

**Findings and Decision- Amendment Application of Bill & Stanley Oyster Company Ltd.  
for AQ#0623**

**1. Overview:**

On October 8, 2015, the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (NSDFA) received an application from Bill & Stanley Oyster Company Ltd. to amend Aquaculture Licence and Lease #0623 (AQ#0623) to authorize the cultivation of Sugar kelp, Finger kelp, Dulse, and Sea lettuce as described below.

Table 1. Description of Amendment Application

<b>Type:</b> Marine Shellfish	<b>Current Size:</b> 14.24 HA
<b>Number:</b> AQ#0623	<b>Current Cultivation Method:</b> Suspended shellfish method
<b>Applicant:</b> Bill & Stanley Oyster Company Ltd	<b>Current Species:</b> Blue mussel, Giant sea scallop, American oyster, Kelp
<b>Location:</b> Country Harbour, Guysborough County	<b>Proposed Amendment:</b> Addition of the following species for cultivation:- Sugar kelp, Finger kelp, Dulse, Sea lettuce

**2. History**

AQ#0623 was first issued to Country Harbour Sea Farms Co-operative Ltd. on May 13, 1992 for a ten year term (May 18, 1992 to May 17, 2002). AQ# 0623 was renewed on December 15, 1993 for another ten year term (December 20, 1993 to December 20, 2003). On November 13, 1997, AQ#0623 was assigned from Country Harbour Sea Farms Co-operative Ltd to Country Harbour Sea Farms Limited. AQ#0623 was renewed on July 16, 2003 for a five year term (December 20, 2003 to December 20, 2008). On June 16, 2006, AQ#0623 was assigned on June 16, 2006 from Country Harbour Sea Farms Limited to 2382144 Nova Scotia Limited. On September 17, 2008, AQ#0623 was assigned again from 2382144 Nova Scotia Limited to Atlantic Aqua Farms Partnership. AQ#0623 was renewed on January 9, 2014 for a five year term (December 19, 2013 to December 19, 2018). On February 13, 2014, AQ# 0623 was assigned from Atlantic Aqua Farms Partnership to Bill & Stanley Oyster Company Ltd. AQ#0623 was amended on May 19, 2014 to allow for the cultivation of American oyster. AQ#0623 was amended on October 14, 2014 to increase the size from 6.73 HA to 14.24 HA.

**3. Procedure**

*3.1 Performance Review*

A performance review of the information submitted by the operator in support of their amendment application was completed. This performance review is required pursuant to Subsection 72(d) of the Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations, and recommended that the site be amended based on the technical and biological assessment.

*3.2 Public Comment Period*

Notice of the application for the amendment of AQ#0623 for the 30-day public comment period was published on NSDFA's website (<http://novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/public-information/>) for the period of July 14, 2016 to August 12, 2016. Notice of the application was also published in the Royal Gazette Part I on July 13, 2016, July 20, 2016, July 27, 2016, and August 3, 2016.

### 3.3 Submissions

Zero submissions were received by NSDFA during the 30-day public comment period.

## 4. Factors to be considered

AQ#0623 is an integral component of the operators plans to incrementally develop a multi-site aquaculture operation in Guysborough County. While the operation intends to primarily produce American oysters, the amendment to allow marine plants will allow for diversification in the operation. Records indicate recent employment since the 2014 assignment. The amendment plan indicates continued production is planned for this site and therefore resulting employment. Should the operator not operate the site as indicated, the Department's site utilization review procedures will be triggered. Performance review indicates that successful development of this site will have a positive impact on the local and provincial economy.

The performance review and subsequent public comment period did not note the presence of other fishery activities in the area of the site. There were no ecological concerns identified in the past performance of this site with respect to negative impacts on other fisheries. There is no evidence that the amendment of AQ#0623 to include marine plants that shellfish aquaculture will have impacts on the sustainability of wild salmon. The growth of these particular marine plants in the local environment is not proven; however, the operator has engaged the scientific community to work on their development. The information reviewed during the performance review did not indicate adverse impacts on the surrounding public waters.

There are no recorded instances on file of AQ#0623 interfering with other users of the public waters surrounding the operation. Upon amendment, AQ#0623 will be authorized to cultivate both shellfish and marine plants using suspended gear, and as such the gear must remain within the geographic boundaries of the site. Section 55 of the *Licence and Lease Regulations* requires an aquaculture licence holder to mark each of their sites in a manner determined by the Minister and keep each site marked during the term of their licence.

AQ#0623 is approximately 200 metres to the northwest of the Country Harbour ferry. Also, there is a submerged cable spanning the harbour in the area between the ferry crossing and AQ#0623. Neither of these are identified as being negatively impacted by AQ#0623. AQ#0623 is located in the nearshore environment, with distance to shoreline along the western boundary varying between approximately 70 to 80 metres. The nearest site to AQ#0623 is AQ#1307, which is approximately 600 metres away. Thus, the physical separation of AQ#0623 from the shoreline and neighbouring aquaculture sites provides for multiple corridors within the harbour. There is no evidence to suggest that the extent of existing aquaculture in the harbour has exceeded the carrying capacity of the harbour.

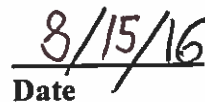
**5. Decision**

Based on the considerations above, Aquaculture Licence #0623 and Lease #0623 shall be amended to authorize the cultivation of Sugar kelp, Finger kelp, Dulse, and Sea lettuce. Except as expressly amended, Licence #0623 and Lease # 0623 shall continue in full force and effect.

The Licence and Lease amendment documents shall be prepared in accordance with the standard operating documents of NSDFA, and shall be made publically available subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.



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**Brennan Goreham**  
**Aquaculture Administrator**  
**Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture**

  
**Date**