Research Indicates Lower Levels of Sea Lice in 2009 in Broughton Archipelago

Preliminary results from collaborative Coordinated Area Management Plan look positive.

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For Immediate Release

Sointula and Campbell River - Preliminary results from the joint Coastal Alliance for Aquaculture Reform (CAAR) and Marine Harvest Canada (MHC) sea lice monitoring program in the Broughton Archipelago indicate that sea lice levels in 2009 on juvenile pink and chum salmon migrating through the region are lower than in recent years.

In 2009 MHC began implementing a coordinated area management plan (CAMP) in the Broughton Archipelago, fallowing the majority of farms in the Tribune-Fife corridor during the juvenile wild salmon out-migration season (March 1st-June 30th). In addition, CAAR and Marine Harvest Canada are actively monitoring lice levels on farmed salmon and wild juvenile fish in the Lower Knight corridor where several farms have adult fish. The objective of the plan is to substantially reduce the presence of lice during the out-migration season for wild pink and chum salmon.

To verify the effectiveness of the CAMP in reducing the potential for farmed salmon to contribute sea lice to juvenile wild salmon, CAAR and MHC collaboratively developed a monitoring program. Overseen by Dr. Crawford Revie, the program involves collecting sea lice data from active farms and wild salmon in both Tribune-Fife and Lower Knight corridors.

Dr. Martin Krkosek from the University of Washington and Fisheries and Oceans Canada (DFO) researcher Brent Hargreaves have each independently conducted wild fish surveys in 2009.

DFO preliminary results indicate levels of lice on wild fish during the March and April 2009 period were similar to 2008, and generally much lower than the levels that occurred from 2003-2007[1]. Dr. Krkosek also observed low levels of lice on wild fish throughout the 2009 out-migration season.

The data from the wild fish sampling and from farm monitoring will be analyzed collectively under the direction of Dr. Revie and the results of the analysis will be publicly available. Should the Provincial Ministry of Agriculture take the necessary steps

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[1] Comparable data for previous years are available on the DFO website at http://www.pac.dfo-mpo.gc.ca/science/aquaculture/pinksalmon-saumonrose/results-resultats/index-eng.htm. Marine Harvest Canada has posted sea lice data for each farm on their website since 2003 at http://www.marineharvestcanada.com/farming_fish_health_sea_lice.php

to ensure the alternating fallow plan can continue, CAAR and MHC will sustain the monitoring program through 2014 providing a multi-year data set in order to determine the effectiveness of the CAMP.

To view a map of the region please visit www.livingoceans.org/files/camp.pdf

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