



Release

Date: November 6, 2009

For immediate release

PRIME MINISTER STEPHEN HARPER ANNOUNCES INQUIRY INTO DECLINE OF SOCKEYE SALMON IN THE FRASER RIVER

OTTAWA – The Honourable Stockwell Day, Minister of International Trade and Minister for the Asia-Pacific Gateway, on behalf of Prime Minister Stephen Harper, today announced the appointment of The Honourable Bruce Cohen, Justice of the Supreme Court of British Columbia, as a Commissioner to conduct an inquiry into the decline of sockeye salmon in the Fraser River.

As Commissioner of the Inquiry, Justice Cohen’s mandate will be to investigate and report on the reasons for the decline of sockeye salmon in the Fraser River. He will make recommendations for improving the sustainability of the sockeye salmon fishery in the Fraser River, including, as required, any changes to the policies, practices and procedures of the Department of Fisheries and Oceans in relation to the management of the Fraser River sockeye salmon fishery. The report resulting from the Inquiry will be submitted to the Government on or before May 1, 2011.

“The Government is establishing a public inquiry to take all feasible steps to identify the reasons for the decline of the Fraser River sockeye salmon population,” said the Prime Minister. “It is in the public interest to investigate this matter and determine the longer-term prospects for sockeye salmon stocks.”

“This is a significant and important issue for BC fisheries industry,” said Minister Day. “Our government is deeply concerned about the low returns of sockeye salmon to the Fraser River and the implications for the fishery.”

Justice Cohen has been appointed as Commissioner under Part 1 of the Inquiries Act, with all the powers set out in the Act, including the authority to hold hearings, summon witnesses and gather evidence needed to conduct the inquiry.

Terms of reference and biographical notes are attached. Justice Cohen will be unavailable for public comment until the Office of the Commissioner is established.

-30-

PMO Press Office: 613-957-5555

This document is also available at <http://pm.gc.ca>