

LETTER TO MINISTER GAIL SHEA:

The Honourable Gail Shea
House of Commons
Minister of Fisheries and Oceans
Parliament Buildings, Wellington Street
Ottawa, Ontario
K1A 0A6
Canada

July 23, 2014

Dear Minister Shea,

Re: Geoduck Opening in Area 17

Thank you for your response to both our letters of April 17 and May 2, 2014. We appreciate that you have taken the time to review this matter as it is vitally important to our community. On July 18, 2014 I, along with other representatives from Stz'uminus First Nation, traveled to Vancouver to meet with your senior officials from the Pacific Region DFO office, Sue Farlinger, Rebecca Reid and Sarah Murdoch. We appreciate those that took the time to attend the meeting and hope that it provided the DFO with a better understanding of our position and has created an opportunity to move towards resolution.

The meeting covered many issues including the DFO's consultation process and Stz'uminus concerns with the proposed IGMF. We spoke about our efforts over the last 5 years to obtain an aquaculture licence in Kulleet Bay in accordance with our business plan. We discussed last year's meetings held at DFO's request between SFN and the UHA about an aquaculture program that included by-catch sharing with UHA. We touched on the recent Chilcotin decision and how it highlights the need to protect resources under dispute. Perhaps most importantly, we discussed the potential geoduck opening and our concerns for the safety of both Stz'uminus and UHA members if the opening moves forward in Stz'uminus traditional waters.

It is our understanding, at this time, that the geoduck fishery may open as early as next week and that you have final approval on any opening. In the spirit of the renewed conversation between Stz'uminus and DFO, we ask that you will consider keeping Area 17 closed and delaying your decision until a resolution has been reached. Taking Area 17 off the table, or at a minimum Kulleet Bay (Area 17-5), will provide the necessary time to continue the conversation without the added complications of safety concerns that may arise from an opening.

We would like an opportunity to consult with you and your staff further. We are committed to achieving a resolution and are prepared to travel to Ottawa to meet with you at your convenience.

Respectfully,



Chief John Elliott
Stz'uminus First Nation

Cc: Susan Farlinger, Regional Director General, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Rebecca Reid, Regional Director, Fisheries and Oceans Canada
Sarah Murdock, Director, Treaty and Aboriginal Policy Directorate, Fisheries and Oceans Canada