

POSITIVE AQUACULTURE AWARENESS NEWS RELEASE

New sea lice study exposes activist driven science

December 13th, 2010, Campbell River – A new sea lice study that confirms BC salmon farms are not responsible for drops in pink salmon populations is welcome news to a grassroots aquaculture group representing fish farmers and fish farm suppliers.

The international study, published today in the Proceedings of the National Academy of Science journal (PNAS) includes researchers from British Columbia and Alaska. After reviewing many years of data and farm production, Gary Marty et al. conclude that salmon farms have had no negative effect on wild pink salmon productivity.

“This is welcome news of course,” says Cory Percevault, President of Positive Aquaculture Awareness (PAA), “but it’s not a surprise. A lot of agenda driven science has dominated the headlines over the past few years, but we felt quite confident the truth would surface.”

In 2000, the Broughton area witnessed a massive return of pink salmon, but then saw the population crash when returning to their birth rivers in 2002. Although salmon farms were operational during the peak and low years, salmon farms were accused of causing the population drop by some activist groups.

PAA says the same groups are making the same accusations today, despite overwhelming research that does not agree.¹

“In the years since 2002, many activists posing as researchers, have pumped out questionable science which has been criticized for it’s weak mathematical modeling and highly selective data”, says Percevault. “But regardless of these unfair attacks, salmon farmers never ignored the concern and have taken part in research to better understand the concern of sea lice interactions with wild and farmed salmon. This study removes the bias by looking at many years of information without cherry picking data.”

The study, called “Relation of farm salmon, sea lice and wild salmon populations”, states that the survival of wild salmon populations is not associated with the number of sea lice on farmed salmon, nor the level of production on the farm. Positive Aquaculture Awareness is a grassroots group formed in 1998 and represents the thousands of men and women employed in BC’s important aquaculture sector. www.farmfreshsalmon.org

[Read the press release from UC Davis](#)

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For more information: Cory Percevault: (250) 830-3374

¹ Scientific Evidence Fails to Support the Extinction Hypothesis (Kenneth M. Brooks et al. 2008)