



MEDIA RELEASE

November 30, 2021

Salmon Farms Set to Expand Despite Federal Promise to Remove Them

Vancouver, BC - Salmon farming companies are proposing 12 site expansions including one entirely new 4,400-metric tonne open-net salmon farm. The requests for expansions come after studies indicate open-net salmon farms spread harmful parasites, viruses and bacteria to wild salmon and after the federal government committed to removing them by 2025.

The 12 proposals (more details in backgrounder) vary in terms of the characteristics of their expansions:

- One is a completely new site proposed between two areas (Discovery Islands and the Broughton Archipelago) where open-net salmon farms are being removed;
- Four are proposing increases in production;
- Four are proposing increases to the number of pens;
- Two are proposing that a maximum allowable production in the region be dropped; and
- One site is increasing the tenure size.

Any expansion of production, whether through new tenures or increases in number of pens, production caps or tenure size will further amplify the risk of disease and parasites to vulnerable wild salmon populations.

“All proposed factory farm expansions should be denied by the government given their harm to wild salmon, the extremely poor returns of wild salmon and the federal government’s commitment to remove them by 2025,” said Stan Proboszcz, Watershed Watch Salmon Society.

“Increasing the number of farmed fish held in any of these areas just increases the risk of uncontrollable sea lice outbreaks and amplifies disease pathogens, putting wild salmon at greater risk,” said Karen Wristen, Living Oceans Society.

“At a time when many wild salmon populations are in precipitous decline and under increasing pressure from climate change we must do everything we can to ensure their survival. This means eliminating the risk from open net-pen fish farming, not expanding this unsustainable practice. Government has to reject these applications if it is serious about salmon recovery,” said Kilian Stehfest, David Suzuki Foundation.

“It is outrageous that DFO would even consider increasing fish farm capacity or production levels in, of all places, Clayoquot Sound,” said Dan Lewis, Clayoquot Action. “This is heading in the opposite direction of the federal government’s commitment to remove salmon farms from B.C. waters by 2025”.

The provincial government is responsible for approving changes to tenures and the federal government is responsible for salmon farm operation licence issues such as production increases. The federal government typically responds to proposed site changes within 1 year.

Contact:

Stan Proboszcz, Science Advisor, Watershed Watch Salmon Society, (604) 314-2713, proboszcz@watershedwatch.ca

Karen Wristen, Executive Director, Living Oceans Society (604) 788-5634, kwristen@livingoceans.org

Dan Lewis, Executive Director, Clayoquot Action, (250) 726-8136, dan@clayoquotaction.org

Kilian Stehfest, Marine Conservation Specialist, David Suzuki Foundation, (778) 686-7472, kstehfest@davidsuzuki.org

BACKGROUNDER

The 12 open-net salmon farm expansion applications can be viewed at (under tab Applications and Decisions) :

<https://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/licence-permis/index-eng.html>

The 12 expansion proposals are summarized in the table below and include:

- One new site: Chatham Channel called “Ga-Guump”;
- Four sites proposing increases in production: in Clayoquot Sound, “Millar Channel” and “Bawden Point”; in the Broughton Archipelago, “Tsa-ya” (Minstrel Island);
- Four sites proposing increases to the number of farmable pens: in Clayoquot Sound, sites “Plover Point”, “Dixon Bay” and “Rant Point”; in Nootka-Esperanza, “Hecate”; and in Klemtu “Goat Cove.
- Two sites proposing to drop the maximum allowable production in Clio Channel: Broughton Archipelago sites “Noo-la” and “Wa-kwa”; and
- One site increasing the tenure size: Klemtu site “Kid Bay.”

Table summarizing the proposed expansion details. Yellow highlighting indicates proposed expansion details.

site	comp.	DFO review start	lat/long	biomass change (tonnes)	area change (m ²)	change in # of pens	net pen size (m)
Plover Point (Clayoquot Sound)	Cermaq	Oct 26 2021	49.214382°N, 125.766025°W	2640 (no change)	12,804 to 14,620 (pens)	12 to 8 square	change 30 to 40
Millar Channel (Clayoquot Sound)	Cermaq	Oct 7 2021	49° 22.5732N 126° 5.4018W	2,640 to 3,960	54,660 to 69,980 (tenure) 11,008 to 18,232 (sq pens)	6 square and 1 semi-closed to 10 square and 1 semi-closed	40 and 120
Dixon Bay (Clayoquot Sound)	Cermaq	July 14 2021	49° 24.30024N 126° 9.03312W	2640 (no change)	10,692 to 12,804 (pens)	10 to 12 square	30
Ga-Guump (Chatham Channel)	Grieg	Jun 24 2021	50° 37.17906N 126°17.27352W	4,400 (new site)	40,500 (tenure)	5 circle	200
Rant Point (Clayoquot Sound)	Cermaq	Jul 5 2021	49° 25.67N 125° 84.153W	2640 (no change)	10,692 to 12,804 (pens)	10 to 12 square	30
Noo-la (Broughton Archipelago)	Grieg	Apr 26 2021	50° 36.310N 126° 22.0200W	4400 (no change) remove Clio	38200 (no change)	16 square	30

				Channel max 9,000			
Wa-kwa (Broughton Archipelago)	Grieg	April 26 2021	50° 36.075N 126° 20.9W	3600 (no change) remove Clio Channel max 9000	38,300 (no change)	14 square	30
Tsa-Ya (Broughton Archipelago)	Grieg	April 26 2021	50° 36.720N 126° 19.608W	3000 to 3700 remove Clio Channel max 9000	60,070 (tenure)	16 square	30
Hecate (Nootka-Espera nza)	Grieg	April 22, 2021	52° 07.94N 126° 45.438W	4000 (no change)	57,800 (tenure) 14,916 to 17,028 (pens)	14 to 16 square	30
Bawden Point (Clayoquot Sound)	Cermaq	April 19 2021	49° 18.3295N 126° 0.2732W	2640 to 3960	90,300 (tenure) 14,620 to 18,232 (pens)	8 to 10 square	40
Kid Bay (Klemtu)	MOWI	April 15 2021	52° 47.784N 128° 24.297W	4000 (no change)	84,300 to 190,900 (tenure)	20 square	90 and 120
Goat Cove (Klemtu)	MOWI	Jan 17 2019	52° 78.726N, 128° 41.99W	2815 to 4000	51,819 (no change)	14 square	120

Recent actions and commitments to remove open-net salmon farms from British Columbia:

- removal of open-net salmon farms from the Broughton Archipelago is currently led by First Nations and is underway.
<https://news.gov.bc.ca/releases/2018PREM0151-002412>
- federal commitment in the mandate letter from the Prime Minister to the Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to transition open-net salmon farms from coastal waters in B.C. by 2025
<https://pm.gc.ca/en/mandate-letters/2019/12/13/archived-minister-fisheries-oceans-and-canadian-coast-guard-mandate>
- Minister of Fisheries and Oceans announcement to remove all open-net fish farms from the Discovery Islands, B.C.
<https://www.newswire.ca/news-releases/government-of-canada-moves-to-phase-out-salmon-farming-licences-in-discovery-islands-following-consultations-with-first-nations-816013273.html>