

## Media Release

# **Hello two new open-net salmon farms and a 100% increase in production by 2025? Goodbye public process and transparency.**

(Vancouver, B.C., April 2<sup>nd</sup>, 2014) The B.C. Salmon Farmers Association recently announced their intent to increase open-net farmed salmon production in B.C. waters by 43% (to 100,000 metric tonnes) by 2020 with a further increase to 150,000 metric tonnes by 2025. That's a 100% increase over today's current production levels.

This expansion process has already begun. Government decisions are now pending for two completely new open-net salmon farms. If approved, these two farms would be on the migration route of the Fraser River Sockeye and many other wild salmon stocks (near Hope Island, north of Port Hardy).

With these new applications for fish farm Licenses of Occupation, it is clear that government is facilitating the industry's expansion dream. Information needed to allow for informed public comment on these applications is not being made available and, with recent changes to the federal *Fisheries Act*, the former *Navigable Waters Protection Act* and the *Canadian Environmental Assessment Act*, there will no longer be any environmental assessments of, or formal transparent public review processes for fish farm applications.

Dr. Craig Orr, Executive Director of Watershed Watch stated, "This approach to expansion is outrageous. DFO is continuing to ignore the deadlines and recommendations of the \$26 million *Cohen Inquiry into the Decline of Sockeye Salmon of the Fraser River* in which Justice Cohen explicitly recommends that salmon farm siting criteria be revised to reflect new science. There is no indication this is happening."

"Instead of moving to a more open process as recommended by Justice Cohen, government is effectively muting the opportunity for transparent and informed decision making," said John Werring, Senior Science and Policy Advisor with the David Suzuki Foundation. "They are forging ahead with expansion without even providing access to the basic information that would allow for informed public comment on new fish farm applications."

The Province has posted minimal information about the two new aquaculture applications (see map provided) at the links below with a comment deadline of April 6<sup>th</sup>. Detail is provided about the boundaries of the tenures, but there is no information about associated production volumes, site management plans, or habitat surveys, thereby making it impossible for the public to provide meaningful comment on the suitability of these sites for open net aquaculture.

- [#1414224](#) - Bull Harbour, Hope Island
- [#1414225](#) - Hope Island, Heath Bay

As further evidence of a lack of transparency and reason for concern, these two new fish farm applications are near the existing Marsh Bay and Shelter Bay farms where, in May 2012, DFO quietly granted a 45% increase in production capacity without announcing anything in the way of policy change and well before the *Cohen Inquiry* even completed its work.

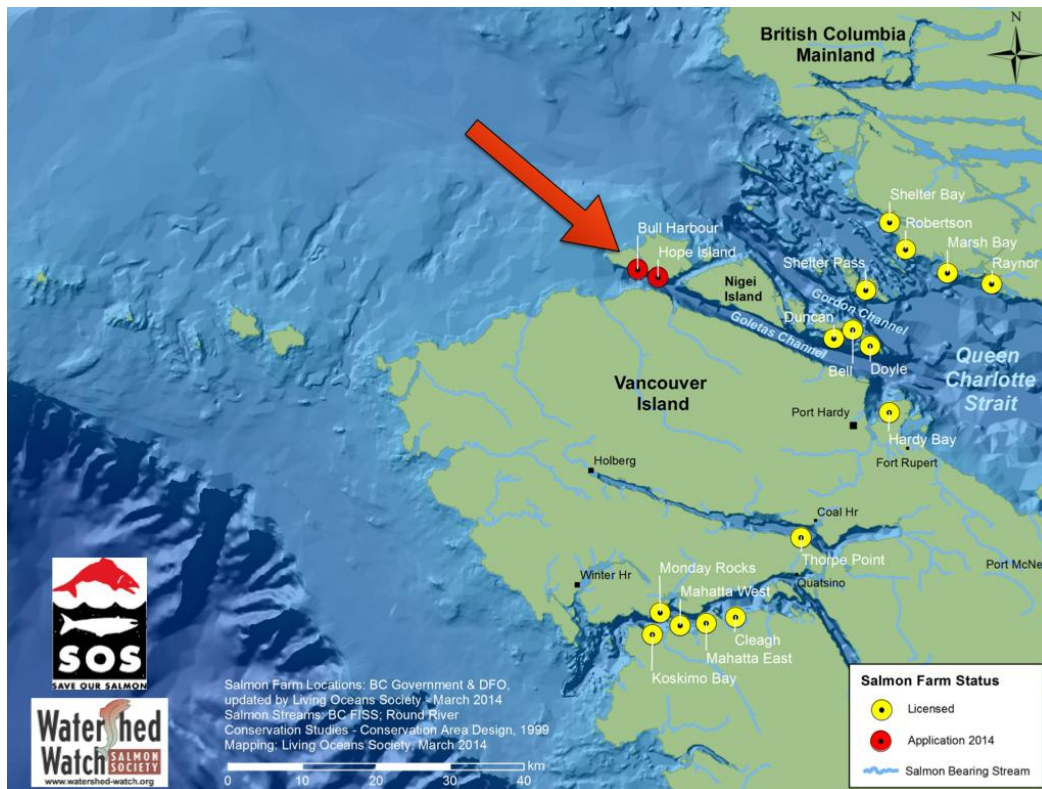
Stan Proboszcz, Fisheries Biologist with Watershed Watch observed, "The process around these applications and aquaculture regulation in general are completely out of sync with the *Cohen Inquiry Recommendations*."

