Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Aquaculture Division, Licensing & Leasing Unit
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Decision – Application to Administrator

Application Summary:

Application Reference Number:	REF#589
Aquaculture Site Number:	AQ#1042
Application Class:	Class II
Application Type:	Renewal
Abstract:	Application to Renew Licence No. 1042
Applicant Name:	Innovative Fishery Products Inc. (formerly 4512617 Nova Scotia Limited)
Date Received by Department:	September 16, 2025
Location:	Annapolis Basin
County:	Annapolis
Site Type:	Marine
Operation Type:	Commercial

Current Licence / Lease Information:

Site Size (in hectares):	98.50
Method(s) of Cultivation:	Suspended
Species:	American oyster, Bay scallop, European oyster, Giant sea scallop
Term of Licence:	May 13, 2016, to May 13, 2026
Term of Lease:	May 13, 2016, to May 13, 2036

Decision:

Decision Issued:	Approved
Signature and Date:	[redacted] October 15, 2026
	Bruce Hancock, Aquaculture Administrator

Definitions:

The following are terms, acronyms and definitions that may appear in this document:
Act means the Nova Scotia *Fisheries and Coastal Resources Act*
Department means the Nova Scotia Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture
Regulations means the Nova Scotia *Aquaculture Licence and Lease Regulations*

Site History:

Aquaculture licence and lease no. 1042 were initially issued to Hillsburn Basin Scallop Group Ltd. on May 14, 1996, for a 10-year term (May 14, 1996, to May 14, 2006), for the suspended cultivation ofGiant Sea scallop on a 10-hectare site located in Annapolis Basin, Annapolis County. Amendment to Licence and Lease dated August 9, 1996, the licence and lease were amended to correct an error in the site description. On August 20, 1996, the licence and lease were amended to modify the site boundaries, resulting in an increase in site size to 100 hectares. On November 27, 1997, the licence and lease were amended to add additional species (Bay scallop, American oyster and European oyster). On August 14, 2001, the licence and lease were assigned to Innovative Fishery Products Inc. On January 31, 2008, the licence and lease were renewed for a 5-year term (May 14, 2006, to May 13, 2011). On February 23, 2012, the licence and lease were renewed for a 5-year term (May 14, 2011, to May 13, 2016). On May 12, 2017, the licence was renewed for a 10-year term (May 13, 2016, to May 13, 2026) and the lease was renewed for a 20-year term (May 13, 2016, to May 13, 2036). On July 12, 2018, the licence and lease were amended to include federal harvesting requirements for scallops. In May 2025 the licence and lease were amended to address issues raised in a performance review.

Outcomes of Compliance Review:

Pursuant to Section 33 of the Regulations, the Administrator (or an appointed employee) must conduct a compliance review of the applicant in accordance with Sections 86 and 87 of the Regulations.
The compliance review identified no significant concerns. Departmental records noted no compliance issues regarding the licence holder; the review recorded no concerns and no actions were deemed necessary. A Justice Enterprise Information Network check also reported no charges pending conviction and no convictions within the preceding five years for the companies and individuals searched.

Outcomes of Performance Review:

Pursuant to Section 34 of the Regulations, the Administrator (or an appointed employee) must conduct a performance review of the associated aquaculture site in accordance with Sections 89 and 90 of the Regulations.
The performance review identified no issues requiring action by the Administrator. The review confirmed that no prior notices, warnings or other actions were recorded in relation to site productivity. It also noted that the site has not produced shellfish since 2014, that no stock or active gear was present at the time of the most recent site information, and that abandoned scallop racks remained on the lease bottom. These matters were considered together with the proposed phased redevelopment and updated site engineering work.

Consultations on Application to Administrator:

Pursuant to Clause 32(a) of the Regulations, the Administrator must undertake consultations with any of the following as required under the laws of the Province or of Canada with respect to the application:

- A department or agency of the Government of Nova Scotia
- A department or agency of the Government of Canada

As such, consultations were undertaken with the following departments or agencies:

Government of Nova Scotia:

- Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture

Public Submissions on Application to Administrator:

Pursuant to Clause 32(c) of the Regulations, the Administrator must undertake consultations with the public, in the manner provided in Section 43 of the Regulations.

