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## News Release

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### **PM's Announcement of Judicial Inquiry Gives Hope for Future**

OTTAWA— “The establishment of a judicial inquiry into the management of the Fraser River sockeye fishery gives new hope for the future of a great salmon river,” said John Cummins, M.P. (Delta-Richmond East).

The Fraser River and its sockeye fishery are part of the lifeblood of British Columbia, a symbol of the province and have come to define the province and its people.

We face a disaster of epic proportions on the Fraser. In six out of the last eleven years the fishery has been closed. Tens of thousands of B.C. families have suffered as a result.

Clear warning signs of an impending environmental disaster are evident. The crisis has moved well beyond the old disputes over who gets what percentage of the total allowable catch; it now is the very survival of the species that is at risk.

“Fraser sockeye must not be allowed to go the way of the Atlantic cod. The announcement of this judicial inquiry shows a Prime Minister committed to resolving this environmental challenge to the Fraser River sockeye and taking the necessary steps so that it is again the world's greatest sockeye river,” said Cummins.

Environmentalists and fishermen must be able to bring forward evidence of what has happened. Departmental officials must be able to come before the inquiry without fear of punishment. A judicial inquiry will empower a justice of the B.C. Supreme Court to impartially hear the evidence, call testimony under oath and make recommendations to ensure the future of the fishery.

“If we are to avert an environmental catastrophe on the Fraser, we must be able to find out what happened and to ensure that mistakes are not repeated. Only a judicial inquiry will get the job done,” concluded Cummins.

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