Mr. Proboszcz summarized the groups' concerns, "Before any new farms or expansions are considered, DFO must act in accordance with Justice Cohen's Recommendations. Most urgently, outdated siting criteria need to be amended in light of new science as recommended by Cohen; the public must have access to the full application packages for the Licenses of Occupation; and the comment deadline must be extended."

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## **To arrange an interview please contact:**

- Dr. Craig Orr, Executive Director, Watershed Watch Salmon Society - 604-809-2799.
- Stan Proboszcz, Fisheries Biologist, Watershed Watch Salmon Society - 604-314-2713.
- John Werring, Senior Science and Policy Advisor, David Suzuki Foundation - 604-306-0517.



#### Background information and resources:

- Attempts to access more information on these applications through the DFO email address provided on the Province's website (links above) leads to an error message. This continues despite numerous requests by our organizations to have this corrected. See below for "Error Message #1".
- A further error message results when attempting to the access information about DFO's [environmental management of aquaculture](#) under the new management regime and how "the Department has set out its process for consideration of environmental risks." See below for "Error Message #2".
- Environmental Petitions filed with the Office of the Auditor General of Canada regarding government inaction and lapsed Cohen Final Report deadlines.
- [Media release](#) from the Watershed Watch Salmon Society (WWSS) and SOS Marine Conservation Foundation (SOS).
- WWSS/SOS [Environmental Petition Part 1 of 2](#).
- WWSS/SOS [Environmental Petition Part 2 of 2](#).
- [Cohen Report Card](#) tracking which Cohen Final Report recommendation deadlines has lapsed.

#### Error Message #1

##### Delivery Status Notification (Failure)

This is an automatically generated Delivery Status Notification.

Delivery to the following recipients failed.

[Finfish.Aquaculture@dfo-mpo.gc.ca](mailto:Finfish.Aquaculture@dfo-mpo.gc.ca)

#### Error Message #2

[www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/management-gestion/role/identification-eng.htm](http://www.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/aquaculture/management-gestion/role/identification-eng.htm)

HTTP Error 404/ Erreur HTTP 404



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##### HTTP Error 404 - Not Found

The page you are looking for might have been removed, had its name changed, or is temporarily unavailable.

Please visit our [home page](#) to find our site and link to the information you are looking for.

Please contact the server's administrator if this problem persists.

##### Erreur HTTP 404 - Non trouvé

La page que vous recherchez pourrait avoir été enlevée, a eu son nom changé, ou est temporairement indisponible.

Veillez vous rendre à notre [page d'accueil](#) pour découvrir le site et créer un lien à l'information que vous cherchiez

Veillez contacter l'administrateur du serveur Web si le problème persiste

Date Modified: 2008-09-26

[Important Notices](#)

Date de modification : 2008-09-26

[Avis importants](#)

**Watershed Watch Salmon Society (WWSS)** has been watching out for B.C.'s wild salmon since 1998. Our focus is to elevate the dialogue surrounding wild salmon and to improve our chances of saving them. Watershed Watch believes that real changes in attitude and behaviour are based on understanding, and that significant understanding requires a broad and deep appreciation of a wide range of habitat, harvest, and management issues. [www.watershed-watch.org](http://www.watershed-watch.org).

**The SOS Marine Conservation Foundation (SOS)** is a group of successful business leaders, entrepreneurs and philanthropists brought together to protect B.C.'s wild salmon stocks and the marine environment from negative impacts of open net-cage salmon farms and establish B.C. as a leader in creating a globally renowned, stable and viable aquaculture industry. [www.saveoursalmon.ca](http://www.saveoursalmon.ca).

The **David Suzuki Foundation** is a science and solutions-based environmental organization whose mission is to "protect the diversity of nature and our quality of life, now and for the future" and our vision is "that within a generation, Canadians act on the understanding that we are all interconnected and interdependent with nature". <http://www.davidsuzuki.org>.