Pursuant to Section 43 of the Regulations, notice of the application was published 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 within a 30-day period, from April 8, 2026, to May 8, 2026.

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

Factors to be Considered:

Under Section 17(1) of the Regulations, in making decisions related to marine aquaculture sites, the Administrator must take into consideration the optimum use of marine resources, as determined by taking into consideration the following factors only:

a) The contribution of the proposed operation to community and Provincial economic development;
b) Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;
c) The oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;
d) The other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation;
e) The public right of navigation;
f) For marine finfish applications, the sustainability of wild salmon;
g) The number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation.

All of the above factors have been taken into consideration prior to making the decision on this application. The following is a summary of the outcomes of the Departmental review and any consultation undertaken (where indicated above). This summary is not intended to be an exhaustive account of the results following review and consultation.

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

The proposed redevelopment would use an existing 98.50-hectare marine site and existing local and Provincial infrastructure. The development plan proposes a phased oyster operation using local and Provincial suppliers and services, with additional farm management, aquaculture technician and boat crew positions required as the operation starts. The technical review found the production plan and proposed use of suppliers reasonable and concluded that the request is expected to support supply-chain services and oyster supply to market.

Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed aquacultural operation

This is an existing lease that has co-existed with fisheries in the Annapolis Basin. The technical review identified no known impacts to fisheries from the renewal and no change to authorized species or cultivation method. No additional mitigation was identified as necessary on the information reviewed.

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

The Annapolis Basin site is influenced by deep water, strong tides and currents, and other high-energy conditions that make suspended oyster cultivation challenging. The proposed operator intends to begin at a smaller scale and expand gradually, supported by engineering work from DSA Oceans. The site is mainly

within a conditionally approved shellfish area associated with the Cornwallis Waste Water Treatment Plant and must be operated in accordance with the applicable Conditional Management Plan. Departmental review also identified abandoned scallop racks on a portion of the seafloor; no change in benthic impacts is expected from renewal itself.

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

The site is an existing marine aquaculture lease and the renewal does not change the authorized species or suspended cultivation method. The technical review found no changes to impacts on other users were expected. Any operational mitigation measures, including measures related to wildlife and public-water users, must be addressed through the approved Farm Management Plan and updated as required before expanded operations.

The public right of navigation

Transport Canada approval NPP 1997-200026, Registry No. 2472, is on file. The whole site must be marked and maintained in accordance with the applicable Transport Canada site-specific marking requirements whenever aquaculture gear is in the water. The proposal to mark only the active portion of the lease is not accepted.

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

The Annapolis Basin contains other aquaculture operations, including experimental oyster sites, clam harvesting areas and a marine finfish site. The technical review concluded that the existing site has co-existed with these operations and that renewal is not expected to impede existing sites or further aquaculture development. The proposed phased redevelopment is expected to return an inactive site to productive use.

Decision:

In making this decision, I reviewed the renewal application and development plan, the compliance information request, the Justice Enterprise Information Network check, the compliance review, the performance review, the technical review, the report on public consultation, and the production report. Based on that information, the consultations undertaken, the factors considered above, and the optimum use of marine resources, the application to renew aquaculture licence no. 1042 is hereby approved. The licence is renewed for a term of 10 years, from May 14, 2026, to May 13, 2036.

Modifications:

None

Implementation:

The renewed licence document shall be prepared in accordance with the Department's standard operating documents. The existing lease term is unchanged. Before aquaculture gear is placed in the water, the licence holder must confirm that the site will be marked in its entirety, including the complete lease perimeter and navigation channel, in accordance with Transport Canada approval NPP 1997-200026, Registry No. 2472, and any current site-specific marking requirements. Marking only the active production area is not permitted. The licence holder must also provide the Department with a plan to either remove the existing scallop racks from the lease or return them to active aquaculture use. This decision shall be deemed implemented once the licence document has been signed by all parties. The licence shall be made publicly available, subject to the Freedom of Information and Protection of Privacy Act, once the decision has been implemented.