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NISGAANATION.CA

FOR IMMEDIATE RELEASE

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Nisga'a Nation Calls on Prime Minister Trudeau to Uphold Promise to British Columbians and Protect First Nations Food Security

Gitlaxt'aamiks, British Columbia – Today, as stewards of the land and water for generations untold, the Nisga'a Nation stands in unity with British Columbians in voicing a resounding call to Prime Minister Justin Trudeau to honour his promise to transition away from open-net pen salmon farming in coastal BC waters by 2025.

Recognized the plight of wild Pacific salmon and the detrimental impacts of these open net-pen feedlots on wild Pacific salmon, in 2019, Prime Minister Trudeau mandated his fisheries Minister to transition ocean-polluting salmon farms from BC waters by 2025. He issued that mandate again in 2021.

Over 120 First Nations in British Columbia, both coastal and Interior, have repeatedly called for a complete and urgent removal of open-net pen feedlots from coastal British Columbia to preserve our constitutionally protected rights. The wild Pacific salmon we rely on to exercise our rights and maintain our culture and food security are nearing extinction.

Today, we are calling on the Prime Minister to uphold his promise. **The federal government must do the following:**

- 1. Introduce a Transition Plan for the urgent and complete removal of feedlots of Atlantic salmon from coastal British Columbia.**
 - The Transition Plan must prohibit open net-pen feedlots and hybrid systems from operating in coastal British Columbia.**
 - Neither open net-pen feedlots nor hybrid feedlots protect endangered wild Pacific salmon from the transmission of pathogens and parasites to wild Pacific salmon.**
- 2. Limit the term of any aquaculture licences less than two years and remove all open net-pen feedlots from British Columbia in less than two years.**

“Anything short of this will constitute a broken promise to Indigenous Peoples in British Columbia, for whom salmon is both a food source and a cultural identity. We have an Aboriginal right to fish for food, social, and ceremonial purposes. This is not just a legal entitlement; it is a fundamental aspect of our heritage and existence. The extinction of wild Pacific salmon would not only devastate the delicate balance of our ecosystems but would also extinguish our constitutionally protected rights and erode the very fabric of our culture,” says Eva Clayton, President of the Nisga’a Nation.

As we stand on the precipice of a pivotal moment in our shared history, President Clayton urges Prime Minister Trudeau to stay true to his word and prioritize the protection of wild Pacific salmon. Together, let us forge a path forward that respects Indigenous rights, safeguards our food security, and ensures a sustainable future for generations to come.

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Backgrounder attached

About the Nisga’a Nation

The Nisga'a Nation is located in the Nass Area, northwest of Terrace, BC. There are four villages in Nisga'a Lands, Gitlaxt'aamiks, Gitwinksihlkw, Laxgalts'ap and Gingolx that rely on cultural harvest. The Nisga'a Treaty is the first modern treaty in British Columbia that came into effect on May 11, 2000. A self-governing nation under the authority of Nisga'a Lisims Government that protects the rights and interests of more than 8000 Nisga'a citizens to date.

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