



COUNCIL OF THE HAIDA NATION

April 12, 2005

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Paul Sprout
Regional Director General, Pacific Region
Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Suite 200 - 401 Burrard Street
Ottawa ON
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By fax: (604) 666-8956

Dear Mr. Sprout:

In the past few days we have become aware of an Individual Transferable Quota (ITQ) Demonstration Fishery that is being proposed for the North Coast troll fishery (Area F) for the 2005 season. We found this proposal on page 68 of the Draft 2005/2006 Northern BC Salmon Integrated Fishery Management Plan. This fishery takes place in Haida Gwaii waters and has been proposed without consultation with us. This is a major management change that has serious implications and we request that this initiative be halted immediately.

We met with Mr. Ron Kadowaki on February 28, 2005 in Massett about Pacific Fisheries Renewal. He informed us that pilot projects for individual quotas were being discussed with several troll groups but said it was too early to provide any details. Also we understood that the Minister would address recommendations of both the First Nation Panel on Fisheries and Joint Task Group before proceeding with management changes. The First Nation Panel on Fisheries recommended an interim 50% allocation of all fisheries to First Nations as a minimum and a moratorium on new individual quota fisheries until First Nations interests are addressed. We support those recommendations.

We see that the proposed demonstration fishery will have only negative effects on Haida access to this important fishery. The IFMP provides sparse details but states that each vessel would get 1/159th of the total Area F TAC and quotas of chinook, coho and pink salmon and quotas would be transferable. We foresee that this initiative will increase licence prices and make it more difficult for Haida to regain access to this fishery. Also individuals are likely to lease quota to others which will lead to absentee ownership and consolidation of quotas. Also a major policy decision is being passed over to what could be a minority of Area F trollers and would have no First Nation input.

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This is certain to further erode local participation in troll fisheries that were once a mainstay of Haida Gwaii communities. We are open to discussing this and other proposals for modifying salmon fisheries with you or your officials but urge you not to proceed with this demonstration fishery this year.

Yours sincerely,



Arnie Bellis
Vice-President
Council of the Haida Nation

cc Ron Kadowaki, DFO
 Northern Trollers Association
 Joy Thorkelson, UFAWU