



Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance  
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The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, P.C., M.P.  
 Minister of Fisheries, Oceans and the Canadian Coast Guard

Dear Minister LeBlanc,

Thank you for your correspondence of October 11, 2016 regarding aquaculture in B.C. waters and Indigenous people's concerns that we raised to you. In reviewing your answer to our letters, we noted that you failed to say whether you are willing to meet with Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw who are looking to you to do the right thing and cleanse their territorial waters of open net fish farms. Approximately one-third of fish farms on the B.C. coast are established in their territory, and it appears there are plans for their expansion, all without their consent. Over the last 30 years, they have attempted to get governments to listen to their legitimate concerns over the harm those fish farms are doing to the marine ecosystem in their territory.

As you and your departmental staff are aware, the Hunt for Virus Campaign last summer included a coalition that involved Dr. Alexandra Morton, a delegation from the leadership of Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw and other First Nations, and the crew of Sea Shepherd's Martin Sheen research vessel. The audit that was conducted on the fish farms in Musgamagw Dzawada'enuxw territory revealed hard evidence that farmed Atlantic salmon are showing symptoms of heart, skeletal and muscular infections, which are sure signs of the much feared piscine reovirus. There is also evidence that farmed salmon in the open net pens appeared to be consuming small fish that could be herring, smolts, eulachons, or other food-fish as by-catch, unprotected and uncounted under any regulations. At the time this was discovered, your departmental staff were invited to investigate this alarming situation, and chose not to respond. Given the gravity of these findings, why did you not call for an investigation of these fish farms?

We urge you to personally review the following links that have raised the deep concerns of thousands of British Columbians:

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=iDr3yabBegM> - cleansing ceremony  
<https://youtu.be/oO5Hr08FJ5g> our leaders have spoken  
<https://youtu.be/lrwlFkeibe8> discover dying salmon in DI  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=TVz3e6H6fZA> -Awahoo Eviction letter  
<https://youtu.be/Tjv5C2ESkS4> Linking Arms  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=9WgWotb97Lk> Fish farm Eviction Notice MD  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=ZFaWG0lmanI> Police enter U'Kwanalis  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=URFIDkFoSPM> - silent GoPro Edit  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=lrwlFkeibe8> Farmed salmon deaths exposed  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=xi-0mROa2mM> Quocksister speaks  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fUFhIUHWvxA> - day 15 Martin Sheen  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=g7EQklfNUyY> - Twyla Intro video  
[https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lcd2OImz\\_9k](https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=Lcd2OImz_9k) - Operation Virus Hunter Campaign Summary  
<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=fSCoBG8W3NQ> - Twyla's Hard Evidence

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=MgrFXN4d1Jc> Fillet Oh Fish

<https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=333QZVP5nSk> Salmon Running the Gauntlet

This should call into question your department's position of being "aquaculture technology neutral" as the mounting scientific evidence points to the unsustainability of open net pens. Business as usual with open net pens on the migration routes of wild salmon is unacceptable. Real change as promised in the election of your government is needed. There is a sustainable alternative - land-based aquaculture as proposed by Fin Donnelly of the New Democratic Party. We, along with thousands of British Columbians, support Bill C-228 that is being debated in the House of Commons.

In your correspondence, you mention your mandate letter, which states that the Government of Canada is committed to a renewed nation-to-nation relationship with Indigenous peoples, based on recognition of rights, respect, co-operation, and partnership. You cannot live up to this commitment as Minister of DFO by ignoring, or excluding the Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw First Nation in this "renewed nation-to-nation relationship." They never gave their consent to having these fish farms occupy their territory, and after years of saying "no," the Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw First Nation issued an eviction notice to Marine Harvest to remove their fish farms from their territory.

We advise that you and your government adhere to the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, as well as the Truth and Reconciliation Commission's recommendations, which Prime Minister Trudeau promised to implement. Doing so would result in your cooperation in getting fish farms out of their territory. Marine Harvest's government-sanctioned trespassing in their unceded territory is unacceptable as their fish farms pose an increasing threat to Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw's Indigenous rights to harvest healthy clams, salmon, herring and eulachons, as they have done for generations.

To continue with your commitment to nation-to-nation relationship with all First Nations, you and your colleague Jody Wilson-Raybould are urged to visit with Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw as it is important to view first-hand the "disaster situation" that has been unfolding over the last 30 years with open net pen fish farms and enter into meaningful discussions with Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw First Nation leaders to address this. When and how will your government enter into nation-to-nation discussions with Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw First Nation, and other First Nations whose rights to a wild salmon fishery are being threatened by open net fish farms?

We look forward to your response to these important matters.

Eddie Gardner,

President, Wild Salmon Defenders Alliance

CC: Honourable Jody Wilson-Raybould, P.C., Q.C., M.P.  
 Minister of Justice and Attorney General of Canada  
 Musgamawgw Dzawada'enuxw First Nation  
 First Nations Wild Salmon Alliance  
 Union of BC Indian Chiefs  
 Skwah First Nation  
 Sea Shepherd Society  
 Fin Donnelly, M.P., NDP  
 Sekw'elwes First Nation  
 Ecojustice