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**FEDERAL, B.C., AND YUKON MINISTERS MEET TO DISCUSS PACIFIC FISHERIES ISSUES**

**VANCOUVER, B.C.** - The Pacific Council of Fisheries and Aquaculture Ministers (PCFAM) met today in Vancouver to discuss issues affecting British Columbia and Yukon fisheries.

The meeting was chaired by the federal Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, the Honourable Loyola Hearn, and was attended by the Honourable Barry Penner, B.C. Minister of Environment, and Edward Huebert, Yukon Deputy Minister of Environment, who attended on behalf of Yukon Environment Minister Dennis Fentie. Senior officials from the B.C. Ministry of Agriculture and Lands attended on behalf of the Honourable Pat Bell.

“Today’s meeting was a great opportunity for us to get together and discuss issues affecting Pacific fisheries,” said Minister Hearn. “I’m looking forward to building on these new relationships by working closely with my counterparts in B.C. and Yukon.”

The Ministers were able to meet each other for the first time and share their views on some of the issues affecting Pacific fisheries. During the meeting:

- Minister Hearn stated his intent to continue with reforms that will improve the overall management of the fishery and to find new ways of working collaboratively with Provinces and Territories;
- Ministers reiterated their support for the Aquaculture Framework Agreement and their commitment to move forward with it;
- Ministers discussed Pacific Fisheries Reform and the importance of better managing the salmon fishery;
- Ministers shared ideas on integrating commercial groundfish management; and
- Ministers expressed their support for the Oceans Action Plan and agreed to collaborate on an expanded Oceans agenda for the future.

“I welcome the opportunity to get together and collaborate on fisheries and oceans issues,” said Minister Penner. “I’m glad that we are all committed to achieving sustainable fisheries and integrated management of ocean resources now and into the future.”

The meeting ended with the Yukon Government reiterating its support for the new Yukon placer mining regime. The regime, which arose out of an agreement between Canada, Yukon, and the Council for Yukon First Nations, recognizes the importance of a sustainable placer mining industry while ensuring that fish and fish habitat are protected.

“Although I could not attend this meeting in person, I am pleased with the work of the PCFAM and our commitment to ensuring cooperation on issues affecting the fisheries of the Pacific and Yukon,” said Minister Fentie.

This is the third PCFAM meeting held since the Council was formed in 2003. It provides an opportunity for the federal, B.C. and Yukon governments to come together periodically to discuss issues affecting fisheries and aquaculture.

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