

**Southern Kings and Queens Fishermen's Association  
Herring Fishermen**

**Presentation to the  
Fisheries Resource Conservation Council**

**Herring Resource Management**

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Presented by:

Brodie Creed

I would like to start by thanking the FRCC for hearing the concerns of Southern Kings and Queens Fishermen.

Fishermen in my area are concerned about the following issues:

- Herring for bait for tuna fishermen.
- Large seiners / mid-water trawls vs. inshore fishermen

For clarity, I will be leaving a hard copy and an electronic copy of my presentation, for your records.

### **Bait fishing by Tuna fishermen:**

This topic has been largely overlooked in considering the conservation and protection of the herring resource in Canadian waters. To make you more familiar with the problem, all fishermen requiring bait may be issued a herring bait licence. We are definitely not objecting to this process but in regard to tuna, it is the way it is being used in our area.

Tuna fishermen come into our area chasing the giant bluefin tuna. In their fishing practice, they set their bait nets. These often fill and the fisherman is not equipped to harvest the fish. He gets some bait for fishing and chumming, than quite often cuts off the nets because he can't haul it back. Such a waste of herring is one thing but the ghost fishing of the nets is even more worrisome.

Another practice that we see very often is that the fisherman will set a fleet of nets in one area and leave them fishing without tending them. He moves to another area and sets another fleet of nets while leaving the first fleet still fishing.

He does this in three or four areas while only fishing in one area. The nets continue to fish even though the fisherman is no where to be found.

This total waste of the resource has to be put under control. We are tired of this type of misuse of the bait licences in our area. On top of that, these fish are not accounted for in the biological assessments.

How does one address this topic?

Well, we don't have all the answers but we would think that the local fishermen working in cooperation with Fisheries and Oceans would be one solution. We are therefore requesting that your committee consider this

problem and include in your recommendations to the Minister that his officers target in on this problem.

Fishermen in my area would be pleased to help and possibly, together, we can make a difference.

If left as it presently stands, both the fishermen in my area and the herring resource both lose. We would like to see this practice changed while we still have herring in our waters.

### **Large seiners / mid-water trawls vs. inshore fishermen:**

What can I add to this topic? You are probably sick of this subject.

Have you ever asked yourself why the inshore fishermen are so dead against the large seiners?

I am sure you are aware of the history but I would like to cover it briefly.

Our fathers were told that the herring was an endless resource. In fact, if you look in the old copies of the Fisheries news, a fisheries publication, they actually say that.

The seiners were employed on the west coast of Canada and depleted the stocks of herring there. Did we learn from this? No, we took the seiners to the east coast.

We proceeded to fish our boundless supply only to learn that it wasn't as boundless as we thought. Literally we wiped out the herring stocks which couldn't be fished for a good number of years.

Mother Nature was kind to us and some of the stock came back.

This has taught the fishermen to be very skeptical of fisheries biologists and their predictions. Secondly, how do you expect us to think kindly of the very vessels which nearly depleted our herring stocks?

The seiners and mid-water trawlers are all company owned. That is, they are strictly profit orientated. Secondly, they are integrated vertically with the processor. The ships and the processor are one in the same. Therefore the processor directs the ships operations and he is free and clear of all the inshore fishers. He can do as he pleases and we are powerless.

What than do we see as the problem?

These vessels can clean up whole schools of herring and wipe them out.

They do not select by size of fish and therefore kill off the younger ones. As the old saying goes, you'll never have a cow if you kill the calf. So it is with the seiners.

They do nothing for the local community. If they wipe out the fish in the Bay de Chaleur, than they just move on.

We are not in a position to do that. We have roots in the community. We have family, relatives, work and our very lives invested in the local area.

What is the solution?

We don't think it was wise to issue them herring quota, nor was it a good idea to allow them to fish for mackerel. Now we are going to allow them to use more fishing effort with the mid-water trawlers to fish herring and mackerel.

My question is very simple. "How stupid are we as the people of Canada to allow such waste to occur?"

Can we not find another approach?

Why not outlaw the use of seines with herring and buy the vessels and licences back? This would address the concerns of the inshore fishermen and it would reduce the financial burden on the seiners.

The fishermen in our area would strongly urge your committee to recommend to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to think of the local communities and eliminate the seiners.

The Prime Minister announced recently a program called the New National Community Development Trust. Talk for perfect timing, the Prime Minister even recognizes that local communities are in trouble, yet we still have to look out our windows and see the large seiners raping the herring and mackerel stocks.

Let's join the Prime Minister in saving our communities by eliminating seiners and help the herring resource at the same time.

I would be pleased to entertain any questions you may have.

Thank you

Brodie Creed  
Southern Kings and Queens Fishermen's Association  
Herring Fishermen