



National and
International Programs
1200 18th Street, Suite 500
Washington, DC 20036

202.861.2242
www.audubon.org

Debra Myles
Impact Assessment Agency of Canada / Government of Canada
Senior Advisor / Strategic and Regional Assessment
RegionalAssessmentRequest-DemandeEvaluationRegionale@iaac-aeic.gc.ca

August 4, 2022

Re: Phased Regional Impact Assessment for Fraser River Estuary and Salish Sea

The Government of Canada describes Regional Impact Assessments as "...studies conducted in areas of existing projects or anticipated development to inform planning and management of cumulative effects and inform project impact assessments. Regional assessments allow the Government of Canada to go beyond project-focused impact assessments to understand the regional context and provide more comprehensive analyses to help inform future impact assessment decisions." The Salish Sea Indigenous Guardians Association has formally requested Canada undertake a Regional Impact Assessment including both the Fraser River estuary and Salish Sea.

We, the National Audubon Society are writing in support of the request from the Salish Sea Indigenous Guardians Association for a phased Regional Impact Assessment of the Fraser River Estuary and Salish Sea region. The Fraser River estuary is a region of global significance for the conservation of migratory birds and has received numerous global designations reflecting the significance of the resource.

The National Audubon Society, along with our conservation partners have identified the Fraser River Estuary as a key site within our Important Bird Areas Program and the [Pacific Americas Shorebird Conservation Strategy](#). Because of the importance of the Fraser River Estuary to a suite of Pacific shorebird species, we have designated the Fraser River Estuary as hemispherically important within our conservation framework.

The National Audubon Society believes that working with the Coast Salish Nations to implement a phased Regional Impact Assessment that includes consideration of the cumulative effects on birds and bird habitat will help ensure the Government of Canada and the Coast Salish Nations have an understanding of what is needed to maintain a functional estuary and a broader Salish Sea capable of supporting communities and the millions of migratory birds that rely on the Fraser River Estuary.

Sincerely,
<original signed by>

River Gates

Pacific Shorebird Conservation Coordinator
<email address removed>