



# PEOPLE POWER

The strength of Clayoquot Action is—people like you! Please consider joining the movement to protect wild salmon.

None of this works unless you read, share, add your voice and donate. You'll feel good, helping protect iconic Pacific salmon from extinction.

**SIGN THE PLEDGE:**  
[SalmonPeople.ca](http://SalmonPeople.ca)

FREE! TAKE ONE & SHARE IT

# Clayoquot Action

CONSERVATION NEWS  
WINTER 2025

# PROTECT WHAT YOU LOVE

ON THE COVER: BLACK BEAR WITH SALMON || Jérémy Mathieu Photography

**RIGHTS & TITLE** || Clayoquot Action recognizes and supports the Indigenous Rights and Title of the Hesquiaht, Ahousaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations—stewards since time immemorial of the lands and waters now called Clayoquot Sound.

**WHO WE ARE** || For over thirty years Clayoquot Action founders Dan Lewis and Bonny Glambeck have been working to protect this awe-inspiring place from the threats of clearcut logging, mining, oil spills, and salmon farming. Clayoquot Action stands for democratic rights, Indigenous rights, and the rights of Mother Earth. Our small but mighty staff, together with local volunteers and backed online by people around the world, run strategic, people-powered campaigns to help Clayoquot Sound remain one of the most beautiful places left on earth.

## FIND OUT HOW YOU CAN HELP!

LEARN MORE:



### There's something special about Clayoquot Sound—you can feel it in the air.

Clayoquot Sound is the Last Great Rainforest on Vancouver Island—unceded traditional territory of Hesquiaht, Ahousaht, and Tla-o-qui-aht First Nations, and world-renowned for monumental cedars, whales, bears, wild salmon, and wolves. Wild salmon are the lifeblood of these ancestral forests and ancient cultures, providing sustenance and fertilizing the ecosystem which sustains life.

**LEARN MORE**

Visit our website at [ClayoquotAction.org](http://ClayoquotAction.org) to find out how you can make the difference for wild salmon.

**PEOPLE POWER TO WIN!**

Sign up to hear about the latest developments. You'll be the first to know when you can send letters, sign petitions, and more.

**VOLUNTEER**

Whether you enjoy working with people at public events, doing research, or getting outdoors with a mission, Clayoquot Sound needs your help!

**FUND THE CAMPAIGN**

The protection of Clayoquot Sound is powered by people like you who dedicate their time and money to wild salmon and ancestral forests. The wild ones need you. Please donate \$25, \$50, or \$100 today to help protect wild salmon.



**Clayoquot Action**

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# THE COMEBACK

Distributing the catch in Alert Bay.

Forty percent of BC's open-net pen salmon farms have been removed from the ocean—largely through the efforts of First Nations to protect their wild salmon. And they are being richly rewarded—since the removal of Discovery Island and Broughton Area salmon farms, there has been a spectacular resurgence of pinks, coho, chum and chinook. Every year the evidence mounts that this is a result of fish farm removals.

Just look at the Hada River in Musga'magw Dzawada'enuxw territory. Formerly seeing abundances of up to 50,000, the river was down to just 27 spawners. The first generation to return after the farms were removed increased to 10,000 spawners in just one cycle (2 years). And salmon weren't the the only ones to return—they brought with them a "staggering" presence of whales, bears, birds, and herring.

The resurgence has spread along the inside passage from Fraser River to the Broughton Archipelago. A tugboat skipper heading north to Toba Inlet posted on social media that "I'm seeing more chums jumping than I have in my 50 years on the coast!". These chum are the first generation that migrated out to sea after salmon farms were removed from the Discovery Islands. Published research showed a 96% decline in sea lice infection when they were tiny juveniles.

The abundance of salmon has meant that northern resident orcas have been able to stay in the Broughton area all summer, which is critical for their culture and well-being. Underwater cameras in the Robson Bight Ecological Reserve picked up school after school of pink, coho and chinook salmon.

The removal of salmon farms from the Discovery Islands by federal fisheries minister Bernadette Jordan was perhaps the most successful federal policy enacted to protect the environment. This year's test fisheries on Fraser River salmon that migrate through the Discovery Islands are showing astonishing increases!

Fisheries and Oceans Canada warned there would not be any commercial salmon openings for chum this year, as returns were forecast to be very low. However, test fishing revealed a much higher than expected abundance, and a fishery was opened successfully.

**With wild salmon in the Clayoquot Sound UNESCO Biosphere Region hovering on the brink of extinction, why not remove fish farms here so wild salmon can flourish once again?**

Jérémy Mathieu photo



## THE LONG GOODBYE

In 2019, the federal Liberals promised to transition from open-net pen aquaculture by 2025.

Five years after the promise was made, the federal government announced in June (wait for it!) that they would ban open-net pen salmon farms—in another five years. Not by 2025 as promised, but by 2029. You could be forgiven for being cynical about this second iteration of the same promise—are they serious this time, or merely kicking the can down the road? And will wild salmon be able to withstand another five years of pathogens, parasites and pollution? No answers on that from government...

The good part? There is clear wording around the fact that open-net pen salmon farms will be BANNED in BC waters as of 1 July 2029. It will be key moving forward to keep eyes on the prize. The whole reason this transition is happening is the dramatic decline of wild Pacific salmon, and the resultant public pressure.

There is a sense of urgency around removal of fish farms. The loss of wild salmon in BC would be devastating, not just culturally for First Nations, but also economically. Not to mention food security—last year the Ahousaht First Nations leadership had to prevent their own members from fishing their own rivers to feed their families as they have done for millennia.

Time is running out for wild salmon. Clayoquot Action will continue to work with all Salmon People—members and leadership of local First Nations, as well as supporters far and wide—to continue to push for the removal of salmon farms as soon as possible.



Farmed salmon spend their lives swimming in circles in a cloud of poop and mucus. They are fed a high-fat diet designed to make them gain weight as fast as possible. The pellets often contain medications. PCBs and dioxins bind to the fats, making farmed salmon a source of toxins.

The flesh of farmed salmon is grey—that's why a synthetic colouring agent called astaxanthin (S-AX) is used to dye it red. This is one of the most expensive ingredients in fish feed. A pigment fan is used to select the colour of the fish—the lighter it is, the less expensive it is to produce. While natural astaxanthin (N-AX) is quite good for you, S-AX is made from petrochemicals, and has nowhere near the health benefits of N-AX.

You can help wild salmon by not buying farmed salmon—and it's a healthier choice! Always ask your server or fish monger if their salmon is wild or farmed.