

Aquaculture Regulatory Advisory Committee Meeting Summary

Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture, 6th Floor World Trade and Convention Center
Halifax, Nova Scotia
December 14, 2016

Province of Nova Scotia:

Present:

Honourable Keith Colwell, Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Mark MacPhail, Executive Assistant to Minister, Fisheries and Aquaculture
Frank Dunn, Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Alan Eddy, Associate Deputy Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Bruce Hancock, Director of Aquaculture
Dr. Vicki Savoie-Swan, Manager of Aquaculture Development
Brennan Goreham, Manager of Licensing and Leasing
Amanda Spencer, Licensing Coordinator
Honourable Margaret Miller, Minister of Environment
Kevin Musgrave, Executive Assistant to Minister Miller
Adrian Fuller, Executive Director of Compliance, Nova Scotia Environment
Janet MacKinnon, Director of Regional Integration of Compliance and Operations, Nova Scotia Environment

Committee Members:

Present:

Lisa Dahr, Tourism Industry Association of Nova Scotia, Halifax Regional Municipality
Carl Purcell, Nova Scotia Salmon Association
Bruce Morrison, Warden, Municipality of the County of Victoria
Ray Plourde, Wilderness Coordinator, Ecology Action Centre
Tom Smith, Executive Director, Aquaculture Association of Nova Scotia

Meeting Summary

Update from NSE

Inspection for Fisheries and Aquaculture is now part of Nova Scotia Environment. Former Fisheries Inspectors from NSDFA

Three classroom training sessions and three field sessions were held in conjunction with NSDFA

- Regulatory updates
- Overview of industry
- Biosecurity training with the veterinarians
- Conservation officers visited 99% of the existing sites to introduce themselves as to operators They met with operators to see how they operated, what to expect, complaint follow-up, etc.

Action taken by NSE

Action was taken on complaints. There were charges laid in Shelburne related to the presence of trout for failure to notify NSDFA of a suspected breach in containment. Two charges were laid. One charge was dropped; one charge was paid.

A summary offence ticket was also issued for an individual who did not have a lease. Once charges have been laid, it becomes public information.

Abandoned Sites

Questions were raised about abandoned sites and how NSE will be dealing with those.

Remediation plans can be requested from the operator.

It was noted that bonds will be put into effect in April 2017.

The Warden from Victoria County noted that sites in Englishtown are large, but the operators are currently not utilizing the entire space. How is this being dealt with?

NSDFA is pursuing a 'Use It or Lose It' Policy for sites that have zero production

Performance requirements are will be put in place in the future for aquaculture sites.

Enforcement vs Administrative

Concerns and issues can begin as administrative matters and then enter the realm of enforcement. For example; if there is no Farm Management Plan in place, DFA will advise and DOE will handle accordingly.

NSE noted that they are currently working to develop a risk model to determine frequency of site inspections. If sites have a history of being non-complaint, they may require more attention than others.

An update on this model will be provided in the spring.

Biosecurity

Questions were asked regarding the procedures on transferring the compliance boat from one body of water to another and the chance of diseases or other agents being transferred.

NSE noted that biosecurity measures are in place. Disinfecting of gloves, boats, and other gear is being done. NSE is working on ensuring inspectors have the proper gear.

NSE is looking to have one boat per region and one individual in each region specifically mandated with ensuring proper cleaning and disinfecting

Concerns that boats could be contaminated with diseases such as MSX.

All aquaculture operators are required to have details around their biosecurity in their Farm Management Plans.

With regards to aquaculture, controls can be implemented for biosecurity. However, we cannot require of other users/industries.

Tools

DOE is currently developing a standardized inspection spreadsheet, so they can approach all sites in the same manner

Want to be consistent all over the province.

Training staff on what is high risk and what is low risk. Looking at all aspects including public health and animal health.

Conservation officers

Conservation officers will continue to regulate hunting.

There were no resources lost. Currently 65 Conservation Officers. All of which are being trained on Aquaculture duties.

Fish Inspectors are being trained for conservation work as well.

Training for side arms is being done through Holland College

There are three managers that are covering the three regions in the province

Complaint Process

Steps for a complaint

- Call the 1-800-9-ENVIRO
- The call goes to the Shubenacadie Dispatch Centre
- An officer is then assigned the complaint
- The officer responds to the complaint
- There is no middle man.
- Depending on the nature of the complaint, the CO will get prepared to go check out situation.
- Complaints are logged in OTIS database.
- Kerry Miller, Director can manage complaints from database. Triage assessment of urgency.

Example: Received complaint about trout farm that they are non-complaint and risk of disease.

DOE worked with DFA. Samples were taken, etc.

Power to take licence away if need be.

Administrator decisions can be appealed to the Minister. Ministerial decisions can be appealed to Supreme Court.