



Kwicksutaineuk/Ah-Kwa-Mish First Nations

P.O. Box 10, 1 Front Street, Alert Bay, BC V0N1A0
Phone: 250-974-3004 Fax: 250-974-3007

Press Release

Attn: Environment, Wildlife, Fish Reporters and Editors

Fish Farm Escape in Port Elizabeth

(Sunday, October 25th, 2009) The Kwicksutaineuk Ah-kwa-mish First Nation is appalled and bitterly disgusted at the recently reported escape of 40,000 Atlantic Salmon from the Port Elizabeth Fish Farm in the Broughtan Archipelago.

After speaking with Clare Backman of Marine Harvest Canada (MHC), it was learned that during the removal of dead fish from a "natural fish kill" a tear of the net pen was discovered.

Initial estimates of a few dozen fish escaping quickly became 40,000 fish.

The emergency response to attempt the recapture of the escaped Atlantics did not actually begin until at least 24 hours after the escape was known.

"It's safe to assume that the chances of recovering a significant portion of this massive escape is slim to none at this point" says Chief Bob Chamberlin, Kwicksutaineuk Ahikwa-mish First Nation.

"There are serious questions of disease, overstocking of net-pens, adequacy of emergency response plans and also follow up investigation and reporting" says Chief Chamberlin " even though Marine Harvest has agreed to let Musgamagw-Tsawataineuk Tribal Council staff question Marine Harvest Staff, we remain skeptical and anticipate a party-line being towed to safeguard employment."

With the Department of Fisheries and Oceans set to assume Regulatory Authority in February 2010, The Kwicksutaineuk Ah-kwa-mish First Nation call on the Provincial Government to publically state that there will be no expansions of Fish Farms tenures and capacity leading up to DFO's assuming control of the Fish Farm Industry.

Further to this, the DFO need to engage with First Nations immediately to develop the new court ordered Fish Farm regulations.

To date there has been no direction coming from Gail Shea, Minister of Fisheries and Oceans to act on this fast approaching deadline.

Bob Chamberlin, Chief
Kwicksutaineuk Ah-kwa-mish First Nation

Cellphone (s): 250.974.8282 or 778.988.9282