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Statement on work in the Broughton Archipelago

VANCOUVER – The following statement has been issued jointly by Minister of Forests, Lands, Natural Resources Operations and Rural Development Doug Donaldson, Minister of Agriculture Lana Popham, Minister of Indigenous Relations and Reconciliation Scott Fraser, Minister of Environment and Climate Change Strategy George Heyman, and the Mamalilikulla First Nation, 'Namgis First Nation, Dzawada'enuxw First Nation, Gwawaenuk Tribe and Kwikwasut'inuxw Haxwa'mis First Nation:

“Following up on a commitment made by the Premier John Horgan in October 2017 at the Big House in Alert Bay, representatives from the provincial government met with six First Nations represented by five bands of the Broughton area to discuss the issue of fish farms in their traditional territories.

“Everyone around the table agrees that protecting the sustainability of wild salmon and other key resources – which are the foundation of their Indigenous culture, way of life and future – is of utmost importance. These resources are also vital to all British Columbians.

“The basis for this meeting was to jointly honour the implementation of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples and to confirm a commitment to a consent-based government-to-government process focused on the current fish farm operations in the Broughton area, and protection of wild salmon.

“We have agreed to immediately embark on government-to-government discussions to address the issues and concerns about fish farms in the Nations' traditional territories, based on free, prior and informed consent.

“Today's meeting was the next step toward finding solutions together, which will include shared priorities and decision-making.

“We are prepared to do the necessary hard work to find a path forward together in the Broughton Archipelago in keeping with and enacting the principles of the United Nations Declaration on the Rights of Indigenous Peoples.”

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