

Wednesday, December 7, 2011

Here are the main points discussed during today's interdepartmental call with CFIA, December 7, 2011

Update from Western Area, CFIA

There was no update from the Western Area other than to state that the records of decision concerning the disposition of samples are being finalized. CFIA will organize a call tomorrow with the committee to discuss the recommendations.

Sample Update:

A short discussion was held regarding national reference lab analysis of recent DFO samples. DFO will follow up with CFIA on a separate call which CFIA will organise.

Laboratory Assessment Update:

The CFIA led laboratory assessment team is working on its reports on the assessment of the two laboratories (DFO Moncton laboratory / AVC laboratory in PEI). There will be two separate reports prepared, one for each laboratory. The draft report on the findings at the AVC laboratory will be forwarded to VP Science CFIA for review. Dr. Kibenge is also reviewing the data in table form that was used in the preparation of this report and will provide comments by tomorrow. This document will be finalized by end of week and will be disclosed to the Cohen Commission. The report on the findings from the assessment of the DFO Moncton laboratory is still in draft form and will be finalized at a later date.

Surveillance Activities:

The draft surveillance plan (*Surveillance Plan For ISAv, IPNV, and IHNv In Anadromous Salmonids in British Columbia*) was sent out and revised as per comments received by CFIA. The Agency is considering issuing a press release on the next steps including surveillance plans therefore need additional feedback from DFO as soon as possible.

It was noted by DFO that it is important that this surveillance plan takes into account the needs of both federal organizations. It was suggested to have a separate call with CFIA and DFO to discuss. CFIA will organize this call.

Communications Update:

CFIA confirmed that a press release on next steps is being drafted with plans to send out by the end of this week.

CFIA working with DFAIT concerning messaging and the consulate post in Seattle would like to issue an Op-Ed to local media. The draft has been shared with DFO.

Next call will be held during the week of December 19th as many of the key individuals will travelling next week. CFIA will send out appointment.

Friday, November 25, 2011

Update from Western Area, CFIA

Western Area stated that they are awaiting the "Record of Decisions" related to the disposition of sample material collected or placed under quarantine as a result of the investigation.

There was an interdepartmental call to discuss this issue on Wednesday and two records of decision are being prepared:

- 1) Return of samples submitted to the DFO Moncton laboratory for analysis;
- 2) Samples at SFU under quarantine which Dr. Routledge has indicated that he needs returned for research especially for species identification using for the scales and otoliths;

Record of decisions to be finalized soon.

Sample Result Update from DFO:

Cell culture on batch 3 (11 fish, 10 heart and 10 gill homogenates) is continuing. The testing on the original sample related to the positive reporting by AVC of the Coho heart from this batch was completed and confirmed verbally as negative. Testing is continuing on the remaining 19 samples from this batch which is expected to be finished on December 1st at which time a laboratory report will be issued for the whole batch.

It was noted that this date is significant from a communication perspective as detailed in a subsequent bullet.

Additional presumptive ISA Finding:

Dr. Nylund, U. of Bergen, Norway has completed testing of an additional batch of samples submitted by A. Morton. His report states that he did not find ISAV however one well had a weak positive and he was not able to repeat the finding thus it is considered inconclusive. This result may be communicated however as being positive as was with the previous results. CFIA will forward copy Dr. Nylund's report to DFO's Dr Peter Wright for his review and comment.

Laboratory Assessment Update:

The CFIA led Laboratory assessment team had completed the on-site assessment of the two laboratories (DFO Moncton laboratory / AVC laboratory in PEI). The team is now capturing the information collected in table format which will be sent to the two labs for confirmation that it has been factually documented. The team is working to have draft prepared by Wednesday of next week (November 30).

Surveillance Activities:

CFIA has developed a first draft (*Surveillance Plan For ISAV, IPNV, and IHNV In Anadromous Salmonids in British Columbia*) and has distributed to appropriate individuals in CFIA and Science DFO looking for input from a technical and operational point of view.

CFIA was to have a conference call with BCMAL after this call to discuss the plan.

DFO to provide to CFIA a contact name for AMD, DFO for their eventual input.

Communications Update:

CFIA received request from their MINO to plan another "Technical Briefing" with the press next week. This will hopefully coincide with the receipt of the final results of the 3rd sample batch (see above). It is also hoped that a news release at the same time with lines on the sample results and surveillance plan. Any reference to the current Lab assessment would be responsive only as the report will not be completed by that date.

