

Hello

I spent the past few weeks pouring over the Cohen ISA virus hearings. That all the lawyers were called back for three days, speaks to the significance of ISA virus to BC. This hearing made it clear the salmon farming industry has grown beyond the control of government.

DFO is mandated to protect salmon, but when a virus concerns trade partners, the CFIA takes over. The CFIA has never heard of the Wild Salmon Policy. DFO closed commercial fisheries to protect Cultus Lake sockeye. They have the power over us. 100% of the Cultus sockeye died just before spawning in 1999, 2000, 2001. When they were tested in 2002, 2003 - 100% were positive for ISA virus which is popping up everywhere there are salmon farms. DFO did nothing, no one breathed a word about this, not then, not now to this federal Commission into the fate of these sockeye and not ever to the First Nations of the Cultus Lake Region. It was a federal secret... why?

The CFIA said if the ISA virus is really in BC, markets could close permanently..... and this is the heart of the beast. One of the strangest pieces of evidence was an internal CFIA email complaining that the Minister of Fisheries "may not understand that ISAV is no longer theirs." Undaunted the Minister's offices dictates precise, but inaccurate, wording for a letter to U.S. Senators that the "official" DFO lab has confirmed all ISAV tests were negative. But no one in the "official" lab actually said the tests were negative. Words like inconclusive and unconfirmed were used. We learned the machine the "official" lab uses is notorious for lack of sensitivity. We heard the scientists who did get positive results, found their reputations and labs threatened with ruin.

Dr. Jones, a DFO sea lice scientist, is inexplicably put in charge of the study that detected ISA virus in US and Canadian wild salmon in 2002/3 and he becomes the gate-keeper on that information. It would never have seen the light of day, if it were not for Dr. Kibenge. Dr. Miller a DFO researcher using cutting edge science, learns the hard way that "research must not fog policy" but she does not back down. Dr. Kibenge – one of two world reference labs for ISA virus thanks his university for fending off the attacks to his reputation, as a result of his diagnosis of ISA virus Pacific salmon. Dr. Nylund, present from Norway via video feed, just recently survived an industry "misconduct" attack for reporting that ISA virus traveled to Chile from Norway via farm salmon eggs.

The federal Minister of Fisheries describes independent reporting of ISA virus tests a needless risk to Canada's reputation. Really! That's pretty huge. It looks like the whole problem is some deal out there where some country is paying for ISAV-free salmon and they might not be getting it. It is that simple. Our governments can't afford to protect wild salmon in the face of global fish farm market pressures. I don't know exactly when this slipped out of their control, but my overall impression is WHAT A MESS. They have no idea what they are doing.

It is time for us to move on, we have been knocking on the wrong doors. It is not against the law for us to respect wild salmon and their health cannot be a federal secret anymore. To be continued.....If you want to read their own words see my blog.

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