Supporting Salmon Research in the Faculty of Environment at SFU

Tony Allard, Hearthstone Investments President donated $322,000 to support SFU researchers to address some of the pressing questions regarding the decline of the Central Coast sockeye salmon populations, including the possibility of dangerous pathogens transferring from farmed Atlantic salmon to nearby wild Pacific salmon and vice versa - and then spreading to more remote populations.

Rivers Inlet, a Central Coast fjord, is the primary focus of this project and once vied with the Skeena River as the location of Canada's second-most prolific sockeye salmon run. The run declined in the late 1990's to less than 1% of its historic abundance and has yet to show solid signs of recovery.

Explains SFU researcher, Rick Routledge, “This research program has two important goals. First, it will generate insight into the role of the freshwater environment in the decline, with particular emphasis on the propagation and impacts of viruses. At the same time, it will help us to develop a working relationship with the Wuikinuxv First Nation and other local residents to develop a comprehensive and inclusive monitoring plan.”

As owner and operator of Good Hope Cannery, Tony Allard has always had a passion for the region and its wildlife including sockeye salmon. He is excited about supporting this important area of research: “There is a lot we don’t know about why the sockeye stocks have declined so precipitously along our Central Coast. I am happy to do my part to help begin to understand the causes.”