



PACIFIC SALMON FOUNDATION ANNOUNCES **"THE WONDER OF WILD SALMON"**

Vancouver – April 16, 2003

Pacific Salmon Foundation (PSF) is hosting the largest gala Charity Dinner and Auction ever to benefit wild Pacific salmon. It all takes place at the Westin Bayshore Resort and Marina on Wednesday April 23, 2003. Over 600 guests have bought tickets to show their support for salmon protection and recovery in British Columbia. The evening events are kicked off at 6:00pm with a silent auction and raffles and at 8:30pm Ritchie Bros. Auctioneers will conduct a live auction. Unbeatable BC fishing vacations, Golf get-a-aways and unique and original artworks are a just a few items that will start the bidding.

In its 11th year, this event is a major fund raiser for Pacific Salmon Foundation, the leading not-for-profit organization dedicated to protecting, conserving and restoring wild salmon. "Through a steady decline it has become apparent if salmon do not survive in their diversity, abundance and geographic dispersion, all British Columbians and Canadians will be poorer – our identities will fail", stated Paul Kariya, Executive Director of Pacific Salmon Foundation. Kariya also indicates, "there are many causes and reasons for this situation, but key is the fact that we have not valued wild salmon highly enough. Through raising public awareness, using education and making wild salmon accessible to the general public, PSF will raise the salmon consciousness of British Columbians." This is what Pacific Salmon Foundation is dedicated to do over the next several years, armed with a plan of action and a campaign to raise consciousness and funding.

Pacific Salmon Foundation's efforts are widely recognized as making a difference in many communities throughout BC. "PSF's activities are made possible through year-round fundraising initiatives that include, hosting 10 charity dinners and auctions, we are so overwhelmed with the continuing support we receive from the community", says Event Coordinator, Brenda McIntyre. In addition to the Foundation hosting their events they are arranging corporate partnerships and securing private donations.

Since inception in 1987, PSF has committed over \$4.2 million to support 480 salmon projects. These funds have been matched with money and in-kind contributions from other sources for a total value of more than \$24 million. Demand has increased because there has been a significant reduction in federal and provincial government programs available for salmon habitat protection, restoration and stewardship.

In addition to the Community Salmon Program, PSF is the Program Manager of the Pacific Salmon Endowment Fund – a \$30 million endowment fund established by an initial contribution from Fisheries and Oceans Canada and championed by Rick Hansen. As Program Manager, PSF invests the income to rebuilding key watersheds in British Columbia. Three priority regions are: Georgia Basin, Thomson Basin and Rivers and Smiths Inlets.

If you would like more information on this event or to purchase tickets please contact Brenda McIntyre, Event Coordinator bcmintyre@psf.ca or for a further information on the Foundation, please visit www.pacificsalmon.ca or contact: Courtney Hatfield, Partnership & Development Officer chatfield@psf.ca Telephone 604-664-7664;