CFIA is organizing a call with the communications team this afternoon including DFO and BCMAL.

DFO communications indicated that a public forum on disease and pathogen control in Pacific salmon is to be held on the evening of December 1st at SFU. It would be preferable to have the tech briefing prior to this forum to ensure messaging is available.

Next call was not scheduled, CFIA will send out appointment.

POST CALL Addition: A. Morton has posted Dr. Nylund's report on her website. Despite her website statements, the following is an excerpt from Dr. Nylund's report:

"Based on my experience with both assays a reasonable answer to this question is that we are not detecting any of the known ISA viruses from Europe (or from eastern North America). A more exact answer requires that we are able to sequence the RNA that is target by the ISAV7 assay."

Friday, November 18, 2011

Here are the main points discussed during today's interdepartmental call with CFIA.

Update from Western Area, CFIA

Western Area stated that they are completing an assessment on whether or not sample materials collected by CFIA will be returned as requested by the Lawyer for the sample submitters.

Sample Result Update from DFO:

Cell culture on batch 3 (11 fish, 10 heart and 10 gill homogenates) is continuing. The testing on the original sample related to the positive reporting by AVC of the Coho heart from this batch was completed today but no official report on the result was available at the time of the call. Testing is continuing on the remaining 19 samples from this batch and will be finished on December 1st.

CFIA has picked up the fish associated with Batch 4 at the AVC laboratory (herring and salmon heart and gills tissue samples) and has delivered these to the DFO Moncton laboratory for future testing consideration.

Laboratory Assessment Update:

The CFIA led Laboratory assessment team had completed the assessment of the DFO Moncton laboratory yesterday and was assessing the AVC laboratory in PEI today. The team will begin working on a report of their findings next week.

Surveillance Activities

CFIA is developing a plan with an objective to be able to detect pathogen prevalence as low 1% in a fish population. The Agency will have a draft plan by next week for discussion by CFIA and DFO. Following federal discussion and consensus there will be a need to have consultation with the Province of BC, industry and others.

It was recognised that the financial and human resource costs associated with any increased fish health surveillance in the future will need to be considered.

There was agreement that there is a need to have clear messaging prepared related to the existing ISAV surveillance activities. CFIA is compiling this information and will be preparing a preliminary analysis.

Communications Update:

CFIA received two media calls this week, one from the Aboriginal Peoples Network and another from CBC, PEI concerning the lab assessment and surveillance.

DFO reported that they had received a media call from a Norwegian television station.

Next call is scheduled for Wednesday, November 23rd.

Monday, November 14, 2011

Here are the main points covered during today's interdepartmental with CFIA as noted by Alf.

Very little to report from the CFIA Operations in Western Area. CFIA has received letter from Lawyer requesting for return of samples. A discussion occurred on application of Health of Animals Act. CFIA will prepare a Record of Decision on disposition of all samples once decided on direction. It was noted that there was an obligation to respond to lawyer to acknowledge receipt of letter and indicate that the request is being looked into.

Sample Result Update from DFO:

- Cell culture on batch 3 (11 fish, 10 heart and 10 gill homogenates) is continuing. The testing on the original sample related to the positive reporting by AVC on the Coho heart from this batch will be completed on November 18th but to date is showing no cytopathic effect. The other 19 samples for which half were showing signs of cytotoxicity and testing ended, testing is continuing on the remaining samples and will be finished on December 1st.
- DFO Moncton laboratory has conducted necropsies on the carcasses of the 48 fish from the original report (Batch 1) in order to obtain any remaining gill material. Testing has not yet started.
- CFIA will be picking up the fish associated with Batch 4 at the AVC laboratory (herring and salmon heart and gills tissue samples) and delivering to the Moncton laboratory for future testing consideration.

Laboratory Assessment Update:

- Dr. Kibenge will be sending his documents to the assessment team electronically today.
- Laboratory Assessments are planned for Thursday, November 17th (Moncton DFO) and Friday, November 18th (AVC).
- The 3 member team (2 CFIA officials and someone from the Ontario Veterinary College) will assess findings after assessment and plan to have report by end of month.

Surveillance Activities

- Planning and preparation for surveillance activities in British Columbia are progressing. CFIA is considering a broad multiyear plan covering more species and more aquatic diseases than just ISAV.
- It was noted that, given that surveillance activities will not begin solely for ISAV, there would be a need to have communication messages (suggested in the form of a possible press release) prepared on the broader proposed direction by end of this week.

