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November 8, 2019

The Right Honourable Justin Trudeau, P.C., M.P.
Prime Minister of Canada
Sent via email to: pm@pm.gc.ca

RE: Mandate letters for Infrastructure, Fisheries & Oceans, Environment, and Finance Canada

Dear Prime Minister:

Congratulations to you and your caucus on your recent election victory and on the important work you accomplished in your previous mandate.

Our mission at Watershed Watch Salmon Society is to defend and rebuild B.C.'s wild salmon and their habitats. We confront threats and promote solutions that will help wild salmon survive and thrive in our warming climate.

Considering the expected impacts of climate change¹ and the projected and current salmon declines², we draw your attention to an important opportunity to advance objectives around climate change adaptation, reconciliation, green infrastructure development, emergency preparedness, and the recovery of endangered Fraser River salmon populations (including the chinook which support endangered Southern Resident Killer Whales).

Flood control structures--dikes, floodgates and pumps--are unnecessarily harming a large amount of salmon and their overwintering and rearing habitat (approx. 1500 km of it) in the lower Fraser region. Many of these structures are aging and must be upgraded soon to adapt to rising sea levels and increased seasonal flooding due to climate change. Requiring these upgrades to be *fish-friendly*, along with habitat restoration behind dikes, will help rebuild depleted Fraser River salmon runs by opening up critical habitats while keeping communities safe from flooding.

Through your BC Salmon Restoration and Innovation Fund, we are working with Tides Canada, Indigenous partners, and others to identify the highest priority flood control structures for

¹ [Report on climate change shows Canada warming at twice the rate of rest of world](#)

² [Global warming causing Pacific salmon decline: DFO](#)

fish-friendly upgrades and restoration. Many successful models of fish-friendly flood control can already be found in B.C., Washington State, and around the world, and have broad support from local municipalities, First Nations, fishery stakeholders, and the general public. While this is an excellent stop-gap measure, it is essential to ensure all future flood infrastructure decisions are aligned with other ecological and social objectives.

Your election platform included investing in natural climate solutions as well as investments in the Disaster Mitigation and Adaptation Fund. Nature-based flood management falls within these promises and provides practical, realistic solutions with multiple benefits. **As you develop your new mandate letters to the Ministers of Infrastructure, Environment, Finance and Fisheries, we implore you to require that infrastructure and emergency preparedness objectives be aligned with recovery objectives for endangered species, as well as with objectives around climate change adaptation and reconciliation with First Nations.** This would include requiring that federally-funded flood control infrastructure projects support wild salmon and other species-at-risk recovery objectives. To support this directive, it is imperative to also provide stable funding, update regulator policies and provide best management practice guidelines.

Thank you for considering this matter. We look forward to working with your government during this new mandate to advance wild salmon conservation and restoration in British Columbia.



Aaron Hill
Executive Director



Lina Azeez
Connected Waters Campaign Manager

c. Hon. Jonathan Wilkinson, Hon. Catherine McKenna, Hon. Bill Morneau, Hon. François-Philippe Champagne, Hon. Terry Beech, Hon. Ron McKinnon, Hon. Ken Hardie, Hon. Jagmeet Singh, Hon. Elizabeth May, Timothy Sargent, Paul Rochon, Christine Hogan, Kelly Gillis