

Minister of  
Fisheries and Oceans



Ministre des  
Pêches et des Océans

Ottawa, Canada K1A 0E6

JUL 20 2010

Grand Chief Stewart Phillip, President  
Chief William Charlie, Vice President  
Chief Bob Chamberlin, Secretary-Treasurer  
Union of British Columbia Indian Chiefs  
209 - 345 Yellowhead Highway  
Kamloops, British Columbia  
V2H 1H1

Dear Grand Chief Phillip, Chiefs Charlie and Chamberlin:

Thank you for your correspondence of March 30, 2010, expressing your views regarding the proposed Federal aquaculture regulation for British Columbia under the *Fisheries Act*. I am pleased to have this opportunity to respond to your concerns, and regret the delay in responding.

I note in particular your comments regarding the importance of meaningfully engaging First Nations during the development of the Federal aquaculture regulation. I can assure you that this is a priority for Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) and would like to update you on the important steps we are taking to hear and consider the interests of First Nations as we develop a new aquaculture regulatory regime.

DFO officials in Pacific Region collaborated with the First Nations Fisheries Council (FNFC) and the Aboriginal Aquaculture Association (AAA) in spring of 2010 to ensure we fully understand the interests and perspectives of First Nations on the new aquaculture regulation.

Due to their collaborative efforts, all First Nations communities in British Columbia were invited to participate in one of ten information sessions held in communities across the province in February and March of this year. I am informed that these meetings were very productive and resulted in two thorough reports summarizing the comments and recommendations of First Nations during the sessions. The Department is carefully considering these reports as we draft the new Federal regulation.

As a follow-up to the community meetings, staff in Pacific Region have written to potentially affected coastal First Nations to update them on status of the proposed regulation, which is expected to undergo a 60-day public review period in the weeks to come as part of the Government of Canada's Canada Gazette Part I pre-publication process.

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This correspondence included instructions on how to access and comment on the regulation, and outlined the Department's plans for issuing new federal licences under the regulation. Discussions are ongoing with coastal First Nations, and I trust that suitable processes can be established with interested First Nations to identify and address their interests.

Thank you again for taking the time to share your views. I trust that my response has been helpful in clarifying the important steps we are taking to involve First Nations in the regulatory development process.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in cursive script, reading "Gail Shea". The signature is written in dark ink and is positioned above the printed name.

Gail Shea, P.C., M.P.