Communications Update:

- It was fairly quiet media-wise over weekend on this issue.
- Dr. Peter Wright conducted an interview with CBC Radio from PEI this morning.

Next call on Friday, November 18th at 11:30.

Wednesday, November 9, 2011 (with corrections in red)

Here are the main points discussed during today's interdepartmental with CFIA.

- Nothing to report from the Western Area, CFIA

Sample Result Update from DFO:

- Cell culture on batch 3 (11 fish, 10 heart and 10 gill homogenates) is continuing. About half of the homogenates are showing signs of "cytotoxicity" which is related to the fact that the samples were so badly degraded that the breakdown products negatively affect the cell culture. It should be noted that this observed effect DOES NOT CORRESPOND TO A REACTION DUE TO A VIRUS. It was recommended to stop at this stage for these samples as no additional useful results would be obtained. These will be reported as "cytotoxic". The remaining samples which show no signs of cytotoxicity will continue incubation as per the testing methodology (completion by Dec 01).
- The original sample related to the positive reporting by AVC on the Coho heart from this batch was placed on cell culture a week earlier as it had been received prior to the other 19 samples. This sample has shown no cytotoxicity and still has one week of incubation (Nov 18) on cell culture but no "cytopathogenic effect" (CPE) related to a virus infection has been noted to date.
- Final testing of batch 2 which included PCR testing of 168 gills from the original 299 sockeye smolts (PCR testing of 299 hearts was completed and reported on Monday's update) has been completed. All PCR test results on the gills have so far been negative, however the RNA quality tests 84 of these gill samples has been very poor (as were the heart tissues). It was agreed to halt further PCR and quality testing and finalize the reporting for this batch. The PCR results for over half the gills is negative but the final report with list results as "inconclusive" due to the RNA quality degradation, as for the tests on the 299 hearts.
- As formal testing of received samples is close to completion, the lab will soon be able to catch up on regularly scheduled samples and to prepare for the receipt of additional surveillance samples if and when they do arrive.

Laboratory Assessment and Surveillance Updates:

- CFIA confirmed that a representative from a third party / non-Government laboratory will participate in the CFIA-led laboratory assessments of the Moncton and AVC laboratories. These are currently scheduled late in the week of November 14-18.
- Planning and preparation for the assessment of the current surveillance activities and possible future modifications are progressing.

Communications Update:

- The Technical briefing yesterday went very well based on the media coverage which indicated that the activities around the investigation and the testing results were understood and received.
- Another technical briefing has been scheduled for 11:30 am tomorrow November 10 with provincial, territorial officials and some industry representatives (associations and other interested parties). Stephen Stephen and Peter Wright will represent DFO.
- The News release not yet formally approved. In the interim messages from the briefing yesterday are being used during media calls. The draft news release should not be distributed.
- There will be a need for communication materials on next milestones such as the laboratory assessments and the surveillance activities review.

Issue Updates – as per calls with CFIA

- It was noted that DFO Comms in the Gulf Region had received request from CBC, PEI for follow up on lab protocols at AVC. The lab assessments will be of interest so we need to be prepared.
- Cohen Commission has requested that CFIA and DFO participate in a 2 day session on this issue in mid December. DFO needs to confirm participants (s).
- CFIA has group working on chain of custody issue for the samples collected.

Next call on Monday, November 14th at 11:30.

Call post script:

News release was issued by CFIA at the following site: <http://www.marketwire.com/press-release/no-confirmed-cases-of-infectious-salmon-anaemia-in-british-columbia-1584708.htm>

Monday, November 7, 2011

Main points discussed during today's interdepartmental with CFIA.

- Nothing to report from the Western Area, CFIA

Sample Result Update from DFO:

- Batch 1 (48 sockeye kidney extract) tested by Moncton, all completed and found to be negative. The RNA quality of the material was slightly degraded however the results are still reliable. The lab has conducted necropsy of the 48 carcasses received separately to recover any remaining gill tissue to permit additional testing is possible.
- Batch 2 (299 fish), all testing on hearts by Moncton has been completed and found negative but due to poor RNA quality is considered inconclusive. Will be testing gills for supplementary information.
- Batch 3 (11 fish homogenates) Moncton testing completed and found to be negative, RNA quality poor and considered inconclusive.
- Batch 4 (61 smolts from UBC), necropsy under way, not sure is quality of sample is adequate. Will hold extract in diagnostic freezer until determined if analysis warranted.
- Batch 5 (herring and salmon), found to be negative by AVC, CFIA to pick up samples and deliver to DFO Moncton in case needed for future analysis.

