

Atlantic Salmon Federation



NEWS RELEASE/COMMUNIQUÉ

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Milestone Report Confirms High Value and Esteem for Wild Atlantic Salmon

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St. Andrews... Gardner Pinfold Consulting Economists Ltd. of Halifax concludes that wild Atlantic salmon were worth \$255 million and supported 3,872 full time equivalent (FTE) jobs in eastern Canada in 2010. The firm's study confirms that Canadians hold a special place in their hearts, and pocketbooks, for restoration of this iconic species.

The Gardner Pinfold evaluation includes a gross domestic product value of \$150 million relating to activities such as recreational and First Nation fishing, tourism, education and spending by governments, universities and non- government organizations. In addition, Atlantic Canadians and Quebecers are willing to contribute tax dollars to support successful restoration programs that would cost up to \$105 million annually to ensure that wild Atlantic salmon continue to exist and contribute to ecosystem integrity.

Spending in the recreational salmon fishery in 2010 alone amounted to \$128 million. This recreational fishery attracts significant numbers of non-resident anglers from the United States, where there is no fishery for wild Atlantic salmon due to their endangered status. Higher angler numbers are the key driver for growth in spending and even greater economic benefits from this fishery. For example, more anglers participated in the recreational fishery in 2010 (53,883) due to better salmon runs, compared to 2005 (41,737). In 2005, Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) in its survey that evaluates all recreational fishing in Canada put a value of \$62 million on the recreational fishery for Atlantic salmon. The Gardner Pinfold value in 2010 more than doubles this amount. "One of the conclusions of this report is a relatively simple concept," said Bill Taylor, President of the Atlantic Salmon Federation, "The more fish there are; the more anglers travel to eastern Canadian destinations and more spending and jobs are generated in rural economies that are very much in need of such a boost."

The Gardner Pinfold report provides a strong case put forward by the general public in the Atlantic Provinces and Quebec for investment by government in wild Atlantic salmon. More than 80% of the public supports investment in salmon restoration with a willingness to pay in the range of \$4.50 to \$12.50 annually per tax-paying household on programs that have a high likelihood of success.

Gardner Pinfold randomly surveyed the general public in Atlantic Canada and Quebec during an economic downturn, when the average Canadian was preoccupied with debt and declining incomes. "The results were great," said Greg MacAskill, an economist with Gardner Pinfold, "Such strong support for wild Atlantic salmon among non-users, against that dire economic backdrop, adds extra weight to the results, and cements the fact that protecting the species rests solidly among the core values of Canadians."

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In our political climate, money talks, and government tends to invest in industries that provide economic benefits and jobs to communities. The Gardner Pinfold report confirms that wild Atlantic salmon support a sustainable green industry that attracts a lot of tourists from throughout Canada, the United States and overseas, and generates income and jobs in rural communities that are often faced with massive job loss in other industries, such as forestry. For example, the recreational salmon fishery on New Brunswick's Miramichi River attracts visitors from around the world, supports annual spending of \$20 million, and provides 637 (FTE) jobs to rural communities surrounding the river.

An increase in salmon numbers is an important goal of both the general public and the recreational fishing segment. Increased salmon numbers depend on governments taking a lead in implementation of effective restoration programs. Despite its core mandate to conserve and manage wild Atlantic salmon, DFO budgets related to wild Atlantic salmon have declined by nearly 75% since 1985.

Mr. Taylor said, "Gardner Pinfold has provided a legitimate socio-economic value for wild Atlantic salmon, utilizing standard, transparent and comprehensive surveying techniques and analyses that have been the basis of many economic studies, some of which DFO itself has commissioned. The study clearly demonstrates that additional conservation and restoration measures for wild Atlantic salmon will significantly strengthen the economy and quality-of-life of Canadians."

If DFO adds \$15 million annually (a fraction of the \$105 million that the general public is willing to contribute) to restore its budget for wild Atlantic salmon to near what the department spent in 1985, Canadians could see a return on investment within six years, according to Gardner Pinfold.

"We are not asking for a hand-out," Mr. Taylor concluded, "We are asking for a reasonable investment in restoration, conservation and protection that will pay dividends in future wild Atlantic salmon returns to our rivers and economic returns and employment to Canadian communities."

The Atlantic Salmon Federation is dedicated to the conservation, protection and restoration of wild Atlantic salmon and the ecosystems on which their well-being and survival depend.

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Additional Information Available:

Report's Main Points <http://www.asf.ca/g-p2012/value-overview-en.pdf>

Report's Executive Summary

<http://www.asf.ca/g-p2012/value-salmon-exec-summ.pdf>

Frequently Asked Questions <http://www.asf.ca/g-p2012/faqs-salmonvalue.pdf>

Graphics <http://www.asf.ca/g-p2012/value-photos.html>

Regional Facts <http://www.asf.ca/g-p2012/regionalfacts-value.pdf>