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NEWS RELEASE

For Immediate Release

BC REGIONAL CHIEF TERRY TEEGEE STANDS WITH 'NAMGIS FIRST NATION IN SUPPORT OF THEIR JURISDICTION OVER FISH FARMS IN THE BROUGHTON ARCHIPELAGO

(Lheidli T'enneh Territory, Prince George, BC – April 03, 2018) – Last week it was announced that the 'Namgis First Nation lost their bid to keep Marine Harvest—a Norwegian multinational corporation—from restocking a salmon farm in their traditional territory near Alert Bay, BC. 'Namgis had applied for a federal court injunction to prevent the restock from occurring, citing serious concerns with the lack of testing for piscine reovirus, concerns with the effect fish farming has on their traditional way of life, and most importantly, the fact that the fish farm is operating without their consent. Today it was reported that a restocking vessel began filling the open-net pens earlier this week with juvenile Atlantic smolts.

Regional Chief Teegee stated, "I continue to stand with the 'Namgis First Nation who have stated clearly that the fish farming activities taking place in their territory do not have their free, prior, and informed consent. I will continue to stand with 'Namgis in their demands for a review of the DFO policies, namely that smolts be tested for piscine reovirus prior to any transfer. If the federal government is serious about the full implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples, they must step up and stand with the 'Namgis, as well as the many other First Nations located in and around the Broughton Archipelago who want to see the abolition of fish farming activities altogether."

The situation demands further action, not only from Canada, but also from the BC NDP government in Victoria. Regional Chief Teegee continued, "In accordance with Article 25 of the UN Declaration, we must stand together with First Nations in applying pressure to pull fish farm tenures in BC, many of which are up for renewal in June 2018. Wild salmon is the lifeblood of our people, and we must protect it to ensure continued vitality and preservation for future generations."

BCAFN Regional Chief shares the national Assembly of First Nations portfolio in fisheries, in addition to his portfolios in justice and economic development.

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