Laboratory Assessment and Surveillance Updates:

- Based on availability the earliest date to conduct assessment of the AVC laboratory is November 18th. Date for DFO Moncton not identified yet.
- It was strongly recommended that a third party representative be involved including the two CFIA experts. A name was provided for consideration.
- Planning and preparation including an action plan with timelines is progressing for surveillance activities for farmed and wild salmon.

Communications Update:

- Direction to have news release today stating negative results to date, quality of samples, and surveillance testing as we go forward.
- Draft Q&As with media lines prepared.
- Spokespersons - Con Kiley and Stephen Stephen.
- There will be no tech briefing as previously discussed.

Latest updated Sample summary table attached as well.



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Friday, November 4, 2011

- CFIA stated Dr. Kibenge had received another batch of fish (mixture of salmon and herring) for testing for ISAV. **His results were all negative.**
- CFIA was contacted by a BC company which was experiencing some market access issues. Additional ISAV testing was requested from the U.S. importer but this was believed to be coming from the state level. CFIA remains in contact with their counterparts in the US Government to resolve any such issues at the federal level.

Diagnostic Testing Update:

- **DFO reported that final results for the testing of the kidney extracts from the original 48 fish has been completed and the results were negative by q-PCR. It was however that the RNA was partially degraded but there is confidence in the results. Official notification will be sent from the DFO ISA reference laboratory to CFIA.**
- U.S. Department of Agriculture's Animal Plant Health Inspection Service (APHIS) will be contacting DFO's National Aquatic Animal Health Lab Manager to obtain information on our testing procedures and methodology
- The Moncton laboratory is continuing their analyses of the samples of 10 hearts and 10 gills received from Dr. Kibenge's laboratory for which he reported 3 positives (1 heart & 2 gills). The DFO results should be ready by early next week.
- CFIA has requested the Moncton laboratory to continue to analyse the remaining 47 fish from the batch of approximately 300 fish for which all analyses to date have been inconclusive due to the poor quality of the samples.
- It was also reported that the carcasses received from the original 48 fish was also assessed and there is not sufficient material present to permit additional analyses.

Comms Update:

- CFIA was working with DFO to prepare a news release. It was decided that the negative results of the 48 fish once received officially should be adequate as basis for the news release.
 - A Letter to the Editor was drafted in case this news release was not ready for publication today.
 - CFIA has been in contact with Dr. Kibenge regarding the proposed laboratory assessment. He will be out of the country next week but has provided all relevant documentation. Planning will proceed to conduct this assessment at the earliest possible date.
 - CFIA had a meeting with BC salmon industry to discuss a proposed surveillance program for ISAV in both wild and aquaculture salmon. Exploring different options and developing models. The Agency will need a number of weeks before being ready to proceed. Consultation on the final plan will have to be discussed
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- Next call on Monday, November 7th.

Wednesday November 2 2011

- The issue of security was discussed in light of the "fishy leaks" webpage activity that occurred on October 31st. CFIA has concluded that the unauthorized release of internal CFIA situation reports did not originate on their end and therefore there will be no further investigation internally. It was agreed that all reports should continue focus on objective statements based on the available facts.
- CFIA Operations in BC are continuing to attempt to obtain the answers to the remaining questions submitted to A. Morton.
- CFIA indicated that they believe that Dr. Kibenge will be sending the results to A. Morton today with respect to second sample set of 11 fish (10 heart tissue and 10 gill tissue samples were extracted). Dr. Kibenge had previously communicated to CFIA as being positive and was reported as such in a recent media article.
- The DFO laboratory in Moncton has a sub sample of these 20 extracts and will begin testing them using Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) as soon as additional primers and probes arrive. **The delay in delivery originates with the supplying company.** In the meantime Moncton has begun cell culture on the 20 extracts.
- CFIA also noted that results from a third sample set, sent to Dr. Nylund in Norway, will likely be reported to the submitter in a few days. The results are not known by CFIA but if any samples have been found to be positive there will be a legal responsibility of the submitter to notify CFIA.
- CFIA indicated that another sample set (believed to be Pacific Herring) was sent recently by a submitter to Dr. Kibenge's lab for analysis. No information was available on the status of this testing.
- DFO reported that approximately 270 of the 300 samples of wild pacific salmon received at the DFO national reference laboratory in Moncton have been analyzed for the presence of the ISA virus. **To date all of the results have been negative, however these results must be considered as inconclusive at this time because of the very poor quality of the samples received which prevents the detection of the virus with any reasonable confidence.**
- **DFO will continue to conduct analysis on the additional material provided by CFIA for sample quality and the presence of the ISA virus.**
- CFIA and DFO are working together to assess the current ISAV testing level in BC and will be considering increasing surveillance activities if required.
- Preparation for the dual laboratory assessment (Dr. Kibenge's laboratory at AVC and the DFO National ISAV reference laboratory in Moncton) is continuing however the date for the actual assessment has not been established and in consideration of the statutory holiday next week the earliest date may be during the week of November 14th.
- CFIA and DFO Communications are preparing a joint news release which they would like to be issued as soon as possible after the appropriate approvals are obtained.
- Next call to be held on Friday, November 4th.

