

NEWS RELEASE

Ecological Disaster Pending in the Broughton Archipelago

Fish-farm industry and government action inadequate to protect wild pink salmon

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VICTORIA, BC - While standards for the controversial practices of salmon aquaculture remain the same, the provincial government has released a report with strict recommendations for farming sturgeon. The report, entitled *Consultation Document on Commercial Sturgeon Aquaculture*, was prepared by the Ministries of Water, Land and Air Protection, and Agriculture, Food and Fisheries.

Among the recommendations the document calls for land-based, closed-contained systems that treat the wastewater and prevent introduction of disease into the environment. New sites would be restricted from setting up near sturgeon-bearing watersheds where releases of non-native sturgeon could impact ailing natural stocks.

"Why the double standards?" asks Theresa Rothenbush, Marine Campaigner for the Raincoast Conservation Society. "While salmon farms continue to allow pollutants and escaped fish into our waters, desperately needed regulations are being applied to other aquaculture sectors."

Recent evidence from salmon aquaculture operations indicates parasite transfer to wild stocks and continued escapes. Conservation groups and First Nations are demanding a move towards closed-containment systems.

"If the government applied these regulations to salmon aquaculture, we would be so much closer to protecting wild salmon from the dangers of open netcage aquaculture." Adds Rothenbush, "As it stands, we are at great risk of irreparable damage."

The Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR) is a coalition of conservation and First Nations groups working to protect the ocean and humans from the dangers of farmed salmon. For more information visit www.farmedanddangerous.org

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