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FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

NDP, Greens oppose fishery privatization in BC Conservatives remain silent, Liberals say they will consult

OTTAWA – The NDP and the Green Party candidates in BC are opposed to privatizing fisheries access rights, Conservatives are silent on the issue while the Liberals say they will “consult” before deciding according to survey results released today by the organization representing the country’s independent fishermen.

The survey asked party leaders and candidates in all BC coastal ridings whether they support the privatization of access rights to BC salmon and other species as recommended to DFO in a recent government-funded study by two academics.

“These are all very important issues in fishing communities especially given how concentrated fisheries access rights already are in the BC fishery” said Christine Hunt , Vice-president of the Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters.

According to Hunt the survey was sent to party leaders and all candidates in 19 selected coastal ridings in British Columbia

“The NDP leader Jack Layton came out clearly against fisheries privatization for his party and so did a third of all Green Party candidates polled. The response from the Liberals and Conservatives, however, was extremely disappointing,” Hunt said

“Not one Conservative candidate responded to the survey and only one Liberal candidate (Noor Ahmed – Vancouver island North) of the 19 surveyed responded. Noor indicated that he was against fisheries privatization but did not know what his party position was. Hunt said the President of the Liberal Party of Canada responded to the survey with a letter that did not answer any of the questions but stated instead that the Liberal party supports the DFO process of conducting consultations on the privatization recommendations for implementation in the fall.

The survey questions and individual candidate responses are available from the Council.

The Canadian Council of Professional Fish Harvesters (CCPFH) is a non-profit organization formed in 1995 to represent the interests of professional fish harvesters throughout Canada in their relations with federal, provincial and territorial governments.

The Council's members are:

Alliance des pêcheurs professionnels du Québec (APPQ), Association des pêcheurs professionnels membres d'équipage (APPME), Area G Trollers Association of BC, Bay of Fundy Inshore Fishermen's Association (BFIFA), Fédération régionale acadienne des pêcheurs professionnels (FRAPP), Fédération des pêcheurs semi-hauturiers du Québec (FPHSQ), Fish Food and Allied Workers Union of Newfoundland (FFAW-CAW), Gulf Nova Scotia Fleet Planning Board (GNSFPB), Lake Manitoba Commercial Fishermen's Association (LMCFA), Maritime Fishermen's Union (MFU), Native Brotherhood of British Columbia (NBBC), PEI Fishermen's Association (PEIFA), and United Fishermen and Allied Workers Union of British Columbia (UFAWU-CAW).

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