

Hi everyone,

It has been a busy few weeks.

Since the website's inception we have had almost 500 emails sent from the website to the Authorizing Agency. We are very pleased with this number! The Authorizing Agency has delayed their preliminary decision by a month to January 10 due to the volume of emails received. Please continue to share our website and talk to people about the application. For now, the best we can do as a group is continue to send emails.

If you haven't already, please send your own email with your specific reasons why you feel the project should not be allowed to

AuthorizingAgency.Nanaimo@gov.bc.ca subject File 1414788

social concerns are significant to them so if you use the beach or walk the CRD trails which connect to the beach or swim at the beach let them know!

Concerns specific to sensitive habit or species can be sent to the Department of Fisheries and Oceans. If you have witnessed Great Blue Herons nesting here, seen Bald Eagles raising their young, noticed sea lions swimming in the distance, swam through patches of eel grass, seen fish spawning, or watched Orcas go by let them know:

ShellfishAquaculture.XPAC@dfo-mpo.gc.ca

Attention: Chris Marrie

Make sure to highlight AQS F9149

Boaters, kayakers, swimmers, paddle boarders... the Department of Transportation is listening to our concerns! One of our working group members received an email back from them stating that they want more information on what activities are on the beach and how they will be affected by the predator netting. Other applications for shellfish farms have been asked told they cannot use predator netting from the Department of Transport. This may be our easiest route to stop the predator netting.

pacnwp-penpac@tc.gc.ca

There are people in the group who are trying to understand the situation at a deeper level. We have had communications with staff who are directly involved with this application at the Islands Trust, The Authorizing Agency, The Department of Fisheries and also at the Department of Transportation. Some have given us invaluable assistance through helping us understand the process and what kinds of concerns can influence decisions. We are also in contact with the Economic Development Officer of the Penelakut and hope to meet him in person this week.

On Monday, two working group members spoke with Elizabeth Nolan of the Driftwood. We made the front page of the Driftwood! Elizabeth is highly informed with regards to this application. We let her know that our main issue with the Application is the use of predator netting. We would welcome a shellfish farm run by members of the Penelakut if it was done without predator netting. There are commercially viable clam and oyster farms on our coast already ready run this way by Penelakut Seafoods Inc.

We have caught the attention of Adam Olsen our local Green MLA. He has agreed to hold a Public Meeting on January 17th. The Economic Development Officer of the Penelakut will be there as well. Please save this date and attend. We need to fill the room, and have as many speakers come to the mic

as possible. We are hoping that the discussions though remain calm and respectful, so please keep this in mind. We are not there to yell at anyone. We would like open, informed and respectful dialogue to take place. More details on time and exact location as they come. Adam has created a summary blog post here: <https://adamolsenmla.ca/addressing-booth-bay-shellfish-harvesting-proposal/>

Finally, one of our working group members has talked with the owners of Evening Cove Oyster, which operates the existing oyster rafts in Booth Bay, and Limberis Seafoods Processing Ltd, which operates several shellfish operations on Vancouver Island. They both say that predator netting would be unnecessary in Booth Bay due to the lack of predators in the area and how predator netting is very expensive to purchase, install, and maintain for a small amount of suitable sand. Consequently, we are asking Penelakut Seafoods Inc and the Authorizing Agency to remove this infrastructure from the application.

As it stands, this is still a matter where the Provincial and Federal Authorities have the power. Salt Spring Island Trustees seem to be trying to gain a larger understanding of the issues involved but cannot outright stop the application at present. They will have more say if the Application is approved and the Applicant applies for a rezoning so that they can operate a shellfish operation. However, our group would like the Islands Trust to try and take a more proactive stance by reaching out to the other Gulf Islands within the Trust and affected First Nations to work together and come up with a Marine Stewardship Plan for the entire area.

We are receiving lots of emails from our website. Since we are a group of volunteers who have jobs, kids, and are sometimes not as organized as we would like to be, we cannot respond directly to all of them. Hopefully, this Newsletter answered some of your questions and concerns.

www.ProtectBoothBay.org
info@protectboothbay.org