Monday October 31 2010

- CFIA Operations has received some answers from Alexandra Morton, via her lawyer, the 4 of the 8 questions posed to her. CFIA will continue to attempt to obtain the additional relevant information, on their outstanding questions, from Ms. Morton.
- CFIA has received the GPS sampling coordinates for the original 300 samples. CFIA will prepare this information in a visual format however it has to be noted that the validity of these data, as it pertains to the original samples may not be possible to confirm completely.
- As part of its sample diagnostic screening process, DFO is currently trying determine if the RNA in the original 300 samples was of sufficient quality to validate preliminary results through the PCR analysis step.
- As noted in Update Number 9, Dr. A. Nylund of Norway has noted that he will be providing a report to the unidentified submitter in BC of the third sample set. Since samples might possibly have been submitted by Ms Morton, given her Blog statements about sampling, it was recommended to remind her of her responsibility to communicate all suspect ISAV findings to the CFIA. **It is NOT known what these results will be.**
- CFIA has again been in communication with US officials whom have noted that there is increasing political pressure to take some action. US officials are planning to conduct some ISAV surveillance activities in US West Coast waters.
- It was agreed that assessments of both Dr. Kibenge's laboratory and the DFO Moncton laboratory should be conducted as soon as possible to provide assurance around laboratory processes and techniques being used in both facilities. An interdepartmental team has been established to prepare the scope and methodology of the assessment. Both laboratories have agreed to participate fully with the assessments.
- As noted last week the review of existing, and planning for future, ISA surveillance activities in BC (farmed and wild) will begin shortly. CFIA will lead the discussion as part of future National Aquatic Animal Health Program surveillance. Dr. Stewart Johnson will liaise with other DFO officials in Pacific Region to provide departmental input into this discussion.
- A interdepartmental communications team has been established to prepare for an approach going forward and next steps.
- DFO's laboratory in Moncton will be preparing a simplified overview of the processes related ISAV virus diagnostic testing methodologies (PCR, sequencing and cell culture as well as step validation/confirmation) to facilitate communication on this complex subject area.
- Next call on Wednesday, November 2.

