



NEWS RELEASE

For immediate release  
October 26, 2004

Auditor General says the province should take more aggressive actions to ensure the future of wild salmon in British Columbia

VICTORIA — B.C.'s Auditor General is urging the provincial government to become a stronger partner in efforts to sustain wild salmon in the province.

Auditor General Wayne Strelieff today released his office's report on the provincial role in the management of wild salmon. In a unique tri-partite project, the report is one of three on the same subject released today. The other two were carried out by the federal Auditor-General and the Auditor-General of New Brunswick. The three auditor general's offices agreed to co-operate in investigating the issue to ensure a perspective is provided from the federal government, and from provinces from both coasts of Canada, given that management of wild salmon and salmon aquaculture is a joint federal-provincial responsibility.

"The findings of the audit concern me," Strelieff said in the report. "British Columbia's ability to ensure sustainability of wild salmon is handicapped by the lack of a clear vision to guide priority setting. While both levels of government appreciate their shared responsibility, their efforts have been weakened by their inability to overcome differing views and come up with a common strategy for wild salmon management."

Further complicating the issue, he noted, are changes that have been made by the provincial government in how it manages fish habitat as a result of resource and budgetary constraints.

"Provincial efforts to manage wild salmon in their freshwater environments have diminished in recent years," he wrote, "and what activities remain are now spread over a number of agencies. Existing provincial legislation and regulations do not provide adequate protection for salmon habitat, because some key provisions are either not in force or not being acted on."

Strelieff said that while the government has taken important steps to deal with the possible risks posed to wild salmon by aquaculture operations, further studies are also needed to better understand the interactions between wild salmon stocks and aquaculture operations.

The Auditor General's key recommendation is that the provincial government, in conjunction with the federal Department of Fisheries and Oceans, develop a clear vision, with goals and objectives for sustaining wild salmon. The two levels of government need to jointly provide the direction of public policy on the questions of what is an acceptable risk to salmon habitat and what is an acceptable loss of salmon runs.

As well, Strelieff recommends that the provincial government identify a lead provincial agency to co-ordinate efforts for sustaining wild salmon, and that ensure its compliance and enforcement programs are adequately resourced.

A full copy of the report can be found on the Auditor General's website, <http://www.bcauditor.com>.

A copy of the federal report can be found on the website of the federal Auditor General, at

[www.oag-bvg.gc.ca](http://www.oag-bvg.gc.ca).

A copy of the New Brunswick report can be found on the website of that province's Auditor General, at [www.gnb.ca/OAG-BVG/Index.htm](http://www.gnb.ca/OAG-BVG/Index.htm).

- 30 -

## **Backgrounder**

### **2004/05 Report #5 – Salmon Forever: An Assessment of the Provincial Role in Sustaining Wild Salmon.**

[Download complete report in .PDF format](#) (size 87,858 KB)

This report is available:

On the Internet at the Office of the Auditor  
General homepage  
<http://www.bcauditor.com>

By contacting:  
Office of the Auditor General  
8 Bastion Square  
Victoria, B.C. V8V 1X4  
Tel: 250 387-6803  
Fax: 250 387-1230

Toll free enquiries by dialing *Enquiry BC* at 1-800-663-7867 (in Vancouver 604 660-2421) and requesting a transfer to 387-6803.



[Top of page](#)