



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

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April 1, 2026

Dear Dr. Mordecai and Co-signatories:

Thank you for your correspondence of February 4, 2026, addressed to the Honourable Joanne Thompson, Minister of Fisheries, in which you express support for continued investment in Fisheries and Oceans Canada's (DFO) Molecular Genetics Laboratory (MGL) at the Pacific Biological Station in Nanaimo and evidence-based management for salmon. I have been asked to respond on the Minister's behalf.

Budget 2025 announced that DFO will see reductions of \$192.7 million ongoing that will be centered on refocusing operations, streamlining internal services, and eliminating redundant functions. While the Department implements these changes, DFO Science will continue its commitment to research that benefits wild salmon conservation and management. I have every confidence in the Department's skilled and dedicated scientists, whose impartial scientific advice guides management decisions and whose work benefits all Canadians. A key priority for the Department is to make decisions informed by sound science.

The Department recognizes the importance of molecular tools—including pathogen monitoring, gene expression profiling, and environmental DNA (eDNA)—in evaluating cumulative stressors affecting wild salmon. The significant scientific contributions of Dr. Kristi Miller-Saunders, her team, partners, and collaborators have helped to establish Canada as a global leader in the use of genomics to understand salmon health. The Department will build upon this foundation to further advance research and knowledge in this area to improve DFO's overall understanding of cumulative effects on salmon populations across Canada.

The importance and benefits of collaborative scientific work with Indigenous partners, academia, and environmental non-governmental organizations cannot be understated. Much of the research and innovation carried out by DFO scientists are delivered through building relationships and collaborative partnerships.

I appreciate your commitment to salmon conservation and the considerable expertise you and your colleagues contribute to Canada's fisheries science landscape. As the Department

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implements its changes resulting from Budget 2025 measures and beyond, DFO looks forward to continued research collaborations with you and your colleagues.

Yours sincerely,

Anna Classen
Regional Director General
Pacific Region

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