



Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform

## **SALMON FARM COMPANIES SEEK MASSIVE EXPANSION OF CURRENT OPEN NET-CAGE PRODUCTION SITES**

If the industry can't go north, they'll go big

For Immediate Release

Vancouver, B.C. – November 19, 2008 – The Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR) has learned that fish farm companies are seeking approval to roughly double current licensed production on several farms in critical wild salmon migration routes such as the Broughton Archipelago and the northern Georgia Strait. This follows a provincially imposed moratorium on expansion into northern BC. On a site-by-site basis, some farms could triple, quadruple or increase six-fold their current licensed production levels. A map detailing these proposed increases can be seen at: [www.farmedanddangerous.org/page/amendments](http://www.farmedanddangerous.org/page/amendments).

“An increase in production of this nature will place tremendous pressure on already imperiled wild salmon stocks and the marine ecosystem around these salmon farms,” said Catherine Stewart, of Living Oceans Society. “Mainstream’s proposed production increases in the Broughton are outrageous, given the company has been violating licensed production limits for years”

Ministry of Agriculture and Lands (MAL) documents show Mainstream alone is seeking to more than triple current licensed production on their Broughton farms while Marine Harvest plans to triple total production on five farms in the Discovery Islands area of northern Georgia Strait. And CAAR has learned that without notice to the public, the province has already approved amendments on two of these five Marine Harvest Canada applications.

“It is unacceptable that an expansion of open net pen farms would be considered just as we are seeing evidence of sea lice from these farms on Fraser River Sockeye, as well as local salmon runs.” says Ruby Berry of the Georgia Strait Alliance.

While CAAR has conditionally agreed to several amendments proposed by Marine Harvest Canada as part of an emergency plan to give immediate relief to wild fish in the Broughton, there is no justification for this level of increase on such a large scale.

“Given the negative impacts from current salmon farming methods, expanding open net pen farms is a move in the wrong direction,” said Jay Ritchlin of the David Suzuki Foundation. “The industry must move to closed containment if it is to succeed alongside thriving wild salmon populations in BC.”

CAAR is seeking a provincial allocation of \$10 million in the 2009 budget for a Closed Containment Innovation Fund to facilitate a rapid transition to closed containment salmon aquaculture.

-- 30 --

*High-resolution maps of the proposed expansion in the Broughton and Discovery Islands are available to [www.farmedanddangerous.org/page/amendments](http://www.farmedanddangerous.org/page/amendments).*

**For more information, contact:**

Catherine Stewart, Living Oceans Society  
Office: 604-696-5044; Cell: 604-916-6722

Ruby Berry, Georgia Strait Alliance  
Office: 250-334-9756; Cell: 250-218-6818

Jay Ritchlin, David Suzuki Foundation  
Office: 604-732-4228, Cell 604-961-6840

**Related document:**  
BC Fish Farm Amendment Applications (Backgrounder)