



Media Release

Two thousand people call on the BC government to concede that they have failed to renew salmon feedlot land tenures - it is time to remove the pens

For Immediate release – Echo Bay, B.C. – Six days ago “A Digital Gathering” began and 2,098 people have signed.

“Out of respect for the law of this land, the Broughton First Nations and future generations, we recognize that the land tenures under the salmon feedlots in Broughton have expired. We the under-signed affirm that the region known as the Broughton Archipelago (between and including Kingcome and Knight Inlets and west through Drury Inlet) is therefore legally salmon feedlot-free. We call on the Province of British Columbia to honour this reality that they caused by not renewing the salmon feedlot leases and remove the feedlot equipment from Broughton so that wild fish can thrive in these waters to the benefit of all.”

<https://spreadsheets.google.com/viewform?hl=en&formkey=dERTSXFqc3pNZTFRaTIRZVVxUUFaV3c6MQ#gid=0>

While the BC government appears to support salmon feedlots in the ocean, they have not renewed the land tenure agreements that give each feedlot legal access to anchor over the seafloor in the Broughton Archipelago.

“Some of these operations have not had a valid tenure for several years,” says BC biologist, Alexandra Morton. “They are operating on a month-to-month arrangement. This is rather huge. No one can figure out why and that concerns us.”

It is unclear whether the problem is failure to win First Nations approval, failure to clear Transport Canada, constitutional matters that prohibit privatization of ocean spaces, or liability issues. But as it stand the Broughton Archipelago is legally salmon feedlot-free.

On December 18, as per a BC Supreme Court ruling, the province must hand management of the salmon feedlot industry back to the Federal Government, which gave it to BC unlawfully in 1988. Federal authorizations to operate will be issued, but the land tenures agreements (or lack of) will remain with the province.

“How can the federal government authorize an industrial activity that appears unable to get legal tenure to the physical sites they occupy?” asks Morton. “Legally, constitutionally and biologically this industry never quite fits and we in the Broughton live with the day-to-day consequences of this. If the province can’t tenure this industry what is it doing in the ocean? Legally Broughton is salmon feedlot-free and the province needs to own up to that.”

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