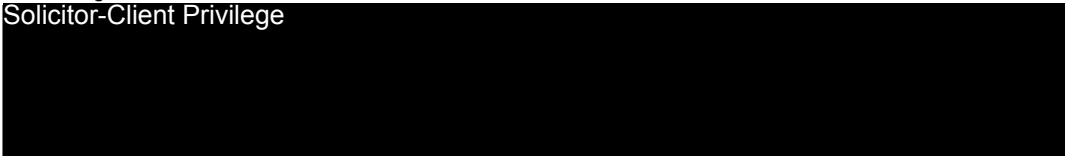
Friday October 28 2011

- CFIA Operations is expecting to receive the GPS coordinates for all of the original samples this afternoon.
- CFIA Operations still has not been able to contact Alexandra Morton directly but have succeeded in sending some questions, that they would like answers to, to her lawyer.
- CFIA has decided to put together an assessment team to prepare a strategy and process in the likely event that they are asked to visit and assess Dr. Kibenge's laboratory and his processes. The team will consist of CFIA Programs, Operations, Science (including their Biocontainment group) as well as someone from DFO's National ISAV Reference Laboratory in Moncton. The first step is to discuss and develop a lab visit checklist which would be used. **DFO is provide the name of a contact for this team.**
- Discussion took place on future surveillance for ISAV in British Columbia. It was recognised that, whatever the outcome of this federal investigation, consideration needs to be given to comparing what surveillance currently exists now (both wild and aquaculture) and what it may look like in the future. **DFO is provide the name of a contact for this team.**
- CFIA noted that they have communicated with Dr. A. Nylund in Norway who, it appears, is in receipt of a third set of British Columbia salmon samples (submitter has not been identified) for ISAV testing. The results may be available next week and Dr. Nylund is expected to provide the results directly to the submitter without notifying CFIA first.
- DFO lab in Moncton has not tested any further samples as they are awaiting new probes which are used in the Polymerase Chain Reaction (PCR) screening. The probes are expected to arrive today. In the meantime additional tissue sample preparation continues.
- As mentioned in yesterday's update the CFIA has a veterinarian posted in China who will make herself available to Minister Ashfield, during his visit, if he has any questions regarding ISAV. CFIA indicated that they believe that the local Trade Commissioner's office may be coordinating this.

Thursday October 27 2011

- CFIA Operations has shipped the additional 61 smolts from the University of British Columbia (UBC) to Moncton and our lab has received them.
- CFIA Operations hopes to get the GPS coordinates for all of these samples by tomorrow.
- CFIA Operations has obtained some material, from a second lot of samples, from Dr. Kibenge in Charlottetown. These have been delivered to our Moncton lab for testing.
- Dr. Routledge has been in contact with CFIA inquiring when he might have his samples returned. Final disposition of samples in a CFIA investigation is at the Agency's discretion depending on the findings. DFO to hold all samples until the investigation is concluded and discussions are held between DFO and CFIA.
- Dr. Routledge has also asked CFIA when DFO will provide him with the results of testing. CFIA has indicated that DFO will not be communicating with him on test results. CFIA will be the recipient of the results not Dr. Routledge.
- Drs Kiley and Klotins of CFIA were interviewed by Cohen Commission lawyers. They could not speak about the questions posed only that the lawyers were thorough.
- **There may be a possibility that DFO officials involved in the investigation may also be contacted.**
- **Dr. Klotins from CFIA indicated that she may need to speak to Dr. Peter Wright, DFO's national lab manager for the National Aquatic Animal Health Laboratory System, about our laboratory doing cell culture on some of the PCR screens that tested negative.**
- Minister Ashfield will be in China over at least part of the weekend. The CFIA has a veterinarian posted in China who will make herself available to Minister Ashfield if he has any questions regarding ISAV. (It's unclear who has or is coordinating this?)

Wednesday October 26 2011

- CFIA Operations has collected an additional 61 smolts from the University of British Columbia (UBC). Again these appear to have been sampled from the same location, by the same boat on the same date as the original 48 and the ~288 samples being tested in Moncton.
- CFIA expects to ship those 61 fish to Moncton today. These samples will held in reserve for ISAV testing.
- CFIA Operations has also spoken to Dr. Paul Kitching, BC Chief Veterinary Officer. Discussion focussed around his knowledge of ISAV.
- As reports yesterday CFIA's Dr. Evans will be providing an update to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on the progress being made in the ISAV investigation.
- Solicitor-Client Privilege

- The CFIA has posted an ISAV fact sheet on their website
- DFO Moncton will next begin analysing kidney extracts from the 252 fish screened so far. The first screening used heart extracts.

<http://inspection.gc.ca/english/anima/aqua/disemala/anaemia/anaemiafse.shtml>

<http://inspection.gc.ca/francais/anima/aqua/disemala/anaemia/anaemiafsf.shtml>

Tuesday October 25 2011

- CFIA expects to collect a lot of 61 smolts from the University of British Columbia (UBC). The UBC samples were collected at the same time and location as the original 48 fish implicated in samples reported positive by Dr. Kibenge's lab at the Atlantic Veterinary College (AVC). Once CFIA obtains these samples they will held in reserve ISAV testing.
- CFIA Operations has still been unable to speak to contact Alexandra Morton to obtain all available information concerning the second set of samples shipped to AVC. They will continue to try and reach her.
- Solicitor-Client Privilege
- [REDACTED]
- CFIA's Dr. Evans will be providing an update to the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE) on the progress being made in the ISAV investigation. This is a normal step in the investigation of potential disease status changes in a country
- The current communications efforts of DFO and CFIA were discussed. It was noted that several media services had picked up the joint letter from Ministers Ashfield and Ritz.
- Possible CFIA ISAV surveillance options for the future will need to be discussed with DFO. DFO is already testing some wild fish for ISAV and the BC Aquaculture industry tests aquaculture fish as well.

