

## Baillie calls on Minister to halt open-pen salmon farm applications

*PC Leader says public does not have confidence in "rubber-stamp" application process*

HALIFAX, NS – The approval for applications for new open-pen salmon farms, like currently under consideration on the Eastern Shore and in Jordan Bay, should be withheld by the NDP's Minister of Fisheries and Aquaculture, says Progressive Conservative leader Jamie Baillie.

"Modern and sustainable aquaculture has a future in Nova Scotia, but the NDP has an open-pen application process that the public has no confidence in," said Baillie. "Residents are concerned with what appears to be a rubber-stamp process."

All 10 applications made in recent years for open-pen fin fish farms have been approved.

Baillie recently again met with concerned local residents and business owners from the Eastern Shore and has met with many concerned Nova Scotians in coastal communities in recent months. He agrees with their concerns that the application process and regulations are deeply flawed.

"An open door, open-pen policy that has rubber-stamped all applications raises serious questions," said Baillie "Today in Nova Scotia, the NDP's flawed policies are moving us further and further away from the goal of becoming an innovative, world-leader in aquaculture."

Stewart Lamont, Managing Director of Tangier Lobster and a spokesman for Harvesters and Seafood Companies on the Eastern Shore said Baillie's position is a "terrific first step".

"We need to slow down this mad rush to open-pen fish farming in Nova Scotia. There is so much at stake, and the due diligence simply has not been completed by the provincial government," said Lamont. "Not only on the Eastern Shore but in all coastal communities in the province, we need to make certain we protect the wild catch fisheries and that we engage the communities."

Baillie says a PC government would support sustainable aquaculture and the jobs that go with it by ensuring a regulatory and approval process is in place that has the confidence of the residents of our province and the industry participants.

He says a Progressive Conservative government will ensure aquaculture grows and develops in the right way: with community support, science-based proven safeguards and clear regulations that enhance the value of our products and protect our coastlines and communities.

Baillie says the NDP's misguided rubber-stamp approach to aquaculture development is rooted in their failure to create jobs in Nova Scotia. The NDP have spent almost half a billion dollars in an attempt to create jobs, but Nova Scotia has lost 3,400 full time jobs since they were elected three years ago.