

# The Salmon and Climate Initiative

## A New Approach to Climate Resilience in North America

### THE CHALLENGE:

## Climate Change

Pacific Salmon, and the benefits they provide, are vital to the health of communities from California to the Arctic. Their epic migratory journey takes them thousands of miles from freshwater streams to deep into the Pacific Ocean. Salmon provide nutrients to 137+ species of wildlife, preserve the deeply held traditions of Indigenous communities, and maintain fisheries generating \$4.7 billion in annual economic activity and 39,100 jobs.

As climate change accelerates, Pacific salmon are in increasing trouble. Habitat loss, pollution, and previous management decisions have left these fish depleted and vulnerable to climate change. The effects of this can be seen across North America with an unprecedented seven-year Chinook fishing moratorium on Alaska's Yukon river, 65,000 dead fish from droughts in British Columbia's Fraser River, and a multi-year salmon fishery closure

risking 23,000+ jobs in California. Without aggressive actions, salmon populations face extinction in watersheds across their natural range.

Despite the shared challenges, North America lacks a coordinated, transboundary response to the impacts of climate change on Pacific salmon. While there are valuable initiatives happening at local levels, no one is reaching across jurisdictions and embracing a broader approach to salmon resilience. As a result, we are missing opportunities to learn from successful solutions pioneered in other watersheds, to collaborate on promising research, and to leverage our collective resources to fast-track large-scale solutions. If salmon are to remain resilient as the climate changes, we must do better.

### OUR SOLUTION:

## A New Salmon and Climate Initiative

Long Live the Kings (LLTK), the Pacific Salmon Foundation, Salmon Defense, and partners are convening salmon recovery leaders from across the U.S. and Canada in a new *Salmon and Climate Initiative (SCI)* to address the challenge of climate change head-on. This ambitious initiative will tackle the big unaddressed needs that are limiting North America's ability to ensure salmon resilience, including:

- **Accelerating New Solutions:** We need bold new solutions implemented at an unprecedented speed and scale. By leveraging the collective resources of North America's salmon stakeholders, the SCI will provide an invaluable new platform to deliver recovery actions quickly enough to outpace climate change.
- **Solving the Big Uncertainties:** Which salmon populations are most at risk? Which resilience solutions are most effective in which environments?

Answering these and other fundamental questions are essential to maximizing investments and to finding the best solutions for unique salmon populations and environments. The SCI will fund, facilitate, and implement this research so the best evidence guides salmon adaptation actions.

- **Building Constituencies for Salmon:** To increase support and funding for salmon resilience, the SCI will lead a large, multilayered, educational campaign that targets the general public and decision makers. Investments in salmon recovery also support countless wildlife species, resilience to extreme weather events, and the vitality of local communities. Widely sharing this message is vital to securing the resources needed to deliver solutions for salmon resilience across North America.



## Want to Learn More?

Questions, comments, or ideas?

Please contact SCI Project Manager, Shaara Ainsley at [sainsley@lltk.org](mailto:sainsley@lltk.org).

## DID YOU KNOW?

Salmon are an umbrella species. Efforts to protect salmon also protect a vast array of wildlife and ecosystems. Pro-salmon resilience actions will also help resident orcas, grizzlies, wolves, and bald eagles.

## We Need Your Help

The success of this new international initiative depends on bringing together all of the dedicated people and organizations who care about salmon – and that means you! Bring your unique voice and help co-create the SCI:

- ✓ **Join Our Team:**  
We need diverse perspectives like yours to co-create and guide the SCI. Join us as a partner organization. **Contact SCI Project Manager, Shaara Ainsley at [sainsley@lltk.org](mailto:sainsley@lltk.org) to learn more.**
- ✓ **Philanthropic Investments:**  
Philanthropic partnerships are essential to establishing a strong foundation for the SCI to deliver salmon adaptation solutions across North America. **To learn more about how philanthropy can ignite change, contact LLTK's Sr. Grants Manager, Trevor Laugen at [tlaugen@lltk.org](mailto:tlaugen@lltk.org).**
- ✓ **Sponsor an SCI Listening Session:**  
The SCI wants to learn more about the salmon and climate needs where you work and live. We'd love to meet with you and representatives of your watershed(s) to learn more about your needs and priorities. **Contact LLTK's CEO, Jacques White at [jwhite@lltk.org](mailto:jwhite@lltk.org) to schedule a meeting.**

Have another idea about how you can contribute? **Reach out to SCI Project Manager, Shaara Ainsley at [sainsley@lltk.org](mailto:sainsley@lltk.org).**

## WHAT'S NEXT?

Long Live the Kings and our partners held an SCI Scoping Workshop in December 2023 welcoming salmon scientists, traditional knowledge holders, fisheries managers, and policy experts from across western North America to evaluate what we can and should be doing to promote salmon resilience. Armed with the information generated at this workshop, we are now working to formalize and fund this new initiative. From 2024-25, we are hiring staff and building out the SCI's organizational structure, resilience actions, fundraising plan, budget, and coordination and communications strategy. We will begin launching full salmon resilience solutions in early 2026.



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