

The Honourable John A. Fraser, P.C., O.C., O.B.C., C.D., Q.C., LL.D.

Mailing Address: 2803 W 41st Ave, Vancouver, BC V6N 4B4

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard
Hill Office
House of Commons
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6

January 20, 2017

Dear Minister LeBlanc,

I am writing to you in support of Gabriola Island residents and visitors who are opposed to the creation of five cape size commercial anchorages off the NE shore of Gabriola Island, in the legislatively protected Southern Gulf Islands region of British Columbia.

As a former Federal Fisheries Minister and also someone who has served in various advisory capacities on the subject of Pacific Salmon and other west coast fisheries concerns, I am aware that the proposed location in question is an area of productive fish habitat that would be severely damaged by the repeated anchoring of large ships. Your department is well aware that activities such as scouring of the sea floor by anchor chains and potential fuel spills, associated with deep sea anchorages, are known to destroy fish and fish habitat.

You may recall that in 2012, I joined three other former federal fisheries ministers in publicly opposing the diminution of the statutory protection of fish habitat contained in changes to the Federal Fisheries act as part of Bill C-38. I want you to know that I stand by that position today and remain convinced that a lack of adequate federal regulation and enforcement, particularly in the area of habitat protection endangers the continued survival of important salmon and other iconic west coast species.

For this reason, I am in agreement with Gabriola Island residents, that approval of these proposed anchorages should not proceed without adequate scientific study including site specific fish surveys and baseline data from which to measure negative impacts on an important variety of sea creatures including British Columbia's iconic orcas, humpback whales, sea lions, Chinook salmon, herring, and rock cod.

I am aware that the designation of deep sea anchorages is ultimately the responsibility of your colleague the Minister of Transport and that he has a responsibility to ensure that Canada has the infrastructure needed to support international trade and to allow Canadian producers to get their products to markets efficiently. However, at a time when proposed shipping activity in west coast waters is set to increase dramatically, I hope you will agree that it is essential that Canada also demonstrates, in the strongest terms possible, its commitment to preserving our precious natural marine resources for generations to come.

Yours sincerely,



The Honourable John A. Fraser, P.C., O.C., O.B.C., C.D., Q.C., LL.D.

Former Minister of Environment
Federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans 1984 -1985
Speaker House of Commons 1986 to 1993
Chair of Fraser River Sockeye Public Review Board 1994
Head of BC Government Citizen's Forum on Pacific Salmon 2004
Former Chair of Pacific Fisheries Resource Conservation Council
Former Director of The Pacific Salmon Foundation