

This brochure was initially distributed at the Aquaculture Association of NS open house with further distribution from them in the near future, along with scientific and other background information that will provide deeper insight as to how the pre-assessed sites were chosen by the province.



Argyle Aquaculture Development Area

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Aquaculture is when seafood, like shellfish, is raised by sea farmers. It contributes to the province's food supply and creates jobs, generating about \$158 million every year for Nova Scotia's economy.

When someone is interested to start or expand an aquaculture business in Nova Scotia, they have to go through a lengthy process that can take years.

Recognizing the need to improve the process, while still ensuring community involvement, consideration of the surrounding environment through a robust assessment, the Department of Fisheries and Aquaculture introduced a new approach, the Argyle Aquaculture Development Area.

In the Municipality of the District of Argyle, the Province worked together with the municipality to identify locations where it may be possible to farm shellfish, like mussels and oysters, and marine plants like kelp.

The locations were assessed for possible impact of aquaculture on local fishing and navigation, and ecological factors like eel grass, wetlands and birds. These assessments are required for any aquaculture site in the province, the difference is they were done proactively to better understand where aquaculture could happen instead of waiting for industry to start the work.

Municipal staff dedicated about 1,400 hours to the project, reaching people through direct engagement, publications, radio, news outlets, pop-up sessions, presentations, social media and public open houses.

This work helped to identify up to 53 potential sites for development. Six pilot sites are now open for proposals from industry. The Department has no plans to issue any more calls for proposal at this time.

This does not mean a final decision has been made on the six pilot sites. An interested company would still need to make a lease application which would be reviewed by the department looking at eight factors. Factors like the contribution of the operation to the community and provincial economic development, and other users of the public waters. A complete lease application would be posted online and the public will be invited to provide feedback.

Next Steps: Lease Applications

If someone would like to apply for one of the six aquaculture sites they would need to submit a lease application. An application review follows the Administrative Process and is led by the Department. Public engagement is held before a decision is made.



Call for proposals:

Those interested in applying for a licence and lease can submit a proposal. Calls for proposal are public on our website. Information is available here: <https://novascotia.ca/fish/aquaculture/public-information/>



Proposal review:

If the proposal is accepted, the potential operator will be invited to apply for a licence.



Application filed:

The potential operator must submit a detailed application and other documents within 90 days.



Application review:

The application and documents are reviewed and must be complete and accepted and move to the next stage.



Public notice:

The application is posted online. A 30-day public comment period begins. There will be notice on the Department website, in the Royal Gazette and the Municipality is notified.



Public comment:

Community members can provide their feedback online via the website, by email or by written letter during this 30-day period.



Decision process:

The public feedback is reviewed before a decision is made on whether to grant a licence and lease as proposed or with modifications to reflect public input. Decisions are posted online.

Aquaculture Decision Factors

The aquaculture licence and lease regulations outline the factors the Department considers in making a decision on the proposed operation:

1. Optimum use of marine resources
2. Contribution of the operation to community and provincial economic development
3. Fishery activities in the public waters surrounding the proposed operation
4. Oceanographic and biophysical characteristics of the public waters surrounding the operation
5. Other users of the public waters surrounding the proposed operation
6. Public right of navigation
7. Sustainability of wild salmon
8. Number and productivity of other aquaculture sites in the public waters surrounding the operation

Contact Us:

Still have questions about the licensing process? You can reach us at:
<mailto:aquaculture@novascotia.ca> or visit our website at:
<https://novascotia.ca/argyle-aquaculture-development-area/>