



Ref: 151946

The Honourable Bernadette Jordan, PC, MP
Minister of Fisheries, Oceans
and the Canadian Coast Guard
Email: min@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Dear Minister Jordan:

I am writing to express our Government's concern over the negative economic impacts of Canada's December 2020 decision to phase out salmon farming in the Discovery Island region and to request that we collaborate to discuss Canada's mitigation strategy for the impacted communities.

As you are aware, this Discovery Island decision has wide ranging impacts, including to First Nations, coastal communities and families, and the broader business community. Our Government is concerned that the consequences of this far reaching decision need to be fully understood and accounted for. Indeed, given the speed of implementation, families and communities in north Vancouver Island are already being significantly impacted and without a federal support plan in place.

We expect these challenges to grow. The resulting loss of an estimated 1,500 direct jobs and many more indirect jobs, will have a cascading impact on more than the aquaculture industry in British Columbia (BC); it will also impact jobs across the entire supply chain from suppliers to processors to domestic and international consumers.

BC's investment climate and business community is another area of concern. Many of the companies currently invested in the BC aquaculture industry are multi-national and have, or are considering, significant investments in other sectors across Canada and BC. This climate of uncertainty may lead them to question those business investments.

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At a time where economic recovery is a priority for both of our Governments, we urge Canada to consider these implications and responsibly minimize disruption. Our Government believes that Canada's decision in the Discovery Islands will require significant immediate and long-term investment from Canada to ensure the economic viability of the north Vancouver Island communities. We see a productive path forward in federal conversations with provincial, Indigenous and local government officials, community members including industry and workers living in the north Island on short and long-term transition supports.

To support this approach, I have tasked two Assistant Deputy Ministers—Christine Little, Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation, and Jennifer McGuire, Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries—to lead the provincial response. I request that you identify a senior representative to lead Canada's response across the range of federal departments who will need to participate in the transition support for these communities.

Lastly, I propose you and I establish monthly meetings to monitor progress. It is only by working together to safeguard wild salmon, while at the same time mitigating the economic impacts of Canada's decision will a path forward for the future economic and social well-being of these communities be realized. I look forward to working together with you and will ask my office to reach out to organize a first meeting shortly.

Sincerely,

Ravi Kahlon
Minister

pc: The Honourable Melanie Joly
Minister of Economic Development and Official Languages

The Honourable Jonathan Wilkinson
Minister of Environment and Climate Change

Honourable Lana Popham
Minister of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries

Michele Babchuk, MLA
North Island

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pc: Christine Little
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Jobs, Economic Recovery and Innovation

Jennifer McGuire
Assistant Deputy Minister
Ministry of Agriculture, Food and Fisheries