Additional information that has become available since this morning's call:

- DFO Moncton has now conducted preliminary screening on 3 sets of 84 samples (from the ~288 sockeyes received last week). **All preliminary results were NEGATIVE but the RNA quality check has NOT been done yet.** The lab does not think this result will change but the analysis of other samples will continue.
- Based on the information above I have requested feedback from Moncton as to: 1. What tissue was analysed? 2. When will RNA quality checks be completed? 3. Will other tissue samples be tested from the same samples? and 4. When will we have final results?
- This afternoon DFO Moncton also received the 48 RNA (kidney extract) samples from Dr. Kristi Millers lab plus the 48 carcasses that were most recently held in a private dwelling. It is understood that the RNA kidney extracts came from the carcasses some time ago. The RNA kidney extracts will be tested and, if there is gill tissue remaining on the carcasses that too will be tested for ISAV.

Monday October 24 2011

- DFO Moncton has analysed the first set of 84 samples (from the ~300 sockeyes received last week). **All preliminary results were NEGATIVE but the RNA quality check has NOT been done yet.** The lab does not think this result will change but the analysis of other samples will continue.
- The 48 kidney extracts, from the original 48 fish implicated in samples reported positive by Dr. Kibenge's lab at AVC are being shipped today from PBS to our lab in Moncton. These samples will be tested for the virus.
- CFIA Operations now has obtained 61 fish samples (originally thought to be 50) from UBC. These will be provided to DFO PBS shortly and PBS will ship them to Moncton hopefully today.
- CFIA had informed us Friday that Dr. Kibenge had received a new set of 20 fish samples (heart and kidney of each from 10 different fish) from Alexandra Morton. **These fish are totally unrelated to the original 48 and other samples collected so far.** According to Dr. Kibenge one tested presumptive positive for ISAV using PCR.
- DFO Moncton lab was provided a portion of Dr. Kibenge's extract from the "presumptive positive" sample by CFIA Operations. **Again the qPCR result was negative but the RNA quality check has NOT been done yet.**
- CFIA Operations has attempted to contact Alexandra Morton to obtain all available information concerning the second set of samples shipped to AVC. To date they have been unsuccessful in reaching her directly but hope to speak to her soon.
- Dr. Joanne Constantine, CFIA National Manager of AAH Import / Export indicated that she continues her communications to other countries on this issues. Countries include: Japan, China (& Hong Kong), Chile and the EU. Additional discussions have also been had with the U.S.
- CFIA indicated that they hope to provide DFO with a chronology and information on the two separate sample lots later today.
- Next call will be at 11:30 tomorrow

Friday, October 21 2011

- CFIA has confirmed that Dr. Routledge, of Simon Fraser University, is the owner of the samples stored at the private residence. CFIA Operations is working with him to pick up samples as soon as possible.
- Another 50 fish are currently stored at UBC. These have been confirmed to have been collected on the same day and same location as the original sample of 48 fish tested by AVC. It appears the researchers/graduate students from both universities were jointly collecting samples. CFIA will collect these additional 50 fish and transfer to DFO PBS as soon as possible.

Note with these samples DFO will potentially have close to 400 fish as a data pool as the ~298 fish received by Moncton yesterday were also from the original sample collection. CFIA will need to confirm that they want all fish tested or if we keep some in reserve for now.

- CFIA Operations will develop a table / flow chart to organize the information available on all of the samples received/collected.
- CFIA has indicated that Operations will be contacting Alexandra Morton to obtain all available information concerning the second set of samples received by AVC. **This is normal procedure for investigations of this type.**
- Dr. Cornelius (Con) Kiley CFIA A/Director of Aquatic Animal Health (AAH) Division indicated that he had a good discussion with the CFIA President yesterday on the investigation. It was noted that, based on the information to date, chain of custody will likely remain an issue and Dr Kiley was given direction with respect to communication trading partners. Dr. Joanne Constantine, CFIA National Manager of AAH Import / Export indicated that she had already made contact with several countries including the U.S.
- Dr Kim Klotins, CFIA National Manager leading the disease investigation, explained the issues of how most of these samples are part of a research project and the researchers will need the samples returned or data from the samples to complete their studies. Samples will remain under the control of CFIA and any decision to release samples back will be taken later.
- CFIA indicated that an information bulletin is expected to be posted on their website today. DFO Science and Communication have provided comments.
- Dr. Kiley is the official CFIA spokesperson and will take any queries over the weekend.
- Next call on Monday, same time.

