ec.ministre-minister.ec@canada.ca)

**Honourable George Hayman**  
Minister of Environment and Climate Change  
Strategy  
By email: [ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:ENV.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Carolyn Bennett  
Minister of Crown-Indigenous Relations  
By email: [minister@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca](mailto:minister@aadnc-aandc.gc.ca)

Honourable Patricia A. Hajdu  
Minister of Employment, Workforce  
Development and Labour  
By email: [Patty.Hajdu@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca](mailto:Patty.Hajdu@hrsdc-rhdcc.gc.ca)

Honourable Doug Donaldson  
Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resource  
Operations and Rural Development  
By email: [FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:FLNR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Scott Fraser  
Minister of Indigenous Relations and  
Reconciliation  
By email: [IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:IRR.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Selina Robinson  
Minister of Municipal Affairs and Housing  
By email: [MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:MAH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Honourable Adrian Dix  
Minister of Health  
By email: [HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca](mailto:HLTH.Minister@gov.bc.ca)

Ken Hardie, MP Fleetwood-Port Kells  
By email: [Ken.Hardie@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Ken.Hardie@parl.gc.ca)

Gord Johns, MP Courtenay--Alberni  
By email: [Gord.Johns@parl.gc.ca](mailto:Gord.Johns@parl.gc.ca)

Fin Donnelly, MP Port Moody-Coquitlam  
By email: [fin.donnelly@parl.gc.ca](mailto:fin.donnelly@parl.gc.ca)

Nathan Cullen, MP Skeena-Bulkley Valley By  
email: [nathan.cullen@parl.gc.ca](mailto:nathan.cullen@parl.gc.ca)

Sonia Furstenau, MLA Cowichan Valley  
By email: [sonia.furstenau.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:sonia.furstenau.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Mitzi Dean, MLA Esquimalt-Metchosin  
By email: [mitzi.dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:mitzi.dean.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Bob D'Eith MLA Maple Ridge-Mission  
By email: [bob.deith.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:bob.deith.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Hon. Lisa Beare, MLA Maple Ridge-Pitt  
Meadows By email: [lisa.beare.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:lisa.beare.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Sheila Malcolmson, MLA Nanaimo By  
email: [sheila.malcolmson.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:sheila.malcolmson.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Doug Routley, MLA Nanaimo-North Cowichan  
By email: [douglas.routley.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:douglas.routley.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Hon Judy Darcy, MLA New Westminster  
By email: [judy.darcy.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:judy.darcy.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Jennifer Rice, MLA North Coast By email:  
[jennifer.rice.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:jennifer.rice.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Hon. Claire Trevena MLA North Island  
By email: [claire.trevena.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:claire.trevena.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Michelle Stilwell, MLA Parksville-Qualicum MLA  
By email: [michelle.stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:michelle.stilwell.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Nicholas Simons, MLA Powell River- Sunshine  
Coast By email:  
[nicholas.simons.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:nicholas.simons.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

John Yap MLA Richmond-Steveston  
By email: [john.yap.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:john.yap.MLA@leg.bc.ca)

Adam Olsen, MLA Saanich North and the  
Islands By email: [adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca](mailto:adam.olsen.MLA@leg.bc.ca)