



Funded by the
Government of Canada's
Community Services Recovery Fund



December 15, 2023

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE – Tofino, Ucluelet, BC - Redd Fish Restoration Society brings Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society under its organization to continue ocean conservation and restoration efforts

Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society (SIMRS) and Redd Fish Restoration Society (Redd Fish) are pleased to announce that SIMRS has been brought under the Redd Fish banner. The amalgamation of SIMRS into Redd Fish reflects a shared commitment to the well-being of our oceans, the preservation of fish habitats, and the care and stewardship of marine ecosystems.

Both organizations have long-standing legacies of serving their communities and a commitment to the protection and restoration of aquatic environments. By combining their expertise, knowledge, and resources, Redd Fish will be poised to usher in a new era of impact in the field of marine monitoring and habitat restoration.

"We are thrilled to amalgamate our organization into Redd Fish Restoration Society in this incredible new chapter," said Jen Dart, President of Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society. "We see this as an opportunity for the work of SIMRS and its founder, Rod Palm, to continue while supporting new opportunities for growth and community engagement. These two organizations are a natural fit in that they share a dedication to aquatic ecosystem conservation."

Redd Fish will continue to work with permission and in partnership with the nuučaanuł Nations in their hahuuli (territory). The Redd Fish Board of Directors has representation appointed by each of the five Nations in the region, including the hišk^wii?ath (Hesquiaht) Nation, ʒaaḥuus?ath (Ahousesht) Nation, ʒa?uuk^wi?ath (Tla-o-qui-aht) Nation, Yuufu?i?ath Government, and tuk^waa?ath Nation Government.

Together their mission is to use the best available science, technology, and Indigenous knowledge to restore damaged ecosystems, rebuild wild salmon stocks, and inspire an ethic of stewardship. By merging the complementary strengths of these two organizations, the impact of the conservation efforts can be expanded. Under this new umbrella, the commitment remains to advance marine conservation, educate the community and visitors on marine stewardship, and ensure the health of our ocean environment. Previous projects, programs, services, and assets held by SIMRS will be maintained wherever possible by Redd Fish.

Jessica Hutchinson, Executive Director of Redd Fish Restoration Society, also expressed enthusiasm for the amalgamation, "This union brings together two organizations with a deep-rooted passion for the health and abundance of aquatic species. Together, we will leverage our collective knowledge and resources to make a profound difference in restoring and safeguarding these ecosystems for future generations." Mayco Noel, Chair of Redd Fish, agrees, "This is not the end. It is a new beginning. It is bridging two forward-thinking organizations with strong and adaptive leadership. This is a means to a higher purpose adding greater capacity, impact, and value to the region."

In the coming months, the organizations will focus on integrating their operations, developing a comprehensive strategic plan, and engaging with stakeholders to ensure a successful transition.

The amalgamation process is funded by the Government of Canada's Community Services Recovery Fund provided through the Clayoquot Biosphere Trust. The Community Services Recovery Fund is a one-time \$400 million investment from the Government of Canada to support community service organizations, including charities, non-profits and Indigenous governing bodies, as they adapt and modernize their organizations.

"Community service organizations are at the heart of communities like Tofino, creating a sense of belonging from coast to coast to coast," said Jenna Suds, Minister of Families, Children and Social Development. "The Community Services Recovery Fund will enable organizations like Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society and Redd Fish Restoration Society that serve our diverse communities to adapt and modernize their programs and services and to invest in the future of their organizations, staff and volunteers. Together, we can rebuild from the isolation of the COVID-19 pandemic and build a more just and equitable future for those in Tofino."

For more information about the amalgamation please visit www.reddfis.org.

About Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society:

Strawberry Isle Marine Research Society (SIMRS) is a registered charity based in Clayoquot Sound on the west coast of Vancouver Island, British Columbia. For over 32 years SIMRS has been dedicated to conducting long-term research and monitoring, providing emergency marine mammal response, and educating the public about marine ecosystems.

About Redd Fish Restoration Society:

Redd Fish Restoration Society (Redd Fish) is a registered charity focused on restoration, research, and education. For over 27 years, Redd Fish (formerly Central Westcoast Forest Society) has worked with the nuučaanuł Nations in Clayoquot and Barkley Sound on ecological restoration in their hahułi (territory). Our leadership is composed of a board of directors with representation from the five Nations in the region including the hišk^wił?ath (Hesquiaht) Nation, ʒaaḥuus?ath (Ahousesht) Nation, ʒa?uuk^wił?ath (Tla-o-qui-aht) Nation, Yuułu?ił?ath Government, and tuk^waa?ath Nation Government. Together our mission is to use the best available science, technology, and Indigenous ecological knowledge to restore damaged coastal ecosystems and rebuild wild salmon stocks.

For media inquiries or interviews, please contact SIMRS board chair Jen Dart at dart.jen@gmail.com.