



Fisheries and Oceans
Canada

Pêches et Océans
Canada

Pacific Region
103-2435 Mansfield Drive
Courtenay, British Columbia
V9N 2M2

Région du Pacifique
103-2435 Drive Mansfield
Courtenay (C.-B.)
V9N 2M2

March 22, 2022

Cermaq Canada
203-919 Island Highway
Campbell River, BC V9W 2C2

Dear Licence Holder,

Subject: **Dixon Bay, REF #234 Non-Compliance**
Millar Channel, REF #1507 Non-Compliance
Ross Pass, REF #314 Non-Compliance
Bawden, REF #227 Non-Compliance

The aquaculture licence that has been issued to you under the authority and provisions of the *Fisheries Act* and the *Pacific Aquaculture Regulations* contains specific Conditions of Licence. These, along with the requirements set out in the *Aquaculture Activities Regulations*, allow you to conduct aquaculture activities at the licenced location in a prescribed manner.

This letter is to inform you that Fisheries and Oceans Canada ("the Department") has conducted a review of your **Condition of Licence 6.6** which states:

"The Licence Holder must ensure that sea lice numbers are below threshold 6.2 at the time of the first Counting Event of the Out-migration Window"

We have determined that you have failed to comply in the following manner:

- The sea lice numbers were above threshold 6.2 at Dixon bay at the time of the first Counting Event of the Out-migration
 - First Out-migration Counts completed on March 7, 2022, indicated an average of 4.73 motile *Lepeophtheirus salmonis*
- The sea lice numbers were above threshold 6.2 at Millar Channel at the time of the first Counting Event of the Out-migration
 - First Out-migration Counts completed on March 2, 2022, indicated an average of 6.27 motile *Lepeophtheirus salmonis*
- The sea lice numbers were above threshold 6.2 at Ross Pass at the time of the first Counting Event of the Out-migration
 - First Out-migration Counts completed on March 3, 2022, indicated an average of 11.53 motile *Lepeophtheirus salmonis*

- The sea lice numbers were above threshold 6.2 at Bawden at the time of the first Counting Event of the Out-migration
 - First Out-migration Counts completed on March 2, 2022, indicated an average of 14.05 motile *Lepeophtheirus salmonis*

The Department understands that there were extenuating circumstances relating to a Chaetoceros algae bloom that resulted in the Licence Holder being unable to count sea lice prior to the Out-migration, as per 6.9(a)(iii), which states:

"The Licence Holder:

(a) is not required to count sea lice in an individual Containment Structure if:
(iii) an ongoing environmental issue would reasonably lead to additional fish stress or harm is handled"

The Department also understands that due to deterioration of water quality associated with the Chaetoceros bloom, the fish could not be treated for sea lice as per section 2.4.1 of the Salmonid Health Management Plan, which states that in the event of deterioration of water quality:

..Cessation of feeding is immediate. Water quality monitoring is enhanced to determine the problem and to estimate how long the problem may persist. Fish are monitored more closely for the duration of the event and will not be handled until water quality is deemed acceptable."

This occurrence of non-compliance is being recorded and will form part of your compliance history, which will be considered in the event of future occurrences. You should be aware that Section 78.1 of the *Fisheries Act* states "Where any contravention of this Act or the regulations is committed or continued on more than one day, it constitutes a separate offence for each day on which the contravention is committed or continued". This letter does not preclude any legal action this Department may take with respect to this matter.

Please note that if the information requested is not received as requested, this file may be turned over to Conservation and Protection Fishery Officers.

Fisheries and Oceans is committed to working with you to resolve this issue. Please feel free to contact Kerra Shaw (Kerra.Shaw@dfo-mpo.gc.ca) if you have any questions or concerns regarding this matter at 250-286-5831. All reports are to be sent to the following E-Mail address: AQFF.FishHealth@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Sincerely,

Kerra Shaw
Regional Manager, Aquaculture Fish Health

Fisheries and Oceans Canada | Peches et Oceans Canada
103-2435 Mansfield Drive | 103-2435 Drive Mansfield
Courtenay, BC V9N 2M2 | Courtenay (C.-B.) V9N 2M2

Cc: Conservation & Protection Aquaculture Unit

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