
INFORMATION BULLETIN

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Ministry of Agriculture and Lands

AQUACULTURE SITE APPROVED AT CONCEPCION POINT

VICTORIA – Agriculture and Lands Minister Pat Bell has issued an aquaculture licence to Grieg Seafood B.C. Ltd.

The licence applies to a site near Concepcion Point in Muchalaht Inlet on the west coast of Vancouver Island. In a separate statutory approval, Minister Bell also executed a Crown Land tenure for this site.

The aquaculture site is within the asserted traditional territory of the Mowachaht/Muchalaht First Nation (MMFN) and is consistent with the outcome of discussions held between the Province and the MMFN. The land tenure and aquaculture application were referred to both the MMFN and the Nuu-chah-nulth Tribal Council for consideration and input.

The licence was approved subject to the following conditions:

- Before any entry of fish, the site must pass an inspection by a provincial fisheries inspector. This inspection will include a comprehensive review of all legislative requirements, including records on site, escape prevention, detection, and response plans, and evidence of the site's net tagging, monitoring and recording program.
- Before any entry of fish, there must be an inspection of the facility by a qualified anchoring specialist. Proof of this inspection must be maintained by the company and produced upon request of a provincial fisheries inspector.
- There must be an up-to-date, ministry-approved Fish Health Management Plan specific to this facility. This plan must be reviewed annually and updated as appropriate.

Numerous other parties were consulted on this application, including: the Canadian Coast Guard, Fisheries and Oceans Canada, Environment Canada, Ministry of Environment, Ministry of Forests and Range, the Comox-Strathcona Regional District, Archeology Research Ltd and the Friends of Clayoquot Sound.

The ministry is currently reviewing the recommendations from the Special Legislative Committee on Sustainable Aquaculture, which, combined with recommendations from the Pacific Salmon Forum may ultimately lead to policy changes as part of the Provincial Aquaculture Strategy moving forward.

The original application for Concepcion Point was received in March 2003. The decision is based on the technical merits of the application and the appropriateness of the site.

All decisions on aquaculture licences in British Columbia are based on the following principles: fairness; transparency; efficiency; accountability; protection of public health and safety; protection of the environment; and sustainable economic development.

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