

Decision on Application to Renew a Marine Aquaculture Licence and Lease

Application to the Administrator:

On June 12, 2025, the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture (the “Department”) received an application to renew Experimental Aquaculture Licence and Lease #5013 (AQ#5013), as described below:

Application Summary:

Type: Marine (Experimental)	Size: 34.42 HA
Number: AQ#5013	Cultivation Method: Marine Cage
Applicant: WFN Fish Farm Limited Partnership	
Location: South Aberdeen, Whycocomagh Bay, Inverness County	Species: Rainbow Trout
Proposed Term: 1 Year License/Lease	

Site History:

AQ#5013 was first issued on September 27, 2021, for a one-year term (September 14, 2021, to September 13, 2022). On August 15, 2022, the licence and lease were renewed for a second one-year term (September 14, 2022, to September 13, 2023). On August 18, 2023, the Licence and Lease were renewed for a third one-year term (September 14, 2023, to September 13, 2024). On September 27, 2025, the Licence and Lease were renewed for a fourth one-year term (September 14, 2024 to September 13, 2025)

Performance Reviews Conducted by Administrator:

A performance review was conducted on the aquacultural operation of site AQ#5013, pursuant to Sections 71-72 of the *Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations* (the “Regulations”). There were concerns raised following the performance review, which shall be communicated to the licensee. The concerns raised during the performance review have not impacted the outcome of this renewal application.

Factors to be Considered (as set out in Section 3 of the Regulations):*The optimum use of marine resources*

As this is an application to renew an existing aquaculture licence and lease, there were no identified novel impacts to the use of marine resources, for the tenure of the experiment.

The contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development

The species and methods of cultivation authorized for this site are suitable for this area and are expected to be a positive contribution to the local and provincial economy. The applicant uses equipment sourced locally where possible and has committed to use local suppliers where possible.

Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

As this is an application to renew an existing experimental aquaculture licence and lease, there were no expected novel impacts to the fishery activities in the public waters near the existing site.

The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the waters surrounding the existing aquaculture site remain suitable for marine cage finfish cultivation, provided that the existing mitigations remain in place.

The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

As this is an application to renew an existing experimental aquaculture licence and lease, there were no expected novel impacts to the other users of the public waters near the existing site.

The public right of navigation

The operator shall adhere to the site marking requirements according to their Notice of Works issued by Transport Canada under the *Canadian Navigable Waters Act*, reference number NPP#2021-204291.

The sustainability of wild salmon

There was no indication that the continued operation of this site will pose ecological concerns to, or have an impact on, the sustainability of wild salmon.

The number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

Experimental aquaculture site no. 5013 is located in South Aberdeen, Whycocomagh Bay, Inverness County, approximately 250 metres from the shoreline. The nearest marine aquaculture site, AQ#5010, is approximately 1.5 km North, and is operated by the same licensee. Within Whycocomagh Bay, west of these two sites, are another three (3) aquaculture sites also operated

by the licensee. There is an application to expand the boundaries of site AQ#0814, which at the time of this issued document had been submitted to the Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture for referral to the Aquaculture Review Board. Existing and proposed finfish sites will be managed collectively and therefore are not expected to negatively impact each other or shellfish sites. The existing sites have proven to be successful in their productivity and utilization.

Decision:

Based on the factors considered above, Aquaculture Licence and Lease #5013 shall be renewed for a fifth and final one-year term (September 14, 2025 to September 13, 2026).

The Licence and Lease documents shall be prepared in accordance with the Department's standard operating documents and shall be made publicly available subject to the provisions of the *Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act*.

A handwritten signature in blue ink, reading "Rob Ceschiutti".

Robert Ceschiutti
Aquaculture Administrator
Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture

September 10, 2025

Date