

Administrative Process for Aquaculture Licence and Lease Applications

The Province of Nova Scotia is committed to an open and transparent aquaculture licensing and leasing process that provides opportunity for public and stakeholder participation. To learn about specific proposals and applications under review by the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture and how to submit a comment, visit novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/public-information/.

What type of applications use this process?

The process described below relates to aquaculture applications for: new land-based aquaculture sites, renewal or assignment of land-based and marine licences and/or leases, experimental land-based and marine licenses and/or leases, reallocation of existing sites, boundary amendments that do not result in expansion of the site and culture method (gear) amendments for existing sites.

Amendments to existing sites that result in an expansion of the site or to add finfish species to sites not currently approved to produce finfish follow the adjudicative application process with final decision on the application made by the Nova Scotia Aquaculture Review Board. For more information on the adjudicative application process please visit novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/licensing-leasing/.

This document provides an overview of the administrative application process from the time an initial request is submitted to the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture until a decision is made by the Administrator.

PHASE 1 – PRE-APPLICATION PHASE

STEP 1: PRE-APPLICATION DISCUSSION WITH DEPARTMENT OF FISHERIES AND AQUACULTURE

Prior to submitting the administrative application to the Department, proponents are required to hold a meeting with Department staff. During this step, the Department will notify the proponent what information needs to be collected and included in the application.

STEP 2: INFORMATION COLLECTION

During this time, the company gathers the information necessary to complete the Development Plan for their proposal. This may include biophysical, technical, or social data depending on the nature of the application.

PHASE 2 – REVIEW PHASE

STEP 3: ADMINISTRATIVE APPLICATION SUBMITTED TO THE DEPARTMENT

Once the pre-application phase is complete, the proponent may submit an application to the Department. A completed application must include the appropriate application form and a Development Plan, as well as any information deemed necessary by the Department during the pre-application phase.

Application forms can be found at novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/licensing-leasing.

STEP 4: REVIEW OF APPLICATION FOR LICENCE AND LEASE

Department staff review the application to make sure it provides all the documentation required. The Department can request additional information from the applicant as necessary. The application will be shared with the necessary federal and provincial departments for their input. Consultations with First Nations may be required depending on the nature of the proposal.

PHASE 3 – DECISION PHASE

STEP 5: PUBLIC SUBMISSION PERIOD

The Administrator will publish a notice on the Department's website and in the Royal Gazette Part I inviting the public to submit written comments on the application to the Administrator. Members of the public have 30 days after the date the notice is published to submit comments to the Administrator.

Comments received from the public that comply with all submission requirements will be posted on the Department's website when the Administrator's decision concerning that application is made and communicated. Comments as posted will include the name of the person submitting the comment as well as their community and province/state. The street address, email address and phone number of the person submitting the comment will be removed.

STEP 6: DECISION BY ADMINISTRATOR

After the close of the public comment period, the Administrator makes a decision on the application. This can be to approve, approve with conditions or reject the application. The Administrator must issue a written decision that includes the reasons for the decision and then publish the decision on the Department's website.

The regulations for aquaculture licencing and leasing and aquaculture management can be found at novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/laws-regs/