

Wilderness Tourism Association



Box 2160 Campbell River BC V9W 5C5
Tel: (250) 286-4080 Email: admin@wilderness-tourism.bc.ca

July 25, 2007

Open Letter to the BC Pacific Salmon Forum
Attention: John Fraser

The Wilderness Tourism Association of BC (WTA) believes that what is happening in the Broughton Archipelago (BA) with regard to the devastation of the salmon fry by sea lice may well be happening in other areas of BC where salmon farms exist. Alexandra Morton and others have been studying sea lice in the Discovery Islands and her preliminary reports suggest serious fish farm threat to BC's most important fish stocks, both salmon and herring. We also understand that DFO has been studying sea lice in the Muchalat Inlet and finding them near fish farms there and that sea lice are being found around fish farms in Jackson Pass.

The Association urgently requests that independent research, like that being conducted in the Broughton Archipelago, take place in the other coastal areas of BC where fish farms currently exist.

The BC Pacific Salmon Forum advises the government, in the interim (of completing the BA sea lice research), to "halt expansion of the fish-farming industry in the Broughton Archipelago." In our opinion, halting expansion of fish farms in the Broughton isn't enough. Action must be taken whether or not the government believes the science is clear, because we can't take the chance that it isn't. The Fife Tribune migration route must be fallowed in 2008 and this isn't being done. Apparently, Marine Harvest is already stocking Glacier Falls, which is one of the key farms on this route.

We believe that the damage occurring to the stocks in the Broughton Archipelago is the death knell for wild salmon on the coast of BC. Our concern is that this could spell the end for Nature Based Tourism, Sports Fishing and Commercial Fishing in the Broughton Archipelago. If expansion of farms takes place throughout the province, and sea lice are proliferating elsewhere as they are in the Broughton Archipelago, then we could see the end of the tourism industry in all of coastal BC and the interior where there is a dependency on wild salmon for the survival of business. We don't want to see a repeat of what has happened in Norway. (Please see a copy of my report on my Norway trip attached of June 13-15). In order to prevent this, we must take the next obvious step, and that is: find out what is happening around other fish farms in BC *outside* the Broughton area.

In summary, we need to see independent research on sea lice and wild salmon on other areas of BC with farms, before it is too late. We also ask that you try to reverse the decision on the Fife Tribune migration route so that the farms located there are fallowed or moved for the 2008 wild salmon fry out migration period.

Thank-you for taking the time to address our concerns.

Brian Gunn, President of the WTA

To contact Brian call: 011-61-406-409-608 or Craig Murray in BC at 250-956-3297.