

Minister of Indian Affairs
and Northern Development



Ministre des Affaires
Indiennes et du Nord canadien

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0H4

DEC 10 2003

The Honourable William Graham, PC, MP
Minister of Foreign Affairs
House of Commons
OTTAWA ON K1A 0A6

Dear Mr. Graham:

This is in response to your letter of November 7, 2003, addressed to the Right Honourable Herb Gray, Chair Canadian Section of the International Joint Commission, concerning Canadian Columbia River Inter-Tribal Fisheries Commission (CCRIFC).

I understand that CCRIFC was formed in the early 1990s, by First Nations located in the Columbia Basin area to co-ordinate fisheries management interests with federal and provincial regulators. In 1995, a Memorandum of Understanding was signed by 10 First Nations located in the Columbia Basin to formally establish CCRIFC, which has not been incorporated under any federal or provincial (British Columbia) laws.

I further understand that through various funding sources, CCRIFC has been involved in a number of programs and processes aimed at conservation and restoration of fisheries resources in the region. Since 1995, CCRIFC has received funding under a multi-year Aboriginal Fishing Strategy agreement with Fisheries and Oceans (F&O) to participate in habitat-related activities. In this regard, I respectfully recommend that you contact F&O to confirm this information.

I have taken the liberty of forwarding a copy of your correspondence to the Honourable Robert Thibault, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans, for any additional comments he may have concerning this matter.

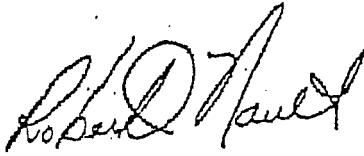
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I trust that this response is of assistance.

Yours sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, appearing to read "Robert D. Nault".

Robert D. Nault, PC, MP

c.c.: The Right Honourable Herb Gray, PC, QC, CC
The Honourable Robert G. Thibault, PC, MP