Thursday October 20, 2011

- CFIA Operations shipped the ~288-298 frozen fish (2011 collection year) yesterday and they are now at the Gulf Fisheries Centre (GFC) and lab staff have begun the necropsies before testing begins.
- CFIA has confirmed with Dr. Routledge that the kidney samples in DFO's Dr. Kristi Miller's laboratory do indeed come from the 48 original fish. PBS will send these to GFC but are trying to ensure that they will not get stuck somewhere in transit over the weekend. **If that is a possibility they will likely only ship on Monday.**
- CFIA has spoken to Dr. Kibenge to find out more details of his testing procedures. They are trying to negotiate with him to provide some extracts to GFC for confirmation.
- Dr. Kibenge also noted that he is still analysing additional samples.

Wednesday October 19, 2011

- CFIA Operations has collected ~288-298 frozen fish (2011 collection year) from Dr. Routledge of Simon Fraser University (SFU). They will be shipped to DFO GFC in Moncton today as TWO separate shipments in case problems arise.
- Unfortunately CFIA has confirmed that NONE of the fish are from the original 48 samples from which 2 suspect positive ISA samples were identified by Dr. Fred Kibenge of Atlantic Vet College (AVC)
- There are an additional 63 bags of mixed finfish species at SFU. These were all collected in 2009. CFIA does not intend to ship these at this time.
- It also appears Dr. Routledge may have possibly provided kidney samples from the original 48 fish to DFO's Dr. Kristi Miller with the hope that she may be able to test them for parvovirus. RNA from those tissue homogenates are in DFO's ultracold freezer at PBS. CFIA will try and confirm with Dr. Routledge whether or not these samples are from the original 48 fish. If these samples are from the original 48 then PBS (or CFIA) could ship them to GFC who will treat them as the highest priority for ISA testing.
- We've spoken to GFC and they are preparing to receive samples from CFIA. Because of the larger sample size they will need at least two days to do all the necropsy of the samples. Priority diagnostic work will focus on ISA testing first.
- Finally, Nellie Gagné from our GFC has noted that Dr. Kibenge's diagnostic report is publicly available at the following link:

<http://alexandramorton.typepad.com/Ref%20Lab%20form%20for%20Laboaratory%20results%20submitting%20data%20to%20OIE%20-%20BC%20Sockeye%20salmon%20smolts%20-%20complete.pdf>

Tuesday October 18, 2011

- Dr. Routledge at Simon Fraser University (SFU) has been contacted by CFIA. The remaining portions of the 48 fish tested by Dr. Kibengi at Atlantic Vet College are still the university as are over 100 other salmon samples.
- Nancy Fowler and her CFIA counterpart have exchanged DFO and CFIA Media Lines (thanks Nancy)
- CFIA has stated that the samples reported as positive by Dr. Kibengi still do not meet the definition of a positive disease situation. There is only a "presumption of disease" until such time as our national reference laboratory can confirm or deny the original results.
- Unless CFIA can confirm the positive disease finding they will not notify the World Organisation for Animal Health (OIE).
- As per normal procedures when issues touch shared waterways CFIA has informed U.S. authorities of the presumptive finding.
- Dr. Kibengi is now analysing a second set of samples for ISA. We do not know when those results will be available.
- A third set of samples have been sent to an un-named laboratory in Norway. It was not known if Dr. Routledge or someone else sent the samples. The Norwegian lab is not an OIE reference laboratory

Next Steps

- Within the next 24 hours CFIA inspectors will go to the university and collect those samples as well as some of the other 100+ fish. Any samples remaining at SFU could be placed under quarantine since a reportable disease is suspect.
- All the collected fish will be shipped to DFO's National ISA reference Laboratory at the Gulf Fisheries Centre in Moncton.
- CFIA will likely ask us to test for a couple of other diseases that are normally found on the Pacific Coast. This will require Moncton to ship portions of sample extracts to our Nanaimo lab.
- Our Moncton lab will be prepared to receive them and process the 48 as a high priority for ISA testing and arrange for testing of any other samples/diseases afterwards.
- As requested by CFIA I have asked Peter Wright our National Lab Manager to provide CFIA with the estimates for approximate turnaround times for ISA testing (several techniques can be used) completion.
- Depending what is found, or not, in the original 48 samples and any others in the first shipment, it could be expected that CFIA may ask us to do further testing as their investigation expands.