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November 10, 2017

File Number: 5450-30

via e-mail: min@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

The Honourable Dominic LeBlanc, MP
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans Canada
200 Kent St, Station 15N100
Ottawa ON K1A 0E6

Dear Minister LeBlanc:

Re: Baynes Sound Cleanup and a research request

On behalf of the Islands Trust Council I am writing to thank Fisheries and Oceans Canada for providing staff and financial support to the Baynes Sound Cleanup this year. The 2017 clean-up was a successful partnership between DFO, the aquaculture industry represented by BC Shellfish Growers' Association and the Denman Island Marine Stewards. I understand that volunteers collected approximately five tons of plastic debris, the majority of which was from aquaculture operations. These clean ups along the shores of Denman Island have taken place annually for a number of years with similar quantities of aquaculture operation waste being collected. I would like to suggest that you consider working with industry to implement best practices to prevent this scale of pollution from the aquaculture industry.

I am also writing to request, on behalf of the Islands Trust Council, that you direct DFO Pacific Region to study the impacts of aquaculture industry modifications in the intertidal zone of the Islands Trust Area and, particularly, the ecologically important Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel intertidal zone. Baynes Sound and Lambert Channel are major production areas for cultured shellfish in British Columbia and also happen to be vital herring spawning areas and important habitat for other forage fish, including Pacific sand lance. The area is one of DFO's Ecologically and Biologically Significant Areas. We hear frequent and ongoing concerns from constituents about potential cumulative impacts to the intertidal zone from aquaculture operations in our region and believe the time has come for additional study.

As a special-purpose local government with a mandate to preserve and protect the Islands Trust Area we are responding to community concerns about the health of the Baynes Sound/Lambert Channel environment by co-hosting in late spring of 2018, with World Wildlife Fund, a forum to foster collaborative dialogue between representatives of First Nations and other governments, shellfish and fishing industries, ecotourism industry, environmental groups and others concerned about Baynes Sound / Lambert Channel. We will be extending an invitation to DFO staff.

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Thank you for considering this request. The Islands Trust Council is a federation of local government bodies representing 25,000 people living within the Islands Trust Area and about 10,000 non-resident property owners. The Islands Trust is responsible for preserving and protecting the unique environment and amenities of the Islands Trust Area through planning and regulating land use, development management, education, cooperation with other agencies, and land conservation. The Islands Trust Area includes the ocean between the British Columbia mainland and southern Vancouver Island, including areas of vital orca habitat, vibrant aquaculture and wild fisheries, as well as vital herring and other forage fish spawning areas.

Yours sincerely,



Peter Luckham
Chair, Islands Trust Council
pluckham@islandstrust.bc.ca

pc: BC Shellfish Growers Association
Aboriginal Aquaculture Association
Cowichan Tribes
Esquimalt First Nation
Halalt First Nation
Homalco First Nation
Hul'qumi'num Treaty Group
K'omoks First Nation
Klahoose First Nation
Laich-kwil-tach Treaty Society
Lake Cowichan First Nation
Lyackson First Nation
Malahat Nation
Musqueam First Nation
Nanwakolas Council
Pauquachin First Nation
Penelakut Tribe
Qualicum First Nation
Scia'new (Beecher Bay) First Nation
Semiahmoo First Nation
Shíshálh (Sechelt) First Nation
Snaw-naw-as (Nanoose) First Nation
Snuneymuxw (Nanaimo) First Nation
Songhees First Nation
Squamish First Nation
Stz'uminus (Chemainus) First Nation
Te'mexw Treaty Association
Tla'amin (Sliammon) First Nation
T'Sou-ke (Sooke) First Nation
Tsartlip First Nation
Tsawout First Nation
Tsawwassen First Nation
Tseil-Waututh (Burrard Inlet) First Nation
Tseycum First Nation
We Wai Kai (Cape Mudge First Nation)
Wei Wai Kum (Campbell River First Nation)
Bowen Island Municipal Council
Islands Trust Council
Islands Trust website