

5 August, 2016

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**Science the key to best future for aquaculture and the natural environment**

Like other coastal communities, Campbell River has ridden the boom and bust cycle of natural resources industries. Forestry, fisheries and tourism, have all risen, fallen and changed. Today, forestry and aquaculture are two of the most important economic drivers for northern Vancouver Island and region.

The Mayor of the City of Campbell River emphasizes that while the community relies on these industries, people also recognize the vital importance of wild fish stocks and the marine ecosystem, both of which are considered of primary value.

*“Campbell River has a proud legacy as the Salmon Capital of the World. Our oldest organization, is the Tye Club, and we have a very healthy recreational fishery – one of the best and most accessible on the coast,”* says Mayor Andy Adams. *“We also have a network of individuals and companies dedicated to salmon enhancement and habitat protection to ensure wild salmon thrive in our area.”*

The key to finding the best way to support industry and the natural environment relies on ongoing scientific research, the Mayor confirms.

*“In Campbell River, we want to be part of the solution that determines how to best keep the natural environment thriving and support aquaculture. That is why, for our own community, and for our neighbours and partners in the northern Vancouver Island region, we support the David Suzuki Foundation’s call for more funding for open and transparent scientific research,”* he says. *“Some of the best scientists and researchers in the world work at the Centre for Aquatic Health Sciences in Campbell River, and their efforts provide sound scientific research on our unique coastal environment to help ensure the viability of local natural resources and the industries that rely on these resources, for generations to come.”*

*“Some of the people most passionate about and dedicated to wild salmon causes are involved in the aquaculture business themselves because they understand that, with more than 50 per cent of the world’s seafood coming from aquaculture, this helps take the pressure off our wild stocks,”* says Rose Klukas, the City’s economic development officer.

*“Aquaculture, including farm-raised salmon, is B.C.’s number one agricultural export and the province’s second most valuable agri-food – and demand continues to grow for this valuable product,”* she says.

*“The head offices of Canada’s top salmon aquaculture companies are based in Campbell River and their collective business is now worth more than \$1 billion to the B.C. economy. The direct and indirect jobs the industry creates have become some of the highest paying, most stable jobs in the area,”* Klukas adds.

*“There is no other industry operating in our area with future potential like aquaculture,”* adds the Mayor.

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Along with the economic engine provided by aquaculture in the region, Adams applauds the community support shown by the industry.

*“Over the last 15 to 20 years, salmon farmers have become part of the fabric of the Campbell River community,” he says. “Visit one of our many playing fields or ice arenas and you’ll see the names Cermaq, Marine Harvest and Grieg Seafood on rink boards, scoreboards and jersey fronts. Our youth have been given opportunities to participate in recreational activities that wouldn’t be what they are without the support of these companies.”*

*“Salmon farmers also volunteer, donate products and help raise money at community events and for pretty well every charity in town,” Adams adds.*

*“Salmon farmers donate more than \$600,000 and about 30,000 pounds of fresh salmon each year, with most of these donations staying in our community,” Klukas confirms.*

*“The community needs great people, a diversified economy, a sense of working together and philanthropy. The people involved in salmon farming help bring these qualities to Campbell River and contribute immensely to our pride in being the Salmon Capital of the World,” the Mayor concludes.*

### **Key messages**

- Campbell River recognizes the vital importance of wild fish stocks and our marine ecosystem. These are both of primary value to our community.
- We also support aquaculture as a key local and regional industry and appreciate their dedication to being exceptional corporate citizens.
- We also want to be a part of the solution that determines how to best support aquaculture and keep the natural environment thriving.
- That is why we support the Suzuki Foundation’s call for more funding for open and transparent scientific research that will inform and ensure the viability of our community, local natural resources and the industries that rely on these resources.

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