

Criteria for siting new finfish aquaculture facilities

The following criteria have been in place since March 2000 and have been used to evaluate proposals for new commercial finfish aquaculture tenures. They remain effective until further notice. They may be adjusted over time by the province in consultation with industry and stakeholders in response to new information and the results of new technology.

These criteria take the place of any previous farm siting criteria, including the Coastal Resource Interests Study guidelines and the Salmon Aquaculture Review's recommended salmon farm siting criteria (on which these criteria are based). Earlier siting criteria may continue to be consulted by agencies in making siting decisions.

These criteria apply to the siting of new tenures only. They do not apply to the evaluation of existing tenures that were granted prior to October 2000. Information on siting requirements for existing tenures is separate and is available from MAFF upon request.

Proposals for new salmon farms must meet the following requirements and minimum separation distances. Sites must be located:

1. At least 1 km in all directions from a First Nations reserve (unless consent is received from the First Nation).
2. At least 1 km from the mouth of a salmonid-bearing stream determined as significant in consultation with DFO and the province.
3. At least 1 km from herring spawning areas designated as having "vital", "major" or "high" importance.
4. At least 300 m from inter-tidal shellfish beds that are exposed to water flow from a salmon farm and which have regular or traditional use by First Nations, recreational, or commercial fisheries.
5. At least 125 m from all other wild shellfish beds and commercial shellfish growing operations.
6. An appropriate distance from areas of "sensitive fish habitat", as determined by DFO and the province.
7. An appropriate distance from the areas used extensively by marine mammals, as determined by DFO and the province.
8. At least 30 m from the edge of the approach channel to a small craft harbor, federal wharf or dock.
9. At least 1 km from ecological reserves smaller than 1000ha or approved proposals for ecological reserves smaller than 1000 ha.
10. Not within a 1km line of sight from existing federal, provincial or regional parks or marine protected areas (or approved proposals for these).
11. In order to not infringe on the riparian rights of an upland owner, without consent, for the term of the tenure licence.
12. Not in areas that would pre-empt important Aboriginal, commercial or recreational fisheries as determined by the province in consultation with First Nations and DFO.
13. Not in areas of cultural or heritage significance as determined in the *Heritage Conservation Act*.
14. Consistent with approved local government bylaws for land use planning and zoning.
15. At least 3 km from any existing finfish aquaculture site, or in accordance with a local area plan or Coastal